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Exploring Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Fulton County, Georgia

Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi
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College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi

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Walden University
2020

Abstract

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by

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MA, Southern University and A&M College, 1982

BA, Southern University and A&M College, 1981

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Public Policy and Administration

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Abstract

The high juvenile delinquency recidivism rate is a problem in Fulton County Georgia, that continues to be of significant concern. The juvenile justice system has gained acceptance as a means of addressing and reducing the high recidivism rates of juvenile offenders. However, there is a lack of research regarding African American male adults and juvenile justice probationers' perceptions on the factors affecting recidivism. This qualitative study explored and examined the phenomenon and factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism through the perceptions of African American male adults who were previously juvenile delinquents, and current juvenile probation officers. Ecological systems theory was used as the theoretical foundation for guiding this research. The results from this qualitative study showed that the current probation guidelines in the juvenile system in Fulton County, Georgia, are not successful. Results indicated that reliable factors for juvenile delinquency recidivism include (a) a lack of juvenile and parent accountability; (b) environment; (c) peers; and (d) family dynamics. The juvenile justice system, human services professionals, leaders in the field, and policy makers could use findings from the study to advocate for the need to develop programs and policies that will reduce juvenile delinquency recidivism.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Mrs. Eunice Ayodele Olagbegi, who passed away October 09, 2013. You have always been my guardian angel and my biggest supporter. Every day that goes by, I wish that you were here to see the progress I have made, and see my boys grow to manhood. I know that you would have been proud of me and my family. I miss you Mom and this one is for you. May you continue to rest in peace.

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First, I would like to give praises and thanks to the good Lord who has been my constant guide and the one whom I call upon every time I sit down to write. Lord, you have truly blessed me beyond measure and this would not be possible without you.

To my beautiful wife, Christine, and my twin sons Adefemi and Adefola, you have been my biggest supporter and motivator. I love you and appreciate you always. Thank you I am truly proud of you. You are definitely responsible for my returning back to school and working towards achieving a dream that started in 1983. Thank you, Wanda Payne. I am forever grateful to you all. To my father, thank you for the leadership skills you instilled in me.

To my Dissertation Committee and Dr. Gregory Koehle, you accepted to chair this study at a time when I was burdened with anxiety. Thank you for the numerous return calls in the midst of your busy schedule. My Co-Chairman, Dr. Susan Baer, who was also willing to help. And to my introduction to dissertation instructor, Dr. Hilda Sheppard who taught me how to perfect a problem statement, I thank you. This was a long journey filled with severe anxiety from start to finish; I could not accomplish this without the guidance and support of each of you. Thank you, I am forever grateful.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Researchers have examined and analyzed juvenile offender recidivism in the literature because the challenge of recidivism remains a problem (Chisalita & Podea, 2013; Clark, Mathur, & Holding, 2011; Voisin, Kim, Takahashi, Morotta, & Bocanegra, 2017). Understanding juvenile offender recidivism is essential for the maturation of active policy development to understand the consequences of a felony or misdemeanor offense. Through this research, I filled a gap in the existing literature. Previous researchers have shown that children who encounter neglect, child abuse, and weak parental guidance are at increased risk of juvenile offender recidivism (McKee, 2012; Ryan, Williams, & Courtney, 2013; Watson, Washington, & Stepteau-Watson, 2015). The diverse demographics of Fulton County, Georgia, where the research took place, includes a large concentration of non-English speaking parents, which may also contribute to the high-risk factors in juvenile offender recidivism (Herz, Ryan, & Bilchik, 2012). Researchers have indicated that urban adolescents in comparison with other offending youth population are conspicuously higher in welfare group homes than juvenile court appointed foster homes that are highly populated with minority youth (Huang, Ryan, Sappleton, & Chiu, 2015). Huang et al. (2015) posited that young people who live in congregated group homes experience increased predictors of initial arrest and, ultimately, recidivism (Gallupe, Bouchard, & Davies, 2015; Pullen et al., 2015).

Background

Juvenile justice literature shows that child placement in group homes or welfare care homes link to adverse outcomes, such as arrests and antisocial behaviors of youth (Ryan, Abrams, & Huang, 2014). The cycle of misplacement of juveniles to care group homes is a lifetime of abuse that originates early in life and may continue through adolescence (Watson et al., 2015; Weaver & Campbell, 2015). Researchers suggested that group homes manifest delinquent youth and increase the likelihood of substance abuse and antisocial behaviors (Scott, Underwood, & Lamis, 2015; Stein, Homan, & DeBerard, 2015; Young, Farrell, & Taxman, 2012).

An evidence-based juvenile delinquency study showed that case managers and probation officers who undertake constant supervision of children under delinquent court orders are not sufficiently trained in cultural diversity (Barrett, Katsiyannis, Zhang, & Kingree, 2015). Evidence shows a notable shortage of research that supports quality training of probation officers, case managers, and supervisors of juvenile in multidimensional training in different family therapy (Weaver & Campbell, 2015; Young et al., 2012).

Recidivism is a problem that has negatively affected the community and remains a risk factor for the community and the juvenile justice system. The results of young offender recidivism are associated with early academic problems, aggression, health issues, substance abuse, and mental health issues with community disruptions (Connolly, Schwartz, Nedelec, Beaver, & Barnes, 2015; Mallett, Fukushima, Stroddard-Dare, & Quinn, 2013; Weaver & Campbell, 2015). With the continued increase in juvenile

offender recidivism, particularly in the African American community, a need exists to study the reason for the trend of recidivism (Clark et al., 2011; Huang et al., 2012). Thus, the results of my study can help inform policy makers and family members, and they may contribute to the body of knowledge.

Juvenile offending and recidivism are persistent public health issues and are linked in the scientific literature (Barton, 2016; Ryan et al., 2013). Reports show law enforcement in the United States arrested 1.9 million youth younger than 18 years, accounting for 15% of violent crimes and 24% of property crimes (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention [OJJDP], 2014; Ryan et al., 2013; Verschere et al., 2012). Researchers have found that children and adolescent maltreatment and low levels of care are likely to play significant roles in reoffending (Ryan et al., 2013).

A significant amount of research has addressed parenting practices, and styles of parenting reveal the etiology of juvenile offending in that parents who consistently monitor character or behavior of their siblings tend to have children with fewer behavioral problems (Schroeder & Mowen, 2014). Parenting has been a form of inquiry for social scientists, according to researchers. Researchers assume that the parents offer stability (Schroeder & Mowen, 2014; Walker-Barnes & Mason, 2004). Youth juvenile justice poses a significant risk in mental and health challenges according to Scott et al. (2015). The suicide rate among youth ages 10 to 18 years is becoming a leading cause of death for this population, according to data collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC; 2013; Hockenberry et al., 2013). Researchers posited that more

than a third (35%) of juvenile deaths in confinement are a result of suicide (Scott et al., 2015).

Selected articles relating to juvenile delinquency recidivism include the following:

1. Cronin (2014) explained that the use of a case study as a rigorous form of inquiry.
2. Tapia, Alarid, and Hutcherson (2015) stated how social bonds and parental support can be crucial to juvenile development.
3. Mathur and Clark (2014) inferred that solving juvenile crime recidivism is the responsibility of the community.
4. Huang et al. (2012) provided statistical data detailing implications of judicial decisions and adolescent re-entry.
5. Mallett et al. (2013) expressed how juvenile delinquency recidivism continues to be a problem and increasingly scores as undesirable for the community goals, adolescent accountability, and safe society.
6. Young et al. (2012) advanced the effect of intensive supervision programs for juvenile delinquency probation and aftercare.
7. Ryan et al. (2013) advanced information regarding the family's role in juvenile delinquency recidivism.
8. Barrett and Katsiyannis (2015) espoused that emotional irregularity represents symptoms and predictors of juvenile delinquency recidivism.

9. Ryan et al. (2014) used predisposition scores and matching survival analysis to infer that open child welfare cases are factors of juvenile delinquency and recidivism.
10. Verner and Abdullah (2012) advanced the use of a case study to build and identify risk factors in a qualitative approach.
11. Berger, Paxson, and Waldfogel (2011) examined the lack of economic resources.

Problem Statement

Recidivism is the rearrests of a juvenile after an initial arrest, which poses a problem in Fulton County, Georgia. Repeat juvenile offending, or rearrests, is a major concern that has generated numerous studies nationally during the past several years. Fulton County is the largest county in Georgia and the most populated, with more than 1,000,000 residents. Atlanta is the largest city in Fulton County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Research on this topic could provide insight on how to prevent and/or reduce recidivism among juveniles.

Juvenile offending and recidivism are a persistent public health issue and are linked in the scientific literature (Barton, 2016; Ryan et al., 2013). Through the identification of intrinsic perspectives of former juvenile offenders, and juvenile justice officers, this study may promote positive social change regarding policies and programs that will increase awareness of repeat offending. Therefore, the findings from this research could help to decrease detainable offenses and reduce recidivism among the African American population in Fulton County.

In Fulton County, Georgia, and many urban counties across the United States, a need exists to address juvenile offenders' recidivism and avoid future placement in juvenile homes or incarceration because of serious offenses, including felony assaults. Juvenile offenders are youth who often recidivate following the first offense. Per the latest census data from the OJJPD (2011), approximately 70,000 juveniles were detained or incarcerated daily in 2010. The State of Georgia estimates the future of the at-risk youth population, ages 10 to 17 years, will increase by 6% in 2015, to 1,150,000 (Bulls & Adams, 2016). More than 50,000 youth are committed to short- and long-term custody each year, according to the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (2015). The youth population in the state is approximately 60% African Americans; in contrast, Georgia's population is 65% Caucasian-American, 30% African American, and 7% Latino/a (Department of Juvenile Justice, 2015). A significant problem exists regarding minority juvenile offender recidivism. Researchers determined that in 2013, the U.S. juvenile courts processed approximately 1 million cases in the United States (Hockenberry & Puzzachera , 2015).

Juvenile offender recidivism is a problem in Fulton County, GA, which consists of 12 cities. Repeat juvenile offending, or rearrests, is a major concern that has generated numerous studies during the past several years (Puzzanchera, Sladky, & Kang, 2016). The Fulton County Department of Juvenile Justice is responsible for all cities' offender statistics, including Atlanta. In 2015, 1,723 youth were under secure detention placement, and total commitment, including nonsecure residential treatment, was 105,488 (ODJJ, 2016). In the fiscal year 2015, Fulton County submitted an average of 75 arrest or intakes

of new juvenile felony commitments or incarcerations (GAJJD, 2015); the average stay for the youth was 15 days. The total youth committed to secure and nonsecure homes was 1,758 with daily population of 589 (GADJJ, 2015). In 2011, the report reaffirmed that Georgia urban cities have high rates of arrest. Fulton County has a high recidivism rate of 45% (GADJJ, 2015; Office of Justice Research and Performance, 2016; juveniledata.gov, 2016). The problem of high juvenile recidivism rates remains in many urban cities and cultures, but 2014 statistics from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services suggested that a disproportionate number of repeat offenders are minorities, particularly African Americans and females, and partly because of family income status (Huang et al., 2015).

According to the national report fact sheet of the U.S. Department of Justice, the number of delinquency cases declined from 1997 through 2013. The report further stated that juvenile courts handled fewer cases in 2013 than in 1985, with 9% fewer reports articulated (Furdella & Puzzanthera, 2015). The Office of Juvenile Justice affirmed that in October 2015, for every 100,000 juveniles in detention, 153 were minorities. Minorities included African Americans, Hispanics, American/Alaskan Natives, Asians/Pacific islanders, and those identified as other race. Approximately 70 of the 153 minorities were African Americans in Fulton County, which is above the national average (OJJDP, 2016). In 2016, Fulton County committed 10,411 juveniles between the ages of 18 to 20 years, whereas the percentage of juvenile offender recidivism for personal offense was 47% and the national average was 38% (Hockenberry, 2016; OJJPD, 2016).

One explanation for the disproportionate rate of recidivism among African American juvenile offenders is the lack of parental monitoring, parental withdrawal, and cohesive family relationship (Ryan et al., 2013). Ryan et al. (2013) stated that congregate care in child welfare is a factor related to the increased rate of recidivism. Per the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2014), 11.5% to 15% of youth who receive welfare live in group homes, whereas 6% are placed in foster care (Barrett et al., 2015; Casey Family Program, 2015; Lee & Barth, 2011). The differences between congregate homes and foster care homes may explain the increased rate of recidivism. Congregate housing is a confined, shared living environment for many juvenile offenders for short- or long-term stay, whereas a foster home has few minors under a state-certified caregiver (Huang et al., 2012; Lee & Barth, 2011; Ryan et al., 2014). Researchers have argued that African American youth are often profiled and those individuals living in group homes received diagnoses for behavioral and emotional disorders (Vaughan, van-Hulle, Beasley, Rodgers, & D’Onofrio, 2015; Watson et al., 2015). Predictors of juvenile delinquent recidivism are parental neglect and close-knit family relationships coupled with active peers (Ryan et al., 2013; Smith & Chonody, 2010). Certain economic conditions and social factors of the parents and group homes also contribute to abandonment and recidivism (Watson et al., 2015; Weaver & Campbell, 2015; Williams, Aiyer, Durkee, & Tolan, 2014).

Purpose of the Study

My purpose in this qualitative research was to explore the reasons why juveniles in Fulton County, Georgia, have recidivated. More African Americans continue to move

toward urban cities, such as those in Fulton County, for increased opportunities and a better lifestyle (Brown & Albert, 2015). The increase in African American youth in diverse communities continues to influence challenges of change (Hastings, Barrett, Barbuto, & Bell, 2011). I conducted this study using a qualitative approach. Case study research will allow researchers to establish a framework for exploratory study of a real-life situation (Cronin, 2014). The central phenomenon of my research study is the perceptions of former repeat juvenile African American male offenders and current probation officers who work with juvenile delinquents in Fulton County. In this study, I explored this phenomenon by interviewing former repeat African American juvenile offenders from Fulton County Georgia, and I also interviewed probation officers in Fulton County, Georgia, who supervise juvenile delinquents. There is no existing research like this on Fulton County, Georgia. The research findings could contribute to a deeper understanding of why juveniles recidivate and possibly design policies that would reduce juvenile delinquency recidivism.

Research Questions

RQ1: What factors do former juvenile offenders in Fulton County identify as having caused them to recidivate when they were juveniles?

RQ2: What factors do probation officers in Fulton County identify as causing juvenile offenders to recidivate?

Conceptual Framework

My research involved the social construction framework and the ecological systems theory of human resources development. By examining the development of

shared assumptions of sociodemographic behaviors regarding repeat juvenile offenders, social construction will allow participants to construct subjective meanings of their experiences. In this study, I analyzed the target population to understand the development and implications of policy design. I addressed the social and health issues of the community. Thus, social construction and public policy design are a good fit for this study. The target population of the research was former repeat juvenile offenders and Fulton County Juvenile probation officers.

To fully understand the complexity of factors that can bestow unhealthy or detrimental psychosocial functioning, it is important to consider circumstances and developmental periods in which youth experiences takes place. Spencer's (2008) phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory provided a framework for understanding risk and resilience (Williams et al., 2014). The phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory suggests that African American adolescents may have high levels of vulnerability given long standing exposure to stress of poverty. This theory further suggests that the high level of exposure may directly relate to maturation of adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies in antisocial behavior (Gaylord-Harden et al., 2012; Swanson et al., 2002). According to previous studies, circumstances of families in urban disadvantage and crowded residential environments may attribute to behavioral problems (Farrington & Welsh, 2007; McLoyd et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2014).

A large concentration of African American youth lives in urban cities, and the conditions of urban poverty are likely increasing factors for youth involvement in antisocial behaviors (Williams et al., 2014). Evidence-based research indicates that

family stress, coupled with discrimination and group membership, may be a factor or a predictor of increased aggressive behavior and offending (Addy et al., 2013; Guerra & Williams, 2006; Williams et al., 2014). Extensive literature has suggested that ethnic diversity exists in modern cities and minorities grapple with the challenges of low income and high unemployment. The literature also indicates extensive discrimination and ethnic profiling occur against ethnic minority citizens (Simon, Svenson, & Saharso, 2014), which invariably may result in urban riots and youth unrest, leading to risk of recidivism.

The interactions of families in a positive environment can help reduce the occurrence and implications of child maltreatment. Supportive neighbors also create an environment that makes raising a child easier. Social cognitive theory explains that individuals actively learn from their environment. Maguire-Jack and Wang (2016) stated that the act of neglect in raising a child is an act of omission. When a parent does not meet the basic physical, health, supervision, safety, and emotional needs of a child, it is a situation of maltreatment. Parents who are emotionally and geographically surrounded by supportive and trusted environments generally meet the basic needs of child raising (Ameen & Lee, 2016; Barnett et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2016; Maguire-Jack & Wang, 2016). Youth who are detained often encounter cumulative, multiple challenges and are victims of child maltreatment and portray higher risks of juvenile rearrests (Ameen & Lee, 2016). Through active social learning, youth social behaviors are shaped by numerous factors; the home environment is the most significant factor. Evidence-based research shows that detained youth or those placed in group homes are exposed to

psychotropic medications, and certain populations of youth in foster care may be undermedicated for mental health conditions (Barnett et al., 2016).

Nature of the Study

In this study, I used a qualitative methodology with a case study research design. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to create patterns and categories that relate to a specific phenomenon. A researcher must be able to state precisely the problem and the purpose, allowing for a better understanding. Per Rudestam (2015), no universally accepted format for a research proposal exists, but the statement of the problem should align with the study and the data analysis. An instrumental case study was the best approach for my study because it will enable researcher to present an in-depth understanding of the causes of juvenile offender recidivism by African American youth in Fulton County, GA. Using the case study approach enabled me to identify the perceptions and risk factors (Verner & Abdullah, 2012). In my study, they relate to recidivism. In this study, I included criterion and purposeful sampling techniques. The target population was the juvenile offenders in the Fulton County, GA community.

Through this case study, I focused specifically and exclusively on now-adult (ages 18 and older) African Americans who are former juvenile offenders, because this group has been found to be at risk for recidivism (Barrett & Katsiyannis, 2015; Huang et al., 2015). In addition, the potential participants must meet the inclusion criteria during recruitment. Because of the ethical considerations for my research study, I recruited adult men who have been previously adjudicated through the juvenile offender's program at least twice. These participants had to (a) be 18 years or older; (b) have previously been

involved in the juvenile justice system as a repeat juvenile offender; (c) reside in Fulton County, GA; and (d) not have outstanding warrants for arrest. I included current juvenile probation officers as a part of the study population as well. Current juvenile probation officers had to be (a) currently work as a juvenile probation officer; (b) have 5 years of experience as a juvenile probation officer; (c) work in Fulton County, GA, and (d) be willing to talk about their experiences as a juvenile probation officer.

Definitions of Terms

Adolescent: The term used to refer to youth who have attained sexual maturity (Ryan et al., 2013).

At-risk youth: Youth subjected to disadvantages and adverse life outcomes due to environmental and personal factors.

Juvenile: Any person under the younger than 19 years.

Juvenile delinquency: Illegal behaviors or crimes committed by any person younger than 19 years.

Recidivism: Individual tendency to reoffend after a first offense.

Serious offense: Any crime of violence.

Urban area: A developed geographical city with human and structures density.

Assumptions

Assumptions underlie research and are integral to the research process, specifically the data collection process (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In this research study, I assumed that participants would be honest in their responses to interview questions. I assumed that research participants understood the procedures asked of them in the

informed consent form and that participants would share their concerns about participating in the research study during their involvement in the study. I assumed that the sample size for both groups provided sufficient data to answer the research questions about the phenomenon of African American juvenile delinquency and recidivism. I also assumed that the interview protocol would probe participants regarding their experiences to yield the data necessary to answer the research questions. It further assumed that a qualitative methodology was the best approach for the research phenomenon and would provide the opportunity to help close the gap in extant literature.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study, I explored and examined the predictive relationships between African American juvenile offenders and probation officers, perceptions of their experiences, and their subsequent recidivism. This study was delimited to those experiences as they related to Fulton County, GA. Further, my study was delimited to probation officers who had been in their current positions for a minimum of 5 years. In addition, the study was delimited to young adult participants who were African Americans males with a history of juvenile delinquency and recidivism and were older than 18 years. These two populations delimited the study to apply to probation officers and previous African American juvenile delinquents with a history of recidivism. The results of this study may appertain to other jurisdictions with similar problems.

Limitations

There are limitations in every study (Braun & Clarke, 2013). One limitation of this study was that participants were limited to specific standards. Participants were

limited to African American repeat juvenile offenders and probation officers who worked with African American repeat offenders, which placed bounds on juvenile offenders and the research. This limited the potential transferability of the research study's findings to other populations, social settings, geographic locations, and cultural contexts. The credibility of my findings are limited to the extent that participants were honest and truthful in their responses to the interview questions. I established rapport with participants by conducting interviews in a private conference room at a local library, which allowed participants to feel comfortable sharing their experiences. The study was also limited to qualitative data collection methods. I used these methods to collect data regarding their experiences with the phenomenon to help close the gap in extant literature and address the problem of juvenile delinquency and recidivism.

Significance

Juvenile offender recidivism has been examined, analyzed, and divulged in many pieces of literature because the challenge remains a problem (Chisalita & Podea, 2013; Clark et al., 2014; Voisin et al., 2017). Understanding juvenile offender recidivism is essential for the maturation of active policy development to understand the consequences of a felony or misdemeanor offense. The findings of this case study will begin to fill a gap in extant literature. Previous studies have shown that children who encounter neglect, child abuse, and weak parental guidance are at increased risk of juvenile offender recidivism (McKee 2012; Ryan et al., 2013; Watson et al., 2015). The diverse demographics of Fulton County that include a large concentration of non-English speaking parents may also contribute to the high-risk factors in juvenile offender

recidivism (Herz et al., 2012). Studies also have indicated that urban adolescents in comparison with other offending youth population are conspicuously higher in welfare group homes than juvenile-court-appointed foster homes that are highly populated by minority youth (Huang et al., 2015). Huang et al. (2015) posited that young groups that live in congregated group homes relate to increased predictors of initial arrest and, ultimately, recidivism (Gallupe et al., 2015; Pullen, Modrcin, McGuire, Lane, Kearney, & Engle, 2015).

Juvenile justice researchers have submitted that child placement in group homes or welfare care homes have links with adverse outcomes such as arrests and antisocial behaviors of youth (Ryan et al., 2014). The cycle of misplacement of juveniles to care group homes is a lifetime of abuse that originates early in life that may continue through adolescence (Watson et al., 2015; Weaver & Campbell, 2014). Researchers have suggested that group homes manifest associations with a delinquent peer that increase the likelihood of substance abuse and antisocial behaviors (Scott et al., 2015; Stein et al., 2015; Young et al., 2013).

An evidence-based juvenile delinquency study submitted that case managers and parole officials that undertake constant supervision of children under delinquent court orders are not sufficiently trained in cultural diversity (Barrett et al., 2015). There is real evidence that a notable shortage exists of research that supports a quality training of direct officers, case managers, and supervisors of the juvenile in multidimensional training in different family therapy.(Weaver, & Campbell, 2014; Young et al., 2012).

Recidivism is a problem that has negatively affected the community and remains a risk factor for the community and the juvenile justice system. The results of young offender recidivism are associated with early academic problems, aggression, health issues, substance abuse, and mental issues with community disruptions (Connolly et al., 2015; Mallett et al., 2012; Weaver & Campbell, 2015). With the continued increase in juvenile offender recidivism, particularly in the African American community, there is the need to study the reason for the trend of recidivism (Clark et al., 2011; Huang et al., 2012). Thus, the result of this case study can help inform policy makers and family members and contribute to the extant body of knowledge.

Summary

The perceptions held by juveniles regarding their probation experience could be instrumental in preventing the youth from committing new crimes (Chui & Chan, 2014). Despite the implementation and use of probation supervision among juvenile offenders, the high recidivism rates among Black males in the United States are still a problem (Morenoff & Harding, 2014). Moreover, the recidivism rates of juvenile offenders cost society through the high costs related to the delivery of probation as well as through detention costs. In Chapter 1, I outlined the social problem and my intended goals of this research study. I described two theories that underlie this research study, the social construction framework, and the ecological systems theory of human resources development (Ameen & Lee, 2016; Spencer, 2008). In Chapter 2, I present a thorough review of the literature, and then I will present the research methodology in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, I present the research findings, and in Chapter 5, I present the social implications.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In this section, I provide an in-depth review of the scientific literature that includes a comprehensive background of juvenile delinquency, social cognitive theory, and the problem of juvenile delinquency recidivism among African Americans. In this review, I detail the findings of extant studies relating to youth offending and antisocial behaviors of youth. I have divided the literature review into three sections, beginning with a comprehensive look at articles that pertain to causal factors of juvenile offending. The second part includes discussions on adolescent cognitive, emotional, and social development as a causal factor to offending and recidivism. The third part involves an examination of public representation, society, maturation, and youth development. The literature review includes an examination of rendition or delineation of recurrence among African American youth.

History of Juvenile Justice System and African American Youth

Numerous researchers have studied the phenomenon of juvenile justice. No parent, regardless of the income or situation, wants his or her children to be delinquent in any area. Few articles have been written on the history of juvenile delinquency in urban cities and in the African American communities. One aspect of the literature is the history of juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice. An old African adage affirms that there is no smoke without fire. This study involves a retroactive interpretation of events of the past includes the disproportionate arrest, detention, and recidivism rates for African American males. The degree to which the past influences the present and the future (Hinton, 2015;

Holleran & Stout, 2017). According to the American Bar Association (2016), the first juvenile court in the United States initiated in 1899 in Clark County, Illinois. The focus of this court was to correct and, perhaps, rehabilitate juvenile offenders. Following the passage of the Civil Rights Acts of 1965, the Johnson Administration passed the bill that promulgated the war on crime (Hinton, 2015). The Johnson Administration brought about stringent measures of law enforcement agents on African American youth after the rhetoric that preceded 1965. Next, the Johnson Administration combined social welfare with strict law enforcement action that created new programs, such as the youth service bureaus, to circumvent potential lawbreakers (Hinton, 2015; Miller, 2017; Young & Reviere, 2015). In 1974, U.S. lawmakers passed the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention bill (Hinton, 2015; Holleran & Stout, 2017).

Social scientists asserted that policy makers of the past, including during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, induced themselves as public surveillance watchdogs. A surveillance mechanism indicates focus on African American urban youth as a threat and menace to society and national safety (Hinton, 2015; Holleran & Stout, 2017; Miller, 2017; Young & Reviere, 2015). Social science researchers affirmed the designers of the 1965 crime control initiatives, which were established to curb social ills, brought about the involvement of the nation's justice system in juvenile delinquency, creating considerable attention and scrutiny of urban youth antisocial behaviors. The Lyndon Johnson Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 was made manifest among African American youth in their disproportionate arrests and holding of criminal records (Hinton,

2015; Holleran & Stout, 2017; Souverein, Van der Helm, & Stams, 2013; Zapolski, Garcia, Jarjoura, Lau, & Aalsma, 2017).

Social scientists further concluded that the tenacious implementation of the Omnibus Crime Control Act of 1968 gave rise to law enforcement surveillance that increased the level of punishment that dominates state and local government actions and creates urban inequality (Hinton, 2015; Holleran & Stout, 2017). Researchers stated that prior to the Civil Rights Movement, lawmakers unfolded stringent measures targeting juvenile delinquency with the purpose of capturing and incarcerating vulnerable youth, particularly African Americans and further criminalizing them (Hinton, 2015). Through evidenced-based studies, researchers have enumerated that the government's approach to the war against poverty and crime produced the highest rate of African Americans incarceration and youth imprisonment of any industrialized nation (Hinton, 2015; Miller, 2017; Suddaby & Foster, 2017; Ward, 2012). President Lyndon Johnson's changes toward social programs disintegrated the lives of African American urban children and adolescents.

Law enforcement has radically transformed the daily lifestyles of African American families. These social control measures took a substantial negative toll on low-income African American families. Adolescents were cajoled to be delinquent by the system before committing any legal violation (Hinton, 2015; Holleran & Stout, 2017; Miller, 2017; Young & Reviere, 2015). Holleran and Stout (2017) further explained that the arrest and detention were solely reserved for low-income family and youth of color.

African American Women Organizations

In the late 1800s and 1900s, social scientists exploited the works of African American women and their efforts to do the right thing by improving the lives of those in the African American community. Meanwhile, the Caucasian-American reformers and lawmakers broadened the scope of the juvenile justice system to negatively affect low-income minorities, including those low-income African Americans (Young & Reviere, 2015). The principal laws governing the distinct line separating juvenile and adult offenders were gradually eroding. African American youth were more plausible to be criminalized because they were being arrested, detained, and sent to adult prison (Miller, 2017; Young & Reviere, 2015). African American women who believed that their children were defenseless in society, especially those accused of crimes, became instrumental in educating and protecting African American youth. These women organized groups and organizations to tackle the violence and discrimination against African American youth (Holleran & Stout, 2017; Souverein et al., 2013; Young & Reviere, 2015).

Looking through the lens of the truism of history, social scientists stated that the urban clubs organized by African American women filled the void of social services as industrialization and urbanization continued to influence the African American community (Holleran & Stout, 2017; Souverein et al., 2013). The African American feminist groups of the 1800s encountered severe hostility, apprehension, racism, and poverty. Their organizations established schools, which served as a haven for African American youth. The stated goals were to educate these youth and to promote the social,

moral, economic, and religious welfare of children where the government has continued to fail (Hinton, 2015; Mooradian & Baumer, 2013; Ward, 2012; Watson et al., 2015).

Researchers have suggested that the justice system is the definer of African American social problems. The anticrime policies stemming from the federal government's significant investment not only dismissed the likelihood of rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents, but also directly increased the number of African Americans into adult prisons and recidivism (Mooradian, 2013; Miller, 2015; Ward, 2012). Researchers affirmed that the Johnson Administration of the 1960s created instability and variations using antipoverty and crime prevention initiatives (Hinton, 2015; Miller, 2013). Scientists believe lawmakers implemented the service bureau outside the juvenile justice system to keep thousands of African American youth under surveillance (Hinton, 2015; Ward, 2012). The bureaus typically operate within the authority of public welfare centers where potential juvenile delinquents, as well as other adolescents who have not acted against the law, are being targeted as susceptible to juvenile delinquency, according to Hinton (2015).

The bureau's surveillance on African American youth becomes a disadvantage, because after a juvenile has been discerned as delinquent, that individual remains on the radar. The strict monitoring attributes to the disproportionate arrest and recidivism among urban African American youth (Hinton, 2015; Holleran & Stout, 2017). Scientists further affirmed the systemic activities of law enforcement targeting minorities and African Americans have resulted in the disproportionate representation of minority populations in U.S. correctional institutions (Holleran & Stout, 2017). Researchers and social science

historians believe that the 1974 Act legislation not only worsened a deteriorating culture of race relations following the 1960s Civil Rights Movement unrest, but it also diffused the crime control protocol that radiates to present day and keeps African Americans incarcerated (Mooradian & Baumer, 2013; Ward, 2012). Researchers examining the national development of race relations agree the social disaster that eclipses the African American male has been present for a long time. The juvenile justice proclamation of the criminal legislation during the 1970s lured urban youth into the juvenile system (Burt, Simmons & Gibbons, 2012; Mooradian & Baumer, 2013; Miller, 2012; OJJDP, 2011).

In Fulton County, Georgia, and many urban counties throughout the United States, a need exists to address juvenile delinquency recidivism and avoid future placement of African American youth in juvenile homes or incarceration because of a severe offense, including felony assaults. For this study, the term *juvenile delinquent* refers to a minor (younger than 18 years =) who committed at least one felony or misdemeanor youth offense, such as truancy, underage alcohol or drug abuse, and antisocial behavior. Juvenile offender recidivism refers to repeat juvenile delinquents. Per the latest census data from the U.S. OJJDP (2011), approximately 70,000 juveniles were detained or incarcerated daily in 2010 in the United States, (OJJDP, 2010). The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice estimated the future of youth ages 10 to 17 years who are in an at-risk population in commitment or detention will increase by 6% in 2015, to 1,150,000 individuals (Bulls & Adams, 2016). More than 50,000 youth are committed to short- and long-term custody each year per the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, and the youth population is approximately 60% African Americans, whereas Georgia's

population is 65% Caucasian American, 30% African American, and 7% Latino (Department of Juvenile Justice, 2015). A significant problem exists regarding minority juvenile offender recidivism. Researchers posited that in 2013, the U.S. juvenile courts had approximately 1 million cases (Hockenberry & Puzzachera, 2015).

Juvenile offender recidivism is a problem in Fulton County, GA. Repeat juvenile offending, or rearrests, is a significant concern that has generated numerous studies during the past several years (Office of Justice Research and Performance, 2016; OJJDP, 2016, Juvenile Data, 2016). Fulton County is the largest county in Georgia with the highest population of more than 1,000,000 people. Atlanta is the most prominent city in Fulton County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016).

Literature Search Strategy

In this case study, I reviewed approximately 100 current research articles, including seminal articles, for this study. The articles that I examined were published within the last 5 years at the time of my study. The primary strategy to locate materials for this empirical research was keyword searches within the Walden University online databases, which include Academic Search Complete, ProQuest Criminal, ProQuest Central Journals, and EBSCO databases. Online keywords that I used included *African Americans, disparities, neighborhoods, communities, family group conferences, juvenile justice, juvenile offender, race, ethnicity, development, juvenile offender, youth offender, juvenile justice workers, parole officers, programs, and interventions*. The scope of the searches consisted of current peer-reviewed articles and journals coupled with seminal

articles and books. The secondary literature search strategy included government websites, such as the National Institute of Justice.

Conceptual Framework

The case research follows the social construction framework and the ecological systems theory of human resources development (Pierce et al., 2014). By examining the development of shared assumptions regarding the sociodemographic behaviors of repeat juvenile offenders, this theory allow researcher to construct meanings of the participants' experiences. The theory will incorporate the power of the target population to understand the development and implications of policy design. Researcher will address the social and health issues of the community. Thus, social construction and public policy design are a good fit for the design of this study. The target population of this study is former repeat juvenile offenders and probation officers in the Fulton County, Georgia, African American community. The probation officers that include repeat young offenders will be selected from this specific community.

To fully understand the complexity of factors that can bestow unhealthy or detrimental psychosocial functioning, it is important to consider circumstances and developmental periods in which youth experiences takes place. Spencer's (2008) phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory provides a framework for understanding risk and resilience processes (Williams et al., 2014). The phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory suggests, African American adolescents may have a high level of vulnerability because of long exposure to the stress of poverty. It further indicates that the high standard of disclosure may have direct

relation to maturation of adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies in antisocial behavior (Gaylord-Harden et al., 2012; Swanson et al. 2002). According to previous studies, circumstances of families in urban, disadvantaged, crowded residential environments may attribute to behavioral problems (Farrington & Welsh, 2007; McLoyd et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2014).

A large concentration of African American youth lives in urban cities, and the conditions of urban poverty are likely contributing factors to youth involvement in antisocial behaviors (Williams et al., 2014). Evidence-based research shows family stress coupled with discrimination and group membership may be a factor or a predictor of higher aggressive behavior and offending (Addy et al., 2013; Guerra & Williams, 2006; Williams et al., 2014). Researches suggested ethnic diversity exists in modern cities and that minorities grapple with low income and higher unemployment. Research literature also indicates widespread discrimination and racial profiling exists for ethnic minority citizens (Simon et al., 2014), which may result in urban riots and youth unrest and leading to the risk of rearrests.

Theoretical Foundation

Researchers have found that a focus has shifted to distinct theoretical perspectives on youth antisocial behaviors and subsequent rearrests. Maguire-Jack and Wang argued that a family's interaction with their environment exacerbates antisocial actions (2015). Persistent antisocial behaviors of a juvenile may be an indication of child maltreatment (Barnette et al., 2016; Rosenfield, Jouriles, Mueller, & McDonald, 2013; Stein et al., 2015). Exploring social dynamics that bestow the development of juvenile arrest,

researchers identified peer group affiliation, neighborhood conditions, community interactions, such as institutional resources, and social disenchantment (Barnette et al., 2015; Huang et al., 2016; Loeser, 2015). Researchers stated socioenvironmental influences are related to juveniles in a home with husband and wife who often experience physical violence, in which case adolescent becomes an adaptive system. In this environment, the adolescent learns antisocial behaviors (Pullen et al., 2015; Rosenfield et al., 2013; Stein et al., 2015).

One of the predictors of juvenile crime throughout the literature is maltreatment that youth encounter during adolescence (Ryan & Teste, 2005; Ryan et al., 2013). Physical abuse ranks prominently among various damage and receives more response among the full category of child maltreatment resulting in emotional, behavioral problems (Vaughan et al., 2015). Vaughan et al. (2015) demonstrated that emotional and behavioral problems during adolescence, coupled with caregiver or parental neglect, are persistent problems that contribute to recidivism. Neglect refers to the failure of caregivers to provide needed and appropriate care when juveniles feel oppressed and disempowered, creating an emotional challenge (Caprara et al., 2012; McMahon, 2015; Wagaman, 2011).

Youth in juvenile justice systems are at risk for developing mental and health challenges, according to Scott et al. (2015). Many researchers have addressed parenting practices, and parents who consistently monitor character or behavior of their siblings tend to have children with fewer behavioral problems (Schroeder & Mowen, 2014). Researchers rest with the assumption that the parent is someone who should display stable

characteristics for children and adolescents (Schroeder & Mowen, 2014; Walker-Barnes & Mason, 2004). The suicide rate among the general population of 10–18-year-olds is becoming a leading cause of death, according to data by CDC (2013; Hockenberry et al., 2013). Researchers posited that more than one-third (35%) of juvenile deaths in confinement are a result of suicide (Scott et al., 2015). Current studies advance the notion that socio-cohesion is a causal factor of youth antisocial behaviors and increases harmful patterns of behavior. Huang et al. (2016) stated mutual trust among supportive neighborhoods may influence the collective effectiveness of juvenile development with the willingness of neighbors to support one another during challenging situations with youth.

Social Cognitive Support

The interactions of families in a positive environment can be vital and have implications for child maltreatment. Supportive neighbors create a climate that makes raising a child easier. The social cognitive theory allows individuals to learn from their environment actively. Maguire-Jack and Wang (2016) stated that the act of neglect in raising a child is an act of omission. When a parent does not meet expectations and the underlying physical, health, supervision, safety, and emotional needs of a child, it is an indication of maltreatment. Parents who are emotionally and geographically surrounded by supportive and trusted environments are more likely to meet the basic needs child raising (Ameen & Lee, 2016; Barnett et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2016; Maguire-Jack & Wang, 2016). Youth who are detained often encounter cumulative, multiple challenges and are victims of child maltreatment and portray higher risks of juvenile rearrests

(Ameen & Lee, 2016). Through active social learning, youth social behaviors are shaped by numerous factors, with the home environment being the most significant factor. Researchers have found detained youth or in-home placements are unprotected to psychotropic medications and particular populations of young people in foster care may be under treatment for mental health conditions (Barnett et al., 2016).

Using an ecological perspective of factors in youth delinquency and behavioral problems, previous researchers identified issues of family, peer network, school, and neighborhood environment as a link to childhood conduct disorder (Darnell & Schuller, 2015; Walker, Bishop, Pullmann, & Baner, 2015).

Predictors of Recidivism

Researchers have linked many factors to youth reoffending or recidivism. Findings from a logistic regression analysis by Mallett et al. (2013) indicated several variables predict juvenile offender recidivism placement. Mallett et al. stated a factor that makes recidivism more likely is a previous behavioral disorder diagnosis. Mathur and Clark (2014) argued that community engagement plays a role in youth reoffending (Huang et al., 2012; Mallett et al., 2013; Weaver & Campbell, 2015). Many risk factors relate to youth reoffending, such as early aggression, mental health problems, substance abuse, family environment, inconsistent parenting, and family trauma. Brown and Albert (2015) stated community, economic, and political culture can be added factors to academic problems, education awareness, and community care (Loeber, Farrington, & Petechuk, 2013; Mallett et al., 2013; Schroeder & Mowen, 2014; Shek & Li, 2015).

Concerned and responsive community members influence juvenile development and well-being. Researchers affirmed that social support and sense of community are influential regarding the character and social behavior of youth (Huang et al., 2012; Rosenfield et al., 2013). Educational researchers argued social network analysis can be used as a framework to understand the effect of social relations on behaviors. Structural relationships are reliable predictors of antisocial behavior. Researchers analyzing peer influence also posited that social relations stand ahead predictors of antisocial behaviors by association (Gallupe et al., 2015; Levrso, Bielby, & Hoelter, 2015). Social cognitive factors can predict future juvenile offending over time. Using logistic regression analysis, researchers' findings revealed a healthy relationship between emotional antisocial behavior and awareness to peer pressure. Evidenced-based research suggests most youth who are susceptible to rearrests were joyriding, which is associated with gangs and the need to gain social status. The need for acceptance and validation in the group, or active community gangs ranks among rated factors of rearrests (Anderson & Linden, 2014; Gallupe et al., 2015).

Evidenced-based research shows African American youth are at the highest risk of rearrests because of children living in poverty. According to Watson et al. (2015), African American males are often profiled in urban cities and experience hardship, adversity, and numerous school challenges. Researchers performing regression analyses posited that significant predictors of adverse antisocial issues include emotional stability, aggressive behavior, self-esteem, rules-breaking, physical aggression, and symptoms of developing behavioral disorders (Chisalita & Podea, 2013; Voisin et al., 2017; Watson et

al., 2015). Mbangowah (2016) found African Americans experience arrest more often than their Caucasian counterparts because of vulnerability and public safety officers profiling these individuals. Disorganized communities that harbor high poverty rates and have a poor recreation environment, failing institutions, and chaotic family settings, breed delinquent behavior that manifests low self-esteem and poor academic performance and truancy (Chisalita & Podea, 2013; Matt, 2015).

Group Homes

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported that 6% of foster children reside in group homes, and 8% reside in institutions or some maximum confinement security (Huang et al., 2015). The movement of a juvenile between child welfare program and justice systems, according to Huang et al. (2015), produces a higher rate of recidivism because the environment adds to prevailing factors (Barrett & Katsiyannis, 2015; Berger, Paxon, & Waldfogel, 2009; Huang et al., 2015). Researchers argued that previous youth arrest is positively associated with rearrests (Herz et al., 2012). Herz et al. (2012) further highlighted the number of crossovers between welfare and the justice systems is not equal by race, as African Americans experience this cycle of crossovers. Researchers stated that congregate or group care homes that provide around-the-clock housing for youth, including youth treatment facilities, residential group housing, juvenile detention centers, and mental treatment facilities, are linked to recidivism. Juvenile recidivism literature also indicates placement in group homes and frequent movement between the justice system and welfare housing is associated with higher risks of recurrence (Ryan et al., 2014).

Researchers in support of the juvenile justice literature stated that group homes are associated with negative antisocial behaviors, mental illness, neglect, educational problems, and violation of the law (Huang et al., 2015). Social scientists delineated peer grouping may be contagious and support the increase of rearrests as it provides an awareness of peer influence from bad to worse (Huang et al., 2015; Ryan et al., 2014). Researchers have addressed congregate care as housing that provides around-the-clock accommodation to peer groups, and as a location where peer-to-peer mentoring and meaningful leadership activities can manifest (Harrison, Lekies, & Arnold, 2013). Regarding congregate care homes, researchers have suggested this type of housing becomes a natural environment for detainees to influence one another leading to the likelihood of substance abuse, aggravated assault, burglary, and drug offenses (Ryan et al., 2013).

Researchers posited child abuse and neglect are significant risk factors that contribute to juvenile youth entering the justice system, which can result in rearrests. Continued youth offending results from a lack of parental monitoring, parental rejection, and a lack of positive family relationship (Clark et al., 2011; Ryan et al., 2013; nij.gov. 2016). Clark et al. (2011) concluded parental neglect, poverty, small income family, and single parenting create a challenging environment for adolescents, resulting in antisocial behavior, such as shoplifting, which can exacerbate juvenile recidivism. Researchers posited group membership predicts recurrence. For example, Ryan et al. (2013) stated youth encounter many challenges, such as internal and external problems. Domestic challenges include limitations of respective families, the level of education, parental

circumstances, peer-pressure from individuals or mutual friends, public profiling, and economic background (Collins, 2014). These factors contribute to juvenile rearrests. The challenges encountered in welfare homes and the juvenile justice systems compound and increase scrutiny by developing systems workers and welfare caseworkers, which can increase the risk of rearrests (Barrett & Katsiyannis, 2015; Ryan et al., 2013).

Child Welfare

The literature on juvenile delinquency has often documented maltreatment as a factor of youth antisocial behavior. Baglivio et al. (2016) argued a direct link exists to recidivism through welfare involvement. Baglivio et al. found child welfare placement has a significant adverse effect on White and Hispanic youth, and that investment in a safe environment at an early age can have a simultaneous negative, damaging effect. Childhood experience in a welfare environment can be traumatic as this environment may include neglect and abuse, which are direct factors that influence reoffending (Barrett et al., 2014). Social science researchers stated maltreatment, mental abuse, and traumatic youth experienced are linked to elements of rearrests (Baglivio et al., 2016). The U.S Department of Health and Human Services (2013) mandates background reports on congregate homes and encourages information sharing on all welfare occurrences (Barrett et al., 2014; JJDPA 2013; Walker, Bishop, Pullmann, & Bauer, 2015). Social scientists found maltreated youth have delinquency rates of 47% more than youths without any abuse experience (Baglivio et al., 2016). Children raised in a welfare involvement or with a history of congregate homes are less likely to receive community-based sanctions, and these children are more likely to be referred to secure locations because of the

susceptibility of environmental influence (Huang et al., 2016; Liverso, Bielby, & Hoelter, 2015; Voisin et al., 2017). Researchers posited that African American youth experience a high level of welfare and juvenile justice involvement at all phases of youth delinquency from arrest, rearrests, to sentencing (Huang et al., 2016; Voisin et al., 2017). Findings affirmed peer contacts may be a factor in recidivism. African Americans living in the predominantly low-income urban community have links to higher arrest. Using a logistic regression model, Voisin et al. (2017) found youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system are 2 to 3 times more likely to report mental health challenges than those not involved in the system (Amen & Lee, 2012; Bablivio et al., 2016; Liverso et al., 2015). Youth in welfare or congregate homes often face multiple cumulative problems (Barrett et al., 2015; Liverso et al., 2015).

According to recent studies, society maturation, development, neglect, maltreatment, and poverty are pathways to youth delinquency (Baglivio et al., 2016; Barrett et al., 2014; Godinet et al., 2014; Onifade et al., 2014). The degree of community adverse is more severe in Caucasian American and Hispanic neighborhoods than African American neighborhoods, as researchers argued that African Americans are less traumatized by childhood welfare experience (Barrett et al., 2014; Onifade et al., 2014). An extensive review of literature involving use of regression analysis reveals a positive relationship between cognitive environment and social influence (Onifade, et al., 2014). Many social scientists argued that environment and sociopolitical factors, including racism, and community maltreatment represent the growing link between substance abuse

and social control, which are factors that influence antisocial behavior (Ameen & Lee, 2012; Connolly et al., 2015; Racz et al., 2016).

Family Structure and Community

The influence of family structure and stability in the urban African American community is inevitable to youth delinquency and reoffending, according to Mbuba (2016). Mbuba argued the structure of both parents actively involves the control of their children's activities and represents a barrier to delinquent and antisocial behaviors (Ray et al., 2017). According to recent studies, a widespread acknowledgment exists that parenthood and stable marriages foster strong social bond (Byrd, Kahn, & Padini, 2013; Mbuba, 2016; Ray et al., 2017; Tapia et al., 2015). Callous and unemotional traits demonstrated by parents and a disorganized community have been consistently associated with severe aggressive and antisocial behaviors among adolescents (Frick, Thornton, Kahn 2014). These behaviors are directly related to recidivism and symptoms of mental health challenges. Researchers address parental corporal punishment as a link associated with negative activities affecting youth, because the parents' behaviors encourage aggression and offending. Researchers further posited that many demonstrations of corporal discipline by parents could cause psychological depression and distress. In a longitudinal study by Lansford et al. (2014), the researchers reveal corporal punishment was causation for antisocial behavior. Researchers have defined corporal punishment as the use of physical force to control a child's behavior (Lansford et al., 2014; Lapre & Maree, 2016).

Social scientists have highlighted the normative culture of African American use of corporate punishment, claiming it does not have a negative, adverse effect on youth development compared to other ethnic counterparts. Findings revealed that an authoritarian style of parenting is more prevalent and shared in African American families because it reduces behavioral problems. Researchers have also found African American youth can handle traumatic family experiences better than White adolescents (Lapre & Marsee, 2016). Theorists delineated that family structure is a significant factor in determining self-control and delinquency. Empirical research shows style of parenting significantly influences restraint (Lapre & Marsee, 2016; McKee, 2012). Recent studies support older research findings that associated parental neglect negates self-control. Social scientists and contemporary authors found parental monitoring was predicated on restraint for single-parent homes and not for organized and intact homes (Lapre & Marsee, 2016; Loeber, Farington, & Pete Chuk, 2013; McKee, 2012).

Researchers have addressed the use of polysubstance or drug use among African American youth and the result of offending (Raez et al., 2016). The extensive literature on drug use reveals African American youth are less abusive of drug use than White and Latino youth. Polysubstance use has been reported as a growing determinant in antisocial and behavioral problems (Mancoske & Edgerson, 2015; McKee, 2012; Raez et al., 2016). A conscientious agreement exists among social scientists that African American youth are more deprived in socioeconomic factors, as exemplified by poverty, broken homes, single families, and group homes and disorganized communities (Kang & Burton, 2014; Loeber et al., 2013). According to Kang and Burton (2014), several factors are associated

with and contribute to juvenile delinquency across all races. Structural factors include the high unemployment rate, poverty, and limited social and economic opportunities. Lack of efficacy and active community organizations and prosocial peer involvement are additional factors (2014). Another area of examination is family and personal experience with racial discrimination and disproportionate racial profiling. Few significant factors contribute to stressors that are associated with psychological and emotional trauma, resulting in posting traumatic stress disorder (Gabbidon & Greene, 2013; Kang & Burton, 2014; Mancoske, Ronald, & Edgeron, 2015).

Considerable evidence suggests perceived and experienced discrimination of racial profiling exists against African American youth, which parallels with many adverse outcomes. Such outcomes include symptoms of depression, low self-esteem, decreased psychological exuberance (Kang & Burton, 2014; Mancoske & Edgeron, 2015; McKee, 2012; Raez et al., 2016; Ray et al., 2017). According to Alexander, Entwisle, and Olson, low self-esteem and depression ultimately become the pathway to delinquency. Peer association between poverty circles for adolescent at home, schools, and in the neighborhood, is a link to poor performance in school and antisocial behaviors (Weaver & Campbell, 2015). Urban widespread poverty puts a lot of pressure on adolescents, as demonstrated through a low-income family structure. Social scientists revealed parental supervision and observation predict self-control and dysfunctional family structures. Adverse communities have a stronger control of the antisocial behavior of adolescents (Mathur, 2014; McKee, 2012; Tapia et al., 2014; Weaver & Campbell, 2015).

Criminologists stated institutional racism and profiling in urban cities results in minor offenses, which sidestep more serious neighborhood crimes but still count as arrest records for African American youth (Voisin & Kim, 2016). Consequences of adverse family structure and peer influence have a high association with recidivism (Kang & Burton, 2014; Lapre & Marsee, 2016; Mbuba, 2016; Voisin & Kim, 2016). Substantial evidence in the literature shows unstable family circumstances and association with peers are linked to reduced performance in school, violent behavior, and repeat offending (Berger, Paxton, & Waldfogel, 2011; Mallet, Fukushima, Stoddard-Dare, & Quinn, 2012; Raez et al., 2016; Voisin & Kim, 2016). Researchers stated stable family intervention and community school-based intervention are associated with youth not getting in trouble and improving self-control (Loeber, Farrington, & Petechuk, 2013; Voisin, Patel, Hong, Takahashi, & Gaylord-Harden, 2016). Delinquent behaviors include antisocial behaviors, regular absenteeism in school, lying, stealing, truancy, and vandalism. Through longitudinal studies, researchers further found that exposure to family and community violence correlates with adverse health issues, such as traumatic disorders and a range of psychological outcomes (Mancoske & Edgarson, 2016; Voisin et al., 2016).

Mancoske and Edgarson (2016) stated White youth are more likely to be indicted for drug-related crimes than African American youth, but African American youth are more likely to be incarcerated for the same act of substance abuse. Active community, family, and school-based intervention have shown to reduce juvenile offending (Lapre & Marsee, 2016; Loeber, Farrington, & Petechuk, 2013; Mancoske & Edgarson, 2015; Voisin et al., 2016). Evidence-based studies show a direct link between low-income or

unemployed parents, as this encourage lacks in supervision. Juvenile reoffending is not likely when total community dedication and family support exist (Mbuba, 2016). Lack of complete commitment by family members towards adolescents increases the odds of antisocial behaviors, truancy, disobedience, and dropping out of school (Mbuba, 2016). Teenagers who find themselves in dangerous predicaments with lack of family or community support are more likely to turn to peers for acceptance and support. Ultimately, this lack of support leads to anxiety and the development of other antisocial behaviors (Byrd, Kahn, & Padini, 2013; Chen, Voisin, & Jacobson, 2013; Lansford et al., 2014; Loeber, Farrington, & Petechuk, 2013; Ryan et al., 2013; Watson et al., 2015).

Considerable evidence suggests stressors are associated with fractured or unstable family structure and substance abuse. The link between delinquency, aggression, and substance abuse among adolescents increases the level of violent behavior, social expulsion, and recidivism (Raez et al., 2016; Ray et al., 2017; Voisin et al., 2016). The quality of parenting guidance that adolescents receive is another critical contextual factor influencing delinquent behavior. Hoeve et al. (2012) posit that a structured, warm parenting style is ideal for youth development. Researchers found that warmth towards adolescents is strongly conducive to resolving problems in childhood upbringing. Researchers concluded that warm parental supervision may be more important for reducing peer influence and delinquency (Frick, Ray, Thornton, & Kahn, 2014; Gabbidon & Greene, 2013; Kang and Burton, 2014; Ray et al., 2017; Waller, Gardner, & Hyde, 2013). Researchers found the experiences of racism, profiling, and disproportionate arrest are positively correlated with posttraumatic stress symptoms and with delinquency.

Findings further affirmed that considering structural factors, African American youth experience efficacy and manifestation of a fundamental factor. Racism may be elevating trauma symptoms of traumatic stress disorder with links to delinquency and externalizing emotions because of the association between experience and corporal punishment (Gabbidon & Greene, 2013; Kang & Burton, 2014; Lapre & Marsee, 2016).

Positive Social Change

The statistics in the research will commonly collect through interviews by asking open-ended questions. The results of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding juvenile delinquency recidivism in Fulton County, Georgia. The outcome of the research will also extend existing study that has previously conducted on juvenile delinquency recidivism by assimilating specific factors seeking data reflecting a predominantly African American youth and parole officers' perceptions as a utensil to predicting and controlling juvenile recidivism.

The benefits of this study will be that findings during this research may lead to a profound understanding and contribution of juvenile delinquency recidivism of African American youth in Fulton County. This study will also impact the knowledge of juvenile delinquency recidivism useful for local government lawmakers and juvenile justice parole department. This study will be beneficial to the juvenile justice professionals to expand effective programs that empower juvenile delinquents to become prosocial and self-sustaining. This research could help to develop a method for predicting juvenile delinquency recidivism among African American youth. This study could contribute to the community resources enabling positive social change.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

.....My purpose in this research was to explore the factors that both former repeat juvenile offenders and current probation officers in Fulton County, Georgia identify as influencing recidivism in juvenile offenders. Collecting and examining their responses led to common factors or themes. More African Americans continue to move toward urban areas, such as Fulton County, for opportunities and betterment of lifestyles (Brown & Albert, 2015). The upsurge of African American youth in diverse communities will continue to influence challenges of change (Hastings et al., 2011). In this chapter, I will present and support the research design. This will include the methodology, sample selection, recruitment procedures, data collection, and analysis plan. Finally, I present and discuss the ethical considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

The central phenomenon of this research study was the perceptions of former repeat juvenile African American male offenders and probation officers who work with juvenile delinquents in Fulton County. In this study, I explored this phenomenon by interviewing former repeat African American juvenile offenders from Fulton County and then also interviewing probation officers in Fulton County who supervise juvenile delinquents. Two central research questions guided this research study.

RQ1: What factors do former juvenile delinquents from Fulton County identify as having caused them to recidivate when they were juveniles?

RQ2: What factors do probation officers from Fulton County identify as causing juvenile offenders to recidivate?

There are three methodological approaches that a researcher can select for a research study: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research. McCusker and Gunaydin (2015) posited that a researcher must choose a research approach that best addresses the research problem, answers the research questions, and fulfills the purpose of the research study. For this research study, I used a qualitative research methodology and a generic qualitative research design to answer the guiding research questions. A qualitative research methodology is ideal for research studies when little is known about the research phenomenon (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Qualitative researchers seek to understand the perceptions, experiences, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes about a particular aspect, which allows them to use narrative data through the form of interviews to understand participants' perspectives about the phenomenon (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). After considering the purpose of this research study and the goals of the research study, the qualitative methodology is an appropriate research approach.

Quantitative research is best suited for research studies that seek to test research hypotheses, measure variables, and use numerical data to ascertain the answers to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The data collected for quantitative research studies include shallow data across a large sample of participants, which allows a quantitative researcher to generalize to a more extensive population (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Because my focus in this research study was to explore the perceptions of former repeat juvenile African American males and probation officers, I did not select

a quantitative approach for the research study. Mixed methods researchers use both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to gather detailed information about a phenomenon (Walton, 2016). Because I decided a quantitative approach was not an appropriate choice for the research study, I opted not to select a mixed methods approach.

The qualitative research approach has various research designs that a qualitative researcher can choose. Before selecting a multiple case study approach, I considered the generic qualitative and phenomenology as potential research designs. Generic qualitative research is a flexible research design that uses the strengths of other research designs to fit the purpose of a research study (Liu, 2016). As a result, this study design is well suited for research studies that do not strictly fall within one research design (Kennedy, 2016). Generic qualitative researchers seek to understand participants' subjective take on an external phenomenon, which is separate from phenomenology in which researchers aim to understand the internal aspects of an event through lived experiences (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). After careful consideration of the purpose of the research study, I did not select a generic qualitative research design for my research study.

Phenomenological research is a study design in which qualitative researchers seek to understand the essence of a phenomenon by examining the lived experiences of the event through the eyes of participants (Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological researchers use in-depth interviews to generate a process of reflection during the meeting to capture the breadth of emotions felt because of the lived experience (van Manen, 2017). Phenomenological researchers use thoughtful interpretation to create a vivid recreation of what the essence of the phenomenon was, as encountered by the participants (Duckham

& Schreiber, 2016). After considering the purpose and goals of the research study, I did not select this research design for the research study.

Case study research is an appropriate research choice for qualitative researchers who wish to understand a modern-day phenomenon in its real-world setting (Yin, 2014). By asking how and why research questions, case study researchers use various data collection methods to carefully examine a phenomenon not easily delineated from the surrounding context (Overland, 2017). For a multiple case study, a qualitative researcher seeks to understand the modern-day phenomenon through a variety of perspectives (Stake, 2013). Various case studies can involve use of separate groups of participants to carefully examine the phenomenon within its real-world setting while maintaining the integrity of each team's perspectives (Yin, 2014). After considering the purpose and aims of the research study, I selected a multiple case study approach for the research study. This study design provided me with the opportunity to explore the perceptions of former repeat juvenile African American males and probation officers about the factors that influence juvenile recidivism.

Role of the Researcher

It is imperative that the researcher not show any bias during data collection and analysis. In this study, I steered clear of any possible preferences. All information that derives from participants' interviews were thorough and precisely recorded and written on paper in addition to the use of digital recording instruments. As the researcher in this study, I did not have any supervisory role toward the participants because I was a peer teacher at one of the elementary schools in the district. As a fellow teacher in the same

school district, I reminded participants that this interview would not affect established relationship in any way. Also, I educated participants about their rights as human subjects to withdraw from the study at any time and that their identity would remain confidential.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The target population for this research study was former repeat juvenile African American male offenders and probation officers who work with repeat offenders in Fulton County. In this study, I used purposeful and criterion sampling techniques to select and recruit potential participants. By using both sampling techniques, I brought into existence purposefully selected participants who are knowledgeable about the research phenomenon using defined inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for former repeat juvenile African American male offenders are (a) must be older than 18 years, (b) have been involved in the juvenile justice system as a repeat juvenile offender, (c) reside in Fulton County, GA, (d) must not have outstanding warrants for arrest, and (e) are willing to talk about their experience as a former repeat juvenile offender. The inclusion criteria for probation officers who work with repeat juvenile African American male offenders are (a) must be older than 18 years, (b) currently employed as a probation officer who has worked with repeat juvenile African American males for a minimum of 5 years, (c) reside in Fulton County, and (d) are willing to talk about their experience as a probation officer working with repeat juvenile African American males. If potential participants fail to meet any of the above criteria, they were not eligible to participate in the research study.

Once the study received approval from Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB), I initiated the process of recruiting participants. I reached out to various districts through their respective superintendents and obtain consent to recruit members from GED, adult education, and night classes by passing out a recruitment flyer before and after school. After receiving approval from superintendents, I began passing out flyers before and after school hours at each respective school. To recruit probation officers who work with repeat juvenile African American male offenders, I requested permission and was permitted to post an invitation flyer within the employee lounge of the Fulton County (GA) Probation Office. During recruitment, I asked participants a series of screen questions related to the inclusion criteria, such as, “Are you over the age of 18?” and “Are you willing to talk about your experience as a former repeat juvenile African American male offender or officer who works with repeat juvenile African American male offenders?” After the research participants’ eligibility was corroborated, I scheduled their interviews.

The study enrolled a total of 10 participants for the research study, five former repeat juvenile African American male offenders from Fulton County and five Fulton County probation officers who currently work with repeat juvenile African American male offenders. Boddy (2016) conducted a meta-analysis of qualitative research and noted that for case study research, a sample size of 10 is an appropriate sample size to achieve data saturation. Braun and Clarke (2013) pointed out that for a small research study, a sample size ranging from six to 10 participants would be sufficient to reach data saturation. Yin (2014) asserted the quality of the data collected for a case study should

determine the number of members based on whether the case study research achieves data saturation or not. As a result, I chose a sample size of 10 participants for this research study. Data saturation occurs during the data collection process whereby no new information or themes emerge during the interviews, thus leaving the data saturated, with no new insights about the phenomenon under investigation (Braun & Clarke, 2013). If by the 10th meeting I have not achieved data saturation, I would recruit additional participants until I reached data saturation in the study. I did not have to draft other participants in twos, one from each group, to maintain even representation in the data, because data saturation was accomplished.

Instrumentation

In this study, I used two researcher-created interview protocols, two audio recording devices, and archival documents to collect the data necessary to answer the research questions. I created each interview protocol to focus on each group of participants, former repeat juvenile African American male offenders, and probation officers who work with repeat juvenile offenders. I tailored each interview protocol to gather information about the phenomenon regarding each group's respective perception. The interview protocol was submitted to a panel of subject matter experts for review and feedback along with a copy of the research questions. By having the interview protocol reviewed by a group of subject matter experts, this researcher made certain that each interview question pertains and gathered the appropriate information to answer each interview question. During each interview, the study utilized two audio recording devices to make sure that if one device fails to record, there was a backup. This researcher

obtained archival documents using a data usage agreement from a nonidentified organization. After receiving approval from the nonidentified organization, the study accepted de-identified archival data on juvenile delinquency recidivism that helped frame the analysis of the data.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The study collected interview data from both groups of participants using the two audio recording devices and interview protocols. Each team had an interview protocol tailored to answer the respective research question focused on their perspectives. The study took a total of 8 weeks to recruit, interview, and transcribe the interviews for all participants due to early planning, cooperation, and preparation. The study recruited participants during the first 2 weeks, conducted all ten meetings over a period of four weeks with two or three participants each week. The study spent several weeks to transcribe all ten interviews. The interview procedure that include meeting environment, set up and the interview discussion took an average of one hour and half per participants.

The first research question focuses on the perspectives of former repeat juvenile African American male offenders regarding the factors that influenced their previous juvenile delinquent recidivism. The study utilized the interview protocol unique to this group along with two audio recording devices, testing each device before the start of the interview to make sure each device functioned properly. Researcher also had extra audio recording device in place as a backup. The second research question focused on the perspectives of probation officers who work with repeat juvenile African American male reoffenders regarding the factors that influence juvenile delinquent recidivism. The study

utilized the interview protocol geared to this group along with the two audio recording devices in the exact manner as described for former repeat juvenile African American male offenders.

After the interview, researcher extended gratitude to each participant for their time and provided further background regarding the significance of their participation. Researcher debriefed participants after the interview and provided them with a copy of the informed consent form. During this time, researcher asked each participant if they are willing to review a summary of the findings after the study. Researcher then asked the participants who indicated their willingness to review the summary of the study for email address so that researcher may forward the summary of the findings to them. The study also notified participants that if necessary, researcher may contact them for a follow-up interview if both audio recording devices failed or if study have any additional questions not covered during the interview.

The study collected archival documents using a data usage agreement with a nonidentified organization about juvenile delinquency recidivism. Researcher will only use these materials to help frame and qualify the resulting analysis. The study estimated the time it will take to obtain the archival documents approximately three weeks from initial contact with the data usage agreement and final receipt of the de-identified data. The research study did not follow-up with the nonidentified organization as researcher transcribed the collected data and the reports provided enough report to frame and qualify the analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

This study analyzed all the data using Braun and Clarke's (2017) thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a flexible analysis plan that does not subscribe to a single research design, meaning a qualitative researcher can select the data analysis plan for a variety of research designs. Thematic analysis is a rigorous data analysis program that includes six distinct steps: (a) familiarization, (b) generating the initial codes, (c) creating the initial themes, (d) reviewing the themes against the data, (e) defining and naming the themes, and (f) writing the final write-up (Clarke & Braun, 2017). The first step of the familiarization process is to read and re-read the interview transcripts and documents to attain a good understanding of what members said about the phenomenon. This is a key step to bring a qualitative researcher into the mindset of identifying common and meaningful topics across the data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). After I was familiar with the data, researcher then uploaded the data into a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) called NVivo 11. Qualitative researchers utilize CAQDAS to manage robust qualitative data and organize the data analysis process (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

After researcher uploaded the interview transcripts and all related documents into NVivo 11, and Microsoft Excel, the study began the second phase of the thematic analysis, creating the initial codes. The study went through each transcript and document line-by-line and began identifying relevant words, phrases, and sentences that relate to the research phenomenon. Researcher then labeled these words, phrases, and sentences with a name that summarizes the content of each unique code. After that, researcher

coded every transcript and document, the study then had a list of codes that researcher used for the third phase of thematic analysis. The third phase, creating the initial themes, required the study to take the list of codes and examine the relationships that exist between the codes. These relationships formed the basis of how the codes are clustered together and given a preliminary thematic label. After the study have clustered all the codes, the clusters themselves were examined to assess whether any further clustering can occur. This process of merging and reassembling clusters continued picking up the threads until no further reduction is possible.

After the third phase of thematic analysis was completed, the fourth phase of reviewing themes against the data was completed. This process ensured that the themes capture the important aspects of the data that relate to the research phenomenon (Clarke & Braun, 2017). After reviewing the themes against the data and making sure the themes reflects the data, the fifth phase of thematic analysis was completed. The study labeled and defined each theme based on the content and relationships of the codes and clusters that made up each theme. After labeling and defining each theme, the final report of the findings was completed. This completed the thematic analysis process for the data.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

The establishment of believability of the results around the views of participants is credibility. The study checked for accuracy which played a formidable role in establishing credibility. The study checked to determine if its approaches are consistent and credible according to Gibbs (2007), who suggested reviewing transcripts to ascertain

that they do not contain any glaring mistakes or omissions during transcription. Because this multiple case study will utilize two different sources of data, the study also employed triangulation of sources.

Transferability

Transferability is the degree by which the sample population is reflective of a much more sizable or significant population. The participants for this study were derived from a sizable population of juveniles who had been through the juvenile justice system. In their work, and Guba (1985) delineated that transferability intends to give the benefit of allowing other researchers the opportunity to be able to transfer the assumptions, context, reference, and contents of the research to another situation. Social scientists argued the most important aspects of transferability are rich detail and thick description of the research setting, sample, data analysis, and precise results so that outside researchers can determine for themselves the extent the research study's findings are transferable to another context (Donges, 2015).

Confirmability

Donges (2015) described confirmability as the areas to which other researchers or readers can authenticate, confirm, or endorse the findings of the study. In many research settings, there is more than one researcher involved in a study; the researchers may serve as experts or chairperson of the committee and may play an active role in the education. The committee led by the chairman of the board, including a methodology expert, offer suggestions and guidelines to the researcher to keep the study on track. I was in continuous contact with the committee chairman during the entire study. The study

provided detailed methodological rendition, which enable the reader to decide confirmability, displaying which data and constructs of theories materialize from it (Moon & Blackman, 2014).

Dependability

According to social scientists, dependability refers to the consistency and reliability of the study outcomes coupled with the degree to which research processes are documented (Adams et al., 2014; Moon et al., 2016). The study allows outsiders to audit and comment on the study procedure, which should and will make research dependable and more relevant to ecological and conservational science applications that increases the confidence in the testing of evidence (Adams et al., 2014; John et al., 2015).

Ethical Procedures

After obtaining Walden University IRB approval, the study reached out to the nonidentified organization and present the data usage agreement. This document outlined the nature of what the study is looking for from them. Researcher maintained the safety of all documents. It is a binding agreement between the organization and the researcher. After the completion of the study, I locked the physical documents in my home office filing cabinet that only I have access to. The data is stored for a minimum of five years, per Walden requirement. After five years, the archival documents will be shredded for destruction.

For recruiting research participants, the study sought permission through a letter of cooperation from superintendents in various districts where a high school provides one of the three services: (a) GED courses, (b) adult education courses, or (c) night classes.

After the study receive permission to recruit participants, the study provided flyers to individuals both before and after school as well as post a flyer inside the classrooms. After potential participants reached out to me via email or telephone, the study asked each potential participant screening questions to confirm eligibility in the research study. If a member is eligible to participate in the research study, researcher asked him or her if he or she is willing to take part in the research study through a semi-structured interview. When participant indicates his or her willingness to participate, the study then scheduled the interview during a date and time that was mutually convenient. The study also asked each participant to provide his or her email address so that the study can provide a copy of the informed consent form, omitting those individuals who reach out to the study via email because the study already have an email address on file. For other people, the study attached a copy of the informed consent form.

Before the start of the interview, the study provided two copies of the informed consent form for each participant. Researcher reviewed the informed consent form with each participant and prompted each participant to ask any questions he or she may have. I then reiterated the voluntary nature of the interview and that if he or she provides consent now, he has a right to rescind that consent at any time. The study informed the participants of their rights as research participants and shared the risks associated with participating in this study, such as feeling stress related to sharing experiences as former repeat juvenile offenders. If a member decides to opt out from the research study, the study had planned to thank them for their time and consideration before destroying any data collected. All collected data from participants was stored on a password-protected

computer, which is in researcher's home office, that only researcher have access.

Researcher stored any physical documents, such as the signed informed consent form, in a locked filing cabinet also located in researcher's home office that only I have access to.

The study will store this data for a minimum of 5 years, as per Walden requirements, before researcher destroys the data. I will delete the electronic data on the password-protect computer and shred the physical documents.

Summary

In Chapter 3, researcher outlined the research study design and provided the rationale for selecting a multiple case study approach. I described my role as the researcher in the research study and described the data collection process. I semi structured interviews with two groups of participants, the first group being former repeat juvenile African American male reoffenders and the second being probation officers who work with repeat juvenile African American male reoffenders. The study obtained archival documents from a nonidentified organization regarding juvenile delinquency recidivism that helped frame and provide context to the analysis. The study analyzed all the data using thematic analysis and ensure the trustworthiness of the data through a variety of techniques and strategies. In Chapter 4, the study presented the findings of the research study, and in Chapter 5, the study discussed the findings as they relate to the literature.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In this chapter, I move from the methodology to the data analysis and present the results of the study. This chapter contains the findings of this research using the grounded theory to answer the research questions. I provide a detailed description of the data through a systemic manner and in-depth collection procedure using thematic analysis process to present the findings of the study. I also provide support that the analysis conducted was consistent with grounded theory methodology and how the analysis binds to the research questions. The process that I used to analyze transcripts from 10 individual interviews that I conducted to expose codes and themes. I used three levels of analysis: (a) open coding (b) selective coding, and (c) theoretical coding. At each stage of analysis, I used continual collation to filter the data until themes emerged from the data.

My purpose in this lived experience research study was to explore and examine juvenile delinquency recidivism, of African Americans in , Fulton County, Georgia. Included in the chapter are tables and figures that I used to present characteristics of codes and themes data, coupled with scenarios from individual interviews. I discuss the lived experiences and perceptions of five experienced parole officers who, at the time of the study, were employed by the Fulton County juvenile system and five African American adults. I listened attentively, to the exploratory audio recordings many times before transcribing the interviews for broad and exploratory analysis.

I have divided Chapter 4 into three sections to present the outcome of this study. The first section of this chapter includes the data collection process. Part 2 consists of the

results of the data analysis. The final section of this chapter consists of a discussion of the results of the collected data analysis. The study of the effects provides an illustration of statistics and the thematic analysis that identify patterns of the theme in the interview data.

Characteristics of Participants

I used purposeful and criterion sampling techniques to select and recruit potential participants. By using both sampling techniques, I made sure purposefully selected participants were knowledgeable about the research phenomenon using defined inclusion criteria. The participants had to meet the eligibility requirements for this study. To be eligible, participants had to be African American male adult reoffenders, and they had to (a) be older than 18 years, (b) have been involved in the juvenile justice system as a repeat juvenile offender, (c) reside in Fulton County, GA, (d) not have outstanding warrants for arrest, and (e) be willing to talk about their experience as a former repeat juvenile offender. The inclusion criteria for probation officers who work with repeat juvenile African American male offenders were as follows: (a) must be older than 18 years, (b) be currently employed as a probation officer who has worked with repeat juvenile African American males for a minimum of 5 years, (c) reside in Fulton County, and (d) be willing to talk about their experience as a probation officer working with repeat juvenile African American males.

If potential participants failed to meet any of the aforementioned criteria, they would not be eligible to participate in the research study. I interviewed 10 participants for the study. Appendix E and Appendix F indicate the participants demographics and

represent the requirements of participation as described in Chapter 3. To maintain the identity of participants, I labeled each participant using pseudonyms such as A1, A2, P1, and P2. I coded the data based on patterns, categories, and themes using Microsoft Excel.

All participants had his or her own individual perspective on juvenile delinquency recidivism, and they all shared common interest in the factors effecting juvenile delinquency recidivism in Fulton County, Georgia. To provide new insight into the phenomenology and to add to the body of knowledge on the effects of risk factors on African American juvenile delinquency and recidivism, I provided background information on each participant.

Data Collection

I posted an announcement flyer in the common areas and bulletin boards at Fulton County Public Library, two U.S. post offices, and one recreation center in Fulton County. The flyer includes information on how to contact me (Appendix D). I obtained data from 10 participants that included five active-duty probation officers and five African American adult males. I conducted the interviews at two locations, the Atlanta public library and the Fulton County juvenile justice building using a face-to-face interview format in a private room setting. I interviewed three female probation officers and three male probation officers. Due to data saturation, I submitted the first five interviews for data collection, comprising three females and two males. I conducted the in-depth interviews, and there were 10 open-ended questions for probation officers (Appendix H) and 11 questions for adult participants (Appendix G). The meeting lasted approximately 1 hour and half per participant. I listened to the audio recordings many times, read, and

reread the transcript to familiarize with the data. I coded all interviews manually during the open-coding procedure as I assigned preliminary codes to the data to describe the content of the data, and I searched for themes in the systems across all 10 interviews. I used Google Doc to transcribe voice recordings into Microsoft Word. I uploaded interview questions and responses into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. I also used NVivo 12 software, but I used the Excel spreadsheet for result submission. In the essence of establishing background information from all adult participants the study discussed upbringing and the welfare of home life as minors.

Interview Question 1

The first interview question was, “Can you describe your upbringing?”

A1 said, “My upbringing was good, my upbringing was very laid back very nice most of my whole family was A team, loving people, from a single parent.” A2 stated:

I have a difficult are bringing involving family friends’ teachers I fed like I was singled without a lot of my days as half cast and not really liked back then. I tried overcoming those obstacles by being a good person and being humble and try to continue to make friends and still it is hard.

A3 responded:

I grew up with nine sisters and brothers, really, it’s eleven of us but I grew up with nine in the house. My Mama, she was at work all the time, and we just be in the house make sure the house is clean before she gets there.

Basically, I grew up all right.

I presented a follow-up question to A3: “Did you grow up with your dad in the house?” He responded, “No my Dad died when I was young, but my stepfather was.” I asked A3 whether his stepfather was active in his upbringing: “Was your stepfather involved?” A3 shrugged, “From time to time.”

A4 explained: “Well I grew up kind of rough.” He continued: “I grew up kind of rough you know. Just a little kind of poor but you know it was sometimes when we had money and sometimes, we didn’t.” I asked a follow-up question: “When you said tough environment what do you mean?” His response was, “You know folks really dying everyday type junk.” He added:

Well folks my momma and I know, I was little back then type junk so I wasn’t paying attention to them. Let me see, so we were at the basketball court because it’s my basketball court. Then people get to shooting and people dying. Then we got a hell lot of running then you don’t have to worry about hitting the ground. Turn it up. Everybody running and going crazy. I was running around scared. I would I say was in elementary school like second grade.

A5 stated, “My upbringing was very rocky. Difficult and staying in urban area environment. The Hood as we say, but I would say it was rocky, other than that it was up and up, it was good but rocky.”

Interview question 2.

Can you describe your home life when you were a juvenile?

A1: “Summer camp, sister, a cousin, and myself. My home life was quiet, movie nights etc. family all time around.”

A2 :

I was the happy child there was some disturbances with my mom and my dad they argue a lot, that get me down and makes me feel a little bit down in my bringing, but other than that my own life upbringing was good; and my family we're still there for me trying to motivate me as they try to work out their problems. They try to make sure that I stay on the right path.

A3: “When I was growing up, I was always out of the house. I was always outside constantly away from the house just doing me trying to put some money in my pocket.”

A4: “I got a lot of them, brothers and sisters. We were getting whippings every day. Like I was bad, it really wasn't whipping, whippings but it was like punching and shit, Yeah getting punched.”

Follow up question: Were you the oldest child? “No, I'm the third oldest. Yes, and one of my brothers died though. He like just died. He had gone to the army.” participant further explained, “he wasn't at the base but he was driving ... he got on the wrong path”.

Question, is your dad still alive? “Not my biological father but my stepdad is still alive, Well he been with me since I was like 4”.

A5:

I'm the only boy in the house, I grew up in the house with nothing but girls, me just being around females as you know what I'm saying, the difficulty of being raised with no male figure around, I can say my mom did very well. I have three sisters. I know who my Dad was but he did not come around, he wasn't around until I was 16 or 17 years old almost at the end of my teenage years. He was not there the years you needed your dad, and your Pops at the beginning of your teenage years wasn't there. A lot of things transpired at that time I know who He was at that time but I didn't have a good relationship with him until I was 16 years old.

Interview Question 3

Can you describe your (time) involvement in the juvenile justice system?

A1: "Hard head, thought I was grown, uuuurh...my main involvement to the justice system was because of Drugs, and messing up."

A2:

It was the mixture of me wanting what I wanted being immature and even not learning how to wait for work at the same time, it is hard to find a job at the age of 15 14 217 why you're still in school especially when you're playing sports also. So that time when you have nothing wanting something, this game came out and at the time when you have nothing wanting this game that just came out and

also trying to go out with this girl to the movies it was a trigger, it is true that for me or any child will get in trouble.

A3:

The first time I got involved with the police I was stealing from the store. the police pulled up on us Family Dollar. over there on Campbelton Road. We were stealing from the store they called the police and we got caught.

Follow up question: A group of you all? “Yeah. They took us to the precinct and our parents had to pick us up. my mom didn't know because I didn't give them her number and she was at work. So, I went to juvenile.”

Follow-up question: How long were you at juvenile the first time? “I was only there for two days.”

A4: “We got caught trying to steal clothes out the mall. I would say about 12. I would say about 12 years old.”

A5: “The first time I got involved with the juvenile system I was like 14, got locked up for a stolen car.”

Interview question 4.

How did you do academically in middle and High school?

A1: “Middle school I was good, in High school I won't go.” Question: You didn't go to High School at all? “I won't go, I skip school.”

A2:

I think I did good in school I think I finished with a 2.7 or 2.8 GPA and the key is starting making sure you listen to your teachers and completing assignments even if you don't do good on all test make sure you do all the requirements so that you can have a passing grade.

A3:

I was doing good class work wise but I wasn't in class. I was always in the hallway of each school. In middle school, I was all As, but in high school I started skipping more and staying in the hallway and leaving school. Mom was working all the time.

Follow up question; What about your stepdad, was he working too? did he know you were skipping school? “Yes, he knew but he didn’t like them calling him so they usually call my mom all the time.”

A4:

I was a genius. I did really good in all the classes I went to. We used to do CRCT type junk and I excelled you know in all my test score. And I was excelling from elementary all the way up to high school. But um I was also doing dumb street type junk. We go out and stuff.

Follow up question: You, your friend or brother?

My brothers. Sometimes we would be chilling but we never really fucked with the gangs that type of junk. Somebody would say bad things to us and then we pipe up on him. It was for respect type of junk.

So, I would jump and fight him and beat him up. Then we would take their stuff, Yes, as in belongings..... Well in school yeah, that's what we would do to you it was just like that, you know. God Damn like I would beat you up and whatever you got it's mine now

Question: How old were you when you did any kind of drug?

First time I smoked when I was 12. But only type of drug I ever did was weed. But I popped a couple pills but I really don't do pills because it ain't my form of (DOC) Drug of Choice you see. I don't like higher up stuff.

Follow-up question: Where any of your friends also involved in delinquent activities?

"Yeah like I said enemies, too. It was all young folks be dealing with that junk. It was just young folks do."

A5: "For the most part, I was an honor roll student, what got me in trouble was my behavior I was labeled as a chronic disruptor, as far as grades, academically I was a smart student I was very smart."

Interview question 5.

Were any of your friends involve in delinquent activities? If so, did this influence you to engage in delinquent acts? Why?

A1:

Yes, Sir they were, they didn't influence me in any way, no because I have my own mind, I know what I want to do and they didn't influence me to do what I don't want to do, why? We were just Teenagers being juvenile.

A2:

Yes, sir peer pressure comes in, not even that in the process of not having money with no money and you want what you want but not even all the time. Just to have friends especially in bad areas friends persuade you to do a lot of things, but you don't want to hurt nobody.

A3: "Some of them not all of them. They wanted money in their pocket. I wanted money in my pocket. It's just what we all wanted to do."

A4:

Yeah, I'm not going to lie, because I would be chilling with them, and they would be like hey, bro, what you doing? and they be like let's go, I might as well do, that's because we don't have nothing else to do.

A5, "No not many."

Interview Question 6

Were you involved in any activities outside of school as a juvenile?

A1: "Yes Sir, Basketball, Football uuumhr ...sports that's basically it."

A2: "Yes, sir I played football and also in school."

A3: “We had a team in the neighborhood and I played basketball and in 7th and 8th grade. In 8th grade I got into a fight then they kicked me out.”

A4:

Yeah, we used to play manhunt and go to the YMCA and used to go to the boys and girls club. I used to go to a lot of shit, yeah all that junk I wouldn't say 6th probably about 7th, 8th grade. I stopped playing football like that. The only sport I stocked with playing was basketball. All the rest of that shit got cut out.

A5:

I was involved in sports nothing criminal just sports. Follow-up Question: Did they ever send you home from school? “Oh yes plenty of time, the most days I was suspended was 10 days like I told you I was a bad kid but I was smart I was sent home plenty of times.

Interview Question 7

Can you describe your involvement in the juvenile justice system?

A1: “It's basically sleep, sleep Nine hours, you get an hour out to eat that's basically what it is in juvenile.”

A2: "I learn how to control myself. They tried what they could to change our lives try to make us live well, I mean it help me."

A3:

They have a little program like a small class. You go to class after that we had lunch, we eat and do what you got to do. Me I stay out of trouble. When I got there, I met with my cousin we were just chilling, he was there for something else.

A4:

It was a lot of junk to do. It was really, really juvenile that shit was bad. Niggers was fighting and stuff and getting hit in the face with books. Yeah, they had classrooms. We weren't really learning shit". "I was 13 years old then."

A5:

The first time I was locked up for stolen car it was on a Sunday but by Monday evening I was back on the street, basically, it showed me that it was okay to get in trouble and that nothing is going to happen until you turn 17, when they send you to jail. if probably put up scared me but basically what it was saying that it was okay.

Interview Question 8

Can you describe the types of services (if any) that you received while in the juvenile justice system? Did these services help? Why or why not?

A1:

It's basically sleeps, sleep nine hours, you get an hour out to eat that's basically what it is in juvenile". That's their curriculum, that's what they do in the system, that's it, just sit around looking at TV and sleep, It doesn't help any.

A2:

There was a program called the workforce that's a program that will teach you places you can get jobs, where you can go learn different types of pay grades and degrees you need to work. in the juvenile system workforce, there was drug abuse class, and a class teaching you how to obtain your driver's license. It was nice thing for them to have for us especially to be away from home behind the doors it's something to stay out of trouble to think about. There you are sitting down at your bunker doing nothing.

Follow-up question: Did the services help? "Yes, they did, now I know how much a captain steering a boat makes for a living, I know how much they get paid."

A3:

they have a little program like a small class. You go to class after that we had lunch we eat and do what you got to do. Me I stay out of trouble. When I got there, I met up with my cousin we were just chilling, he was there for something else.

Follow up question: The first time you were in there for 2 days. How long were you there the second time? Response, "A week."

A4: "Yeah, they had classrooms. We weren't really learning shit."

A5:

Schooling, Schooling that's it. They teach you juvenile system is like daycare to me the juvenile justice system is like a daycare to me they feed you good, it's like a pat on the back and they send you home the services did not help me. Whenever you get committed or go to jail I'm just talking about Atlanta and Fulton County I don't care what you go to jail for, first-time offense, they let you out, they let you right out with that being said Fulton County Jail juvenile system is like a daycare center did not help me. The factor that people that work there, and the correctional officers are supposed to help you but unfortunately they are in for their salaries they are not worried about you go home they want you to come back into the system they're not there to help you. The system is set up for you to fail is not to help you.

Interview Question 9

After being involved in the juvenile justice system, can you reflect and describe what was going on that led you to reoffend? Why?

A1: "Just following the wrong crowd, not listening to no adult but nobody but me I want to go left but they wanted me to go right the road not taking basically it."

A2:

Opportunity and being a fool to take it or steal instead of remaining on the right track. Going through life you are going to learn increasingly you are going to become greedy and if you fall into it you lose your advantage around.

A3:

It was this one day I started arguing with my little brother over some little stuff. Then I got mad and just left out the house. He told my mom and I got mad and just left out the house. After that I met up with my friend. So, we went striking, and got caught.

A4:

We got caught again stealing out at the mall". Follow up question, what made you do the same thing? By then I had different friends. But yeah, I don't know...peer pressure? "I don't want to say it was peer pressure because I wanted to do it too.

A5:

Reflecting back when I first got locked up, I was back out so fast and everybody was saying that boy you just stole a car and you are back on the street, I really felt I was being held in the holding tank,

that made me feel immune and it made feel bigger than I was. That was the reason I went back.

Interview Question 10

Thinking back on this time when you did reoffend after being involved in the juvenile system, what do you think could have helped you to stay away from crime? Why?

A1:

May be if they have services when I was there the first time like somebody sit down with me and talk to me and tell me this, that and the other and how to go about, next, some kind of impact services for teenagers so that they can listen and study instead of looking at TV may be that could have helped.

A2: "Money from parents. Everybody needs just a little something to get by."

A3: "For me. I would just say stay in the house more. I was never in the house. My momma said I wouldn't be in any crime if I was inside. Listen to what my mom says."

Follow-up question, why did you not like staying home? Was your house too small ? too many people in there? Response:

We had a big house. It was just I didn't depend on my mom that much. I don't like asking her for money and she is telling me no.

So, I stopped coming home so I can get money myself.

A4: "I do not think family, could have prevented me from going back over so I didn't know about that. Probably having something to do."

Follow-up question: did you finish high school? You have your GED (General Educational Development)? “No, but I got a job though.” “Construction.”

A5:

I felt immune to the system if they have been rough on me the first time that probably would have scared me to learn a lesson. As a juvenile the system did not deter me after that I must have gone in 3 or 4 times.

Interview Question 11

What message would you give to current juvenile delinquents? Why?

A1: “Go to school, stay in school, get your education because your education is very important and you learn in the long run.”

A2:

Find extracurricular activities to do instead of plotting on people that are not trying to help you or trying to do nothing to help you out don't take from them or steal behind their backs and try to make acquaintances, try to find some work out there, it's always somebody need to do lawn work.

A3:

Listen to your parents because they are telling you stuff pay attention, listen to what they say and finish school. I lost my Dad when I was younger, I didn't really know him, I am glad I know

my mom wish I listened to her, I wouldn't be where I am now".

Question, so, did you finish high school ? "No, but I am going to get my GED."

A4:

I would tell them to stay on the right path but you can't really tell a young person to stay on the right path because I know what they really want to do but yeah try to stay on the right path.

A5:

I will tell them it is not worth it. Right now, it has changed since I was young. They are keeping track of your juvenile records it is going on files and they not closing it no more. The police are killing all black men now I tell them to watch it and be mindful, of their criminal records they're not being closed now they're keeping records and keeping it open it will hurt you, in the long run, I will tell them that. I will tell them it's a lot of things out there now that they can do.

The first adult participant interviewed described his upbringing as laid back and "very nice." Furthermore, P3 stated that although each individual is different, juveniles learn crime through their peers and their families. P3 also stated that family criminal history has a significant effect on juvenile delinquency. P3 explained that of all the juvenile cases that she handles, 85% or more have a parent, parents, or family members

who are involved in the criminal justice system. P3 referred to mental health and its effect on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, P3 explained that disorders such as attention defiance disorder (ADD) and anger management issues play a role in juvenile recidivism. P3 further explained that if there are identified mental health issues, the juveniles are referred to counseling and stabilized on medication if prescribed. P3, however, explained that in her experience, the juveniles do not receive the necessary services because the parents or legal guardians are usually not proactive and most often cannot afford the fees or fail to follow through. P3 stated that the parents' or legal guardians' failure is due to lack of financial resources.

Findings of the Interviews

Several key issues emerged from the interviews amongst them was a short amount of time African American juvenile delinquent reoffenders spend in the juvenile system. One participant responded that "The first time I was locked up for a stolen car, it was a Sunday, but by Monday evening I was back on the street..... it showed me that it was okay to get in trouble and that nothing is going to happen until you turn 17 when they send you to jail". The participant was twelve years old when He committed this offense. One of the earlier themes from this structured interview that emerged was when all participants were asked if they learn anything while committed in the juvenile justice system. A participant responded "Hell no"; Another response was "To me, the juvenile system is like daycare, they feed you good, and they send you home", the answer to this question was unanimous amongst all participants as probation officers concurred, casting

the blame on the short duration of the commitment. There were no surprises from all participants, as all were relaxed and willing to share their experiences.

The interview question on academic performance in middle and High school, all but one adult participant possesses a high school diploma, and two had obtained their GED. The question of a friend's involvement in criminal activities? The response was unanimous as interviewee said " yes sir, peer pressure comes in, in the process of not having money. To have friends in bad areas, friends persuade you to do a lot of things."

Another adult responder:

Yeah, I'm not going to lie, because I will be chilling with them, and they would be like, Hey bro. What are you doing? And they are like let's go; I might as well do, that's because we don't have anything else to do.

All adult responders were between 12 and 13 years old on their first arrest. One revealed, "I left home following an argument with my younger brother while my mother was at work. I got with my friends, and we got arrested stealing from the Dollar store". Participants submitted that not all their friends influenced their actions. As one puts it, "They wanted money in their pocket, and I wanted money in my pocket. It's just what we all wanted to do". All but one adult participant had a "rough" upbringing all grew up with single parents or with uncaring stepdads in the household.

Probation officers' interview was conducted on the same day, July 25, 2019. And the adult interviews were conducted from July 15 through July 29, 2019. My interview

discussion with probation officers revealed their perceptions through respective lived experience that accountability is a crucial factor in juvenile delinquency recidivism in the City of Atlanta. From the viewpoints of all participants, preponderance evidence of accountability through lived experience was mainstream. "Accountability. I think that's a major concern." was a response from one probation officer all initiating the same thing in many ways.

Well accountability I think with that if you have a child that comes in the system, he feels that nothing happened. And there are concerns of not completing the requirement or conditions of the juvenile court judge, and nothing happens to them, and the system still let them out of probation, not holding them accountable for their actions; there's nothing a probation officer can do.

Every probation officer has supervised over 150 African American juveniles. One recanted in response to question number 4, "in conversation with them, some of them are economics, some pretty much the home dynamics and school."

One should not underestimate the factor of parenting and environmental structure.

One of the officers responded that:

We are probably in our third generation of kids raising kids. A lot of the average parents now maybe 14, 15, years older than their kids, and trying to be parents, at that young age? And still trying to be kids, I think a lot that has to be the parenting.

Follow-up question to number 6, (Appendix H):

I think with the new media, social media, I think they are a prevailing factor that emanate within our young people. There are no opportunities. There is no money there is a sense of lack of it. The flip side to that is, it doesn't matter how you get your money as long as you get your money. I think a lot of our kids have attached themselves to that idea to sell drugs or steal cars. Whichever way you get your money, get your money. Long as you get paid it's okay.

He remarked that:

We have Criminalized being a teenager. They have a police person in schools. Teenagers get into fights, but now they carry guns, so it's a different level, but at the same time. I think it is more difficult nowadays to be a teenager because most of what they do I did. Like I say it has been criminalized. They have police forces in the schools, so there is that idea that as a teenager, you are wrong, I grew up making mistakes, but I was not criminalized for those.

Fulton County probation officers agreed that the justice system does not deter African American youth from reoffending, coupled with time spent in commitment. The order of the day leaves barely enough time to diagnose a child with mental issues adequately probation officers concurred.

Data Analysis

The research questions that guided this study were:

RQ1: What factors do former juvenile delinquents from Fulton County identify as having caused them to recidivate when they were juveniles?

RQ2: What factors do probation officers from Fulton County identify as causing juvenile offenders to recidivate?

This chapter includes data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and results based on the methodology outlined in Chapter 3. The coding process was done with Microsoft Excel and NVivo 12 software to assist in organizing and analyzing data. The study transcribed the interview data from a voice recorder into a Microsoft Word document. For simplicity, researcher use the table from Microsoft Excel.

Data Analysis – Descriptive and In Microsoft Excel Coding

Through the coding process, Researcher assign codes to all participants' response to the study's interview questions allowing the study to organize data into meaningful groups. Following coding, researcher was able to collate all the sections that fit into each code. Codes extract into broader themes that fit meaningfully into the research questions. The narrative from the interviews helps the developed frequency of systems and ideas. (Figure 1, Figure 2). These categories were created to explain the various codes that came from the data and to breakdown those codes to find emerging themes. A prevailing theme throughout the data was Accountability, deterrence, economics, environment, and family dynamics.

Adult Participant Responses

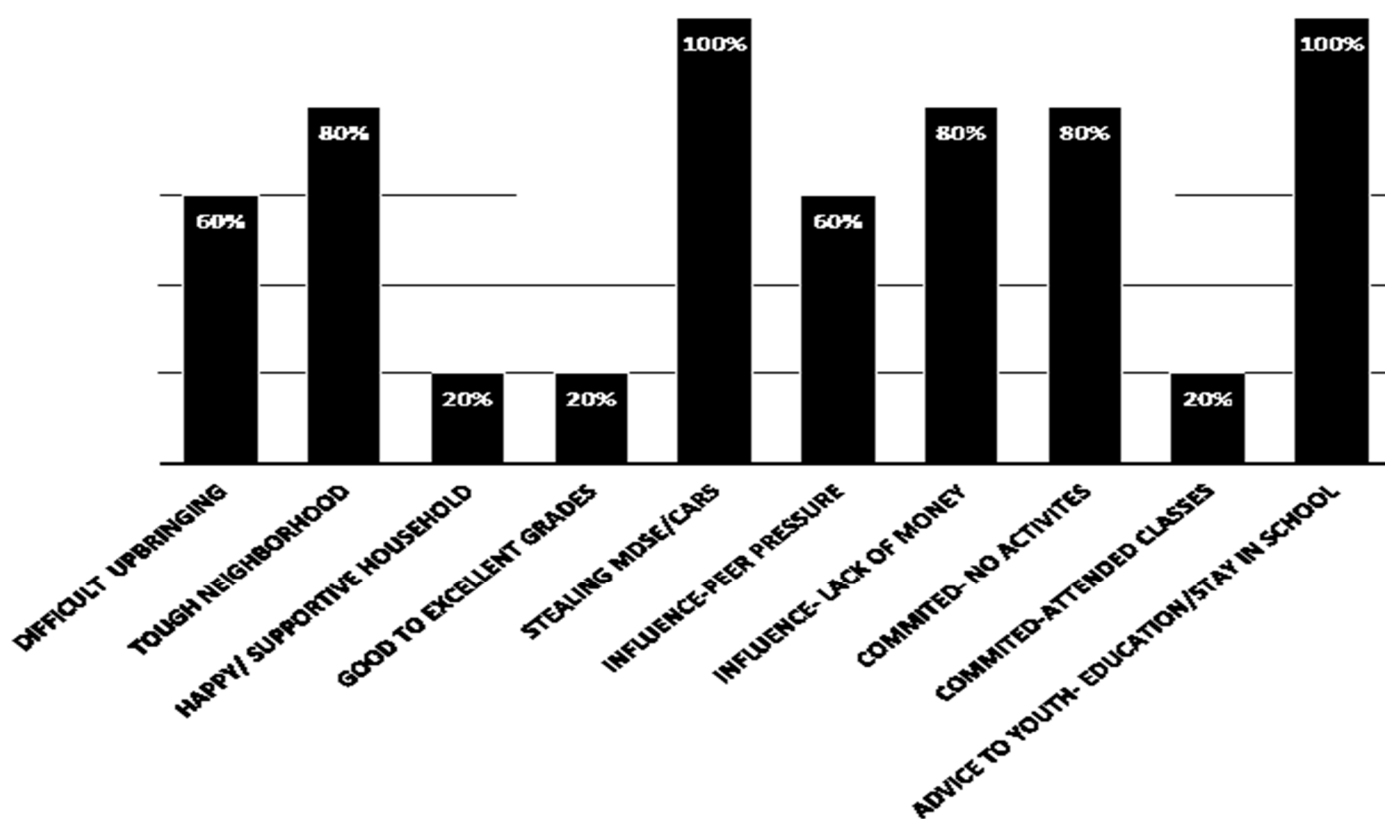


Figure 1. Adult participant responses.

Probation Officer Responses

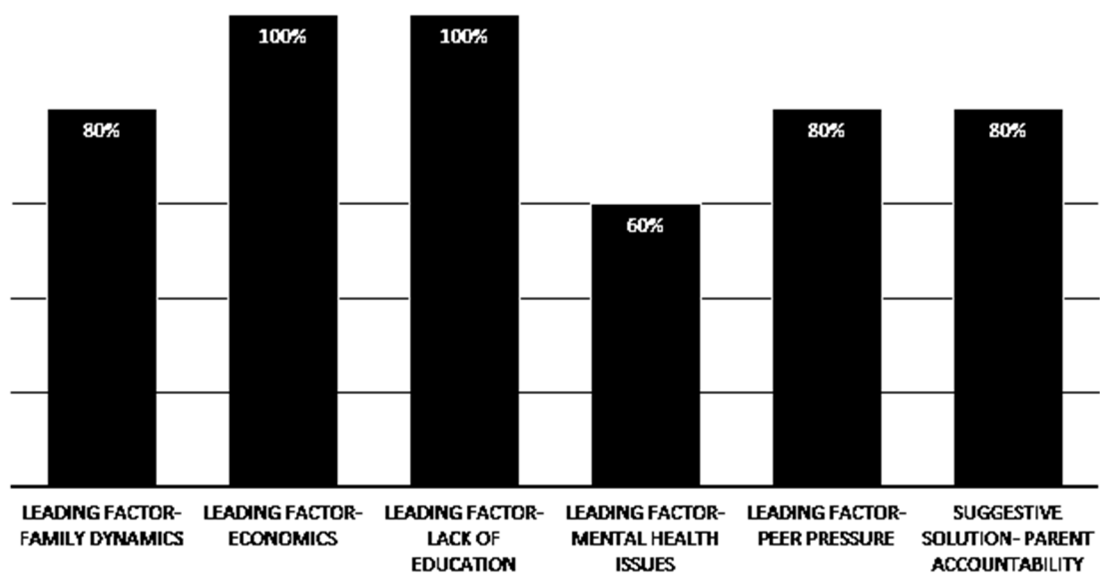


Figure 2. Probation officer responses.

Discussion of the Findings From the Interview Data

The findings of this study come from semi-structured interviews . The researcher had discussions with probation officers of the Fulton County justice system. And with African American juvenile reoffenders who are now adults; To bring into view their perceptions on juvenile delinquency recidivism in Fulton County, Georgia. Questions about recurrence as the focus of the interview. The findings from the interview data reveal that there are no deterrence and lack of consequence in the juvenile system, Accountability on both juvenile reoffenders and their parents. Results also show that the environment, money, and social dynamics are factors aiding reoffending.

Evidence and Trustworthiness

Careful transcription of the interviews was done, and afterward, they were compared with the recorded interviews to ensure their translations were thorough. Additionally, a constant review of the recorded interviews against the transcripts, in no less than four instances, confirmed the findings.

Summary

This chapter presented a comprehensive description of the data analysis procedures and results. The section provided an in-depth analysis of the participants' responses to the 10 Interview questions for probation officers and 11 questions for African American adult participants. I coded the interview transcriptions and then further analyzed the data for themes. The themes were then coordinated with the findings of the study. The results were reported back to backorder. While saving the data from the interviews, I used alphanumeric identifiers (i.e., A-1, A-2, P-1, P-2,) to refer to

participants when discussing their responses to the interview questions. A majority of the participants expressed all of the themes identified. The results indicated overwhelmingly that a lack of juvenile and parent accountability is a reliable indicator for juvenile recidivism. Social, environment, money, and family dynamics are indicative of factors for African American male juvenile recidivism. Commitment without deterrent repercussions will not curb reoffending. The results indicated that the current probation guidelines in the juvenile system are not successful, and suggestions for reevaluation and improvement in making the community a safer and better place.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

My purpose in this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and understand the effects of the risk factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate. I focused on the perceptions of juvenile delinquents, African Americans, who are now adults and probation officers of the Fulton County juvenile justice system in Fulton County, Georgia. My ultimate goal in the study was to gain a more extensive comprehension of the scope of which risk factors of economy, environment, family, education, and peer influence contribute to juvenile delinquency recidivism in Fulton County through the perception and lived experiences of participants. I interviewed five African American adult participants and five juvenile probation officers to collect data. In this chapter, I present my interpretation of the findings, limitations, recommendations for future research, and prospective influences on positive social change. Also included in this chapter are explanations based on the result from the review of the research data. Future benefits that this study may even provide to the juvenile justice system include prevention, intervention, and program execution.

In this study, I sought to understand what can be done to prevent these risk factors from the perspectives of probation officers and adult participants. The underpinning questions that guided this research were (a) What factors do former juvenile offenders in Fulton County identify as having caused them to recidivate when they were juveniles? and (b) What factors do probation officers in Fulton County identify as creating juvenile offenders to recidivate?

Few research studies have been conducted to examine the perceptions of this population relative to recidivism. The objective of the juvenile justice system is to rehabilitate juvenile offenders and impede recidivism. The community that I selected for this study is made up of African American male resident in the City of Atlanta who had experiences reoffending and Fulton County probation officers who are willing to share their experiences. I obtained permission to recruit for this purposeful and criterion sampling from the IRB and the National Institute of Health (Appendix A). I obtained permission to interview probation officers from the Fulton County juvenile court system (Appendix B). I recruited adult participants through flyers posted at the U.S. Post Office, Fulton County Public Library, and Fulton County recreation center (Appendix C).

In this chapter, I will present the following: the interpretation of the findings, limitations; prospective influence for positive social change; and recommendations for future research. In this chapter, I also incorporate explanations relative to the results of the review of the research data. Also included in this chapter is a discussion on what this study may provide to the community and the juvenile justice system during policy debates and implementation sessions.

Interpretation of findings

In this phenomenological qualitative study, I aimed to examine the perceptions of Adult African American males and probation officers of the juvenile justice system regarding the factors that influence recidivism among African American males. The findings were relative to the two research questions in Chapter 1. The study was supported by the collected and analyzed evidence. The outcome of the study and interpretations are part of

this section. I guided my study by using two foundational research questions and 11 interview questions for adult participants and 10 interview questions for probation officers.

Research Question 1

The first research question was, “What factors do former juvenile offenders in Fulton County identify as having caused them to recidivate when they were juveniles?” The motivating factors that drove African American juveniles to recidivate was a recurring theme in their answers. In this study, I was able to explore the perceptions of adult participants and probation officers. Peer pressure is one of the most contributing risk factors for juvenile recidivism. Results from this study ascertained and affirmed the literature review of the research. Researchers have posited that behaviors are learned within intimate personal groups. Thus, if youth associate with others who are engaged in problematic behavior, they will have more opportunity to become involved in that behavior and reoffend (Huang et al., 2015). Peer and environmental dynamics are two crucial factors that are noteworthy and significantly affect juvenile recidivism among African Americans. The result is consistent with social learning theory, which emphasizes that human behavior is learned by observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and psychic reactions of others. Ryan et al. (2013) explained that social learning theory and human behavior is a continuous mutual interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. Further, learning is observational and develops by imitating models. The weight of peers on problem behaviors may be stronger during adolescence, because of the increase in the amount of time spent with peers, the

importance of peer relationships, and more susceptibility to peer influence (Barrett et al., 2014). Likewise, Mbuba (2016) posited that deviant peer influence might account for severe antisocial behavior and reoffending for a minor during the child's transition to adolescence. Researchers affirmed that the relationship of peer rejection and acceptance into a group is a risk factor for juvenile delinquency recidivism.

The participants reported that juveniles mostly recidivate or reoffend through mutual association with their peers. Not only do youths learn crime from their peers, but they are also influenced by their peers to become engaged in delinquent behaviors. The interview data specified that the majority of the participants voiced that peer influence is one of the most influential risk factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism. The findings from this research interview questions are supported by previous literature as it relates to peer influence and the influence of criminal recidivism among juveniles. Peer pressure provides the main social context for adolescents, and peer influence is consistently one of the significant factors of delinquent behavior. The importance of delinquent peers happens in an uncomplicated fashion. Adolescents participate in negligent acts because of their friends' participation. The participants' responses supported the approach of both the social learning and social bond theories in which the absence of a positive social bond among a chaotic environment, which ultimately lead to criminal activities culminating in commitment in the justice system. However, according to literature, when juveniles form relationships with deviant friends and become attached and committed to deviant peers, they are likely to become involved in delinquent behaviors. Time spent with deviant

peers increases offending behaviors by providing skillful ways to abnormal behaviors and motives to committing crimes.

Research Question 2

What factors do probation officers from Fulton County identify as causing juvenile offenders to recidivate? The environment is yet another significant theme that emerged from the structured interview that includes a community environment. The physical setting of placements, foster homes, or group homes and the services and level of care offered to each minor. Returning back to the same disparaging environment following commitment is a factor in African American juvenile delinquency recidivism, this was echoed in the structured interview questions to all probation officers. A positive tie with communities, for example, with churches, teachers, coaches, and other community organizations, could reduce recidivism. The data also revealed that more resources, such as increasing community partnership with a more faith-based entity, implementing parenting, and family educational programs on how to deal with their at-risk juveniles.

Economics also emerged as a significant theme in the findings. Collected data revealed that a lack of financial resources is a significant setback in the confrontation to abort factors affecting African American juvenile delinquents' recidivism. For example, participants expressed the lack of money as a significant challenge for purchasing minor things from neighboring stores. Probation officers all affirmed that economics is a significant theme of recidivism. For example, most of the affected families are unable to afford to counsel; when juveniles are unable to receive counseling or medication,

juveniles result in self-medication, which invariably results in drug abuse. All adult participants started using drugs at the age of 12.

Family dynamics emerged as another focal factor to African American juvenile delinquency recidivism. Unstructured home life and a lack of parent involvement lead to unstable youth and contribute to lousy conduct culminating in juvenile delinquent recidivism. The adult participants reported that social bonds formed with parents are most important in reducing recidivism among African American juvenile delinquency recidivism. It became clear that the participants in this study are all from single parents and are concerned about their Mothers. Adult participants discussed the essence of not asking mom for money of which she does not have, result in deviant, delinquent behaviors. The positive parent-child bond is most significant in reducing African American juvenile recidivism, as the parents are the juveniles' first love, mentor, and most significant influence. This finding supports the literature review that children's positive attachment to parents deters anti-social behavior because children who are close to their parents imagine their parents' reactions to misconduct when temptation arises. Based on the participants' experiences, juveniles with strong family support, positive community ties, and staying in school usually counteract African American juvenile delinquency recidivism.

Education also emerged as a significant theme in the study. All but one Adult African American participant has a high school diploma; the rest other participants had dropped out of school. Not attending school was also revealed as another risk factor that hurts African American juvenile delinquency recidivism. Previous studies have suggested

that poor academics and the lack of participation in school activities have increased the likelihood of deviant peers. School engagement, such as participation in school activities, positive emotional disposition, and motivation to invest in school tasks, reduce school problems, and general delinquency.

On the other hand, adolescent's school failures and lack of engagement increase the likelihood to associate with deviant peers. This finding is consistent with the literature review. Association with dubious peers without positive engagement increase bad behaviors leading to criminal activities. Researchers submitted that strong bonds that children have with their parents and schools discourage delinquency recidivism during adolescence. The obligations to education associated with a lower risk of arrest and the lack of parent-child bonds do influence African American juvenile delinquency recidivism. When the parent-child bonds are weakened or broken, juveniles tend to rebel offending behaviors start to matriculate. Through analysis of the interview data, I concluded that education, economics, peer influence, environment, family dynamics, and substance abuse, respectively have a significant impact on recidivism among African American juvenile delinquency recidivism. In order to counteract these risk factors, it is revealed that early intervention, such as counseling and more resources, needs to be implemented.

The collected data revealed that juveniles are committed into the juvenile justice system without adequate time to serve as a deterrent or to diagnose for any health themes before recommending counseling, or treatment as juveniles are released back to their

Mothers, back to the same environment invariably heading to the continual recurrence of anti-social conducts and recidivism.

The second phase of the research interview question to the probation officer's discussion focused on the influence of social bonds to reduce recidivism among juvenile delinquents. The emergent theme of family dynamics was unanimously paramount in response. Responders submit that because of the lack of positive family support, and the urge to belong, African American juveniles are more susceptible to their peers. They are easily influenced by their peers to become engaged in delinquent behaviors. African Americans juveniles who reside in low-income urban communities have links to and susceptible to peer pressure likely to departing from good, acceptable behavior. Voisin et al. (2017).

The participants ascertained that the first juvenile's stay in the juvenile justice system is relatively too short before being released back to the same environment and peers. Only one Adult participant affirmed that rehabilitation in the juvenile justice system was somewhat helpful. The interview data identify that all participants ascertained that peer influence and neighborhood or environment dynamics significantly impact African American juvenile reoffending. The research study concluded that due to the lack of productive family support aid, anti-social behaviors and the social cognitive theory explains that children learn from their environment. The attitude to belong, the lack of positive models, juveniles are vulnerable to their peers and are influenced by their peers to become occupied in delinquent behaviors. (Ameen & Lee, 2016; Barnett et al., 2016; Huang, Ryan, & Rhoden, 2016; Maguire-Jack & Wang, 2016; Clarke, 2015). Based on

their lived experience, knowledge, and observation, participants in this research study reaffirmed that peer influence and environment had a remarkable effect on juvenile recidivism in Fulton County, Georgia. The ultimate findings from this study research questions are reinforced and supported by previous literature as it connects to peer influence and environment dynamics in juvenile reoffending in Fulton County, Georgia. Through active social learning, youth social behaviors are shaped by numerous factors; the home environment is the most significant factor (Barnett et al., 2016).

The influence of peers and environment dynamics is uncomplicated by examining the shared sociodemographic behaviors regarding repeat juvenile offenders, through social construction framework participants were able to construct subjective meanings of their experiences. Juvenile attracts delinquent acts because their friends and family member are on the same pathway. The participants further reinforce the approach of social learning and anti-social behaviors through peer influence (Gallupe et al., 2015; Levrso, Bielby, & Hoelter, 2015).

A larger goal of this study is to synthesize the knowledge about juveniles and Recidivism within Fulton County, Georgia with research and theory on delinquent behavior. The review utilized the social cognitive approach (Maguire-Jack and Wang, 2016). The case that negligent conduct is learned helped to frame this study on environment and peer influences on juvenile recidivism. The survey established one out of all five adult participants has a high school certificate. The rest were high school dropouts. Remarkably, this study will submit that academic performance or school environment has a significant role in delinquency and recidivism, extensive literature

review affirmed this connection. The study revealed that not all probation officers are passionately committed to the success of all juvenile delinquents or are committed to doing the work that requires success in rehabilitative programming.

This research study aimed to uncover adults' African American perceptions of factors relating to juvenile delinquency recidivism and the programs serving them. Included in the survey are the Juvenile Justice probation officer's opinions that contribute to juvenile recidivism and, in particular, to its prevention. The specific focus was on programs for juvenile offenders in Fulton County, Georgia and how those interventions operate to inhibit recidivism according to perspectives of lived experience. To this end, the research study conducted ten qualitative interviews. It is imperative to reflect on the influence of arrest or programs in commitment for juvenile offenders and the effect it may have on African American juvenile recidivism. The findings in this research demonstrated a lack of connection between corrective programs, put in place in the commitment, but inhibit juvenile delinquency recidivism. The Adult participants viewed the programs in commitment as being too lenient inhibiting rehabilitative interventions for juvenile offenders. While the objective of the juvenile justice system is to rehabilitate young offenders and inhibit reoffending, the initial short-term commitment programs could use some adjusting; the plans could be refined to be more productive and to better serve the delinquent juveniles in Fulton County.

The programs and what transpired in commitment following arrest themselves may have some factors responsible for the recidivism that occurs among African American juvenile reoffenders. The nature of these programs and the dedication to

service from probation officers toward the success against juvenile delinquency recidivism may not be underestimated. It must be stated that part of this problem is connected to the fact that juvenile offenders are sent to commitment following an arrest for the shortest span of time. The system and Individuals who work in these programs do not seem to look farther than parental shortcomings or trouble-making peers for the social context of juvenile delinquent reoffending. However, minimal deterrent programming of a substantive nature intended to promote lasting or effective change in the behavior of juvenile reoffenders themselves should be provided. The study asked the interviewees in their discussions what is their perception of the programs slated to deter or support effective rehabilitation?, The interviewees responded overwhelmingly that programs in commitment are a comparison to sitting in a waiting room, of an established organization and watching television. This study will submit that it is not only what these programs are doing but also what the programs are not doing in terms of deterrent programming for juvenile offenders that may influence recidivism. Revolving-door rehabilitation programs anticipating the return of a delinquent youth is not acceptable, these areas merit attention. It is not necessary to rearrests African American juveniles for the sake of pilling up arrest records, instead use proven methods to take the time and evaluate the needs of juveniles that are delinquents. The process will ensure that upon release from a program, they have received the assistance they need and deserve to be a productive citizen.

The Literature review maintains that delinquent behavior is acquired behavior. In discussion with probation officers, negligent behavior may be absorbed through exposure to lifestyles of family members and in peer groups as well as through media, all of which

offer "positive" models and images of such behavior. Of behavior. The study postulate that the quality and amount of time a delinquent juvenile spends in initial commitment may be an essential factor in reducing recidivism. I submit that it is not only what these programs are doing but also what the programs are not doing in terms of programming for juvenile offenders that may influence recidivism. Revolving-door rehabilitation scheme cost the community lots of money and manifest criminal records for youth that deserve rehabilitation. It is obligatory to evaluate the needs of juveniles to ensure proper diagnosis that upon release from a program, they have received the assistance they need and deserve to be a responsible citizen.

The five central themes of this study provided significant insight into how the adult participants described their lived experience in the justice system. Numerous warning signs identify anti-social factors of potential reoffenders. Some of these examples are juveniles cutting classes and struggling in school, lack of focus, or unable to pay attention both academically and with anti-social behavior. The lack of positive attention from parents or caregivers will elevate youth to a higher risk for delinquency recidivism. Skipping classes and a lack of positive role models may lead to dropping out of school before graduation. Kids have a far higher propensity for being rearrested than those who elect to remain in school. This study points out that through background study and the review on existing literature that lack of parental involvement and intervention, youth are prone and even more at risk for delinquent anti-social behavior, especially when the interest to stay in school and academic performance begins to deteriorate.

Emotional support from family or positive family dynamics is an integral part of counteracting juvenile delinquency recidivism. They are based on interventions from both juvenile offenders, parents, and key individuals in the family. The justice system should require accountability and provide adequate training before release. The idea is to assist with family functioning by strengthening family ties as well as improving social and communication skills between all parties, which can significantly increase the likelihood of emotionally supportive relationships and decrease subsequent reoffending. A weekly one-on-one session with youth and a counselor after release from commitment will reverse specific frequent transitions. Fulton County's juvenile justice system could implement the idea for troubled youth to discuss their frustrations with regards to their disadvantaged family dynamics and assist them with constructive counseling generating a positive outcome.

This study reiterates as a literature review posited that a relationship exists between environment dynamic and the likelihood factors of juvenile delinquency recidivism. Higher levels of neighborhood support decrease the likelihood of rearrests and commitment. Juvenile justice agencies can use these findings to implement community-based anti-juvenile reoffending programs that can help lessen cumulative youth community crime. It is highly essential to address issues that create anti-social behavior for African American juveniles that results in reoffending. The broader social context is the mental factor that the juvenile justice system can address through early diagnosis while in commitment. Provision of work-study incentives where youth are rewarded with coupons to purchase minor items for good behavior can be made to

provide juveniles with tools needed to effectively change their responses to negative factors in the social environment that contribute to offending and reoffending. Such interventions would make positive steps toward improving outcomes for juvenile offenders and those who work with them in Fulton County.

These findings supported that the social control theory could explain juvenile recidivism. For the social control theory to be effective, there must be an inverse relationship between the degree of attachment to conventional society and criminal propensity because social bonds correctional programs can achieve through interactions with family and friends, parental monitoring. A positive school environment, coupled with parental supervision and engaging in school activities, positively leads to good social bonds. When youth are not in a positive relationship with society, they are more likely to commit crimes and recidivate in the future.

The probation officers' discussion that centered on juveniles internalizing problems with media messages also followed the logic of juvenile delinquency as learned behavior. In general, the Adult participants in this study level to many of the factors identified in the research literature as influencing juvenile delinquency and recidivism. For misconduct, contributing factors include poverty, community and neighborhood dynamics, families, and peer associations. Early release of juveniles from rehabilitative programs, must be rectified. Programs should encourage focused youth developments coupled with cohesiveness among staff members. Remarkably, probation officers affirmed that academic performance or a positive school environment has a significant role in delinquency and recidivism. The number of school dropouts lack of education is

puzzling, given the fact that many of the interviewees stated that they dropped out of school and still awaiting GED certification.

The study already noted some of the problems with the short time juveniles spend in rehabilitative programs in Fulton County, suggesting their release is too soon in the sense that youth leave programs before they internalize the intended changes in attitude and behaviors. The lack of cohesiveness of program staff is a complicated issue. Part of the problem has to do with the degree of allegiance the staff members put forth to the job. There are staff members who are working more to receive a paycheck than to have a vital role in juvenile offenders' lives.

Given the crucial shift in the juvenile justice system from punitive punishments to rehabilitation, staff must be committed to strategies for rehabilitation with the overall goal of improving outcomes for the juvenile reoffenders in , Fulton County, Georgia.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations in every study (Braun & Clarke, 2013). One limitation of this study was that participants are limited to specific standards. Participants are limited to African American repeat juvenile offenders, and probation officers who work with African American repeat offenders' place bounds on juvenile offenders and the research. The process limits the potential transferability of the research study's findings to other populations, social settings, geographical locations, and cultural contexts. The credibility of the research study's findings is limited to the extent that participants are honest and truthful in their responses to the interview questions.

Another limitation of the study was the sample size; this study was limited to only ten participants from Fulton County, Georgia probation officers. I collected the data in this research study from this homogenous sampling group; therefore, the results may not generalize to all juvenile offenders, as the data collected was from only one area of the United States.

Recommendations for Further Study

The first recommendation would be to replicate this study in different settings. This study conducted (2019) suggested that further research is needed in the area of risk factors related to African American juvenile delinquent recidivism in the population. Some recommendations for the new study would be to follow up with the current findings for further validation. A suggestion would be to conduct further research in the area of special education services as a risk factor. Another area of new study would be a focus on mental health as a risk factor for juvenile recidivism. Another recommendation would be to train probation officers that the ultimate goal of the justice system is to discourage reoffending, and proper minimal job placement training will help to alleviate financial stress on the low-income delinquent juveniles. Training probation officers on family dynamics and counseling are imperative. If possible, it would be ideal for future researchers to talk to the parents of juvenile delinquents who are recidivating and hear directly from them what is not working and what can be done to help them succeed. Since juvenile recidivism is such an important topic, it is also recommended that future research be conducted using a larger sample size. The larger sample size will allow for the results to be generalized to the overall juvenile population. It is vital to continue to

research the topic of juvenile recidivism. It may take time for changes to occur, but modifications and revisions must continue to be made to the current system until the desired outcomes are achieved.

Implications

The findings of the research study have practical implications for professional practice. The targeted populations that can benefit from these results are specific groups of individuals. These findings can help juvenile judges who are in charge of sentencing minors for their criminal acts. They can be mindful about the success rate of each placement and the likelihood of the youth recidivating. Furthermore, the findings can help probation officers and social workers of the justice system. This study can assist juvenile delinquents' parents through perceptions of their siblings. Based on the findings, the parents will know how significant their involvement is in their children's success. Parent involvement is not limited to biological parents; it can include but is not limited to guardians, foster parents, and grandparents. Parent involvement includes any adult who can pose as a positive role model and provide mentoring and guidance for the youth. Most importantly, these findings indicate that a change is necessary to help lower juvenile recidivism. This study will help guide the critical decision-makers in the juvenile justice system to look at the current policies and procedures and make changes accordingly. Not only do the results identify parts of the system that are not working, but the findings include suggestions for program improvement. The creation of more community resources, parental and family support and the implementation of transitional pieces of training for the youth are some ideas that were suggested to help reduce

juvenile recidivism. Additionally, families could benefit from understanding better and utilizing more positive strategic methods when working with their juvenile delinquents. Participants in this study shared their experiences at home and in the juvenile system. The probation officers also provided their insights on strategies that could be implemented to reduce recidivism among this sub-group of juveniles. Moreover, the results of this study may assist policymakers in implementing and or modifying treatment, prevention, and intervention programs to provide services based on an individual juvenile's need.

Conclusion

One of the most severe problems in society today is juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. Though juvenile arrests are decreasing, juvenile recidivism continues to increase. Various risk factors predict recidivism among juveniles. To continue to counteract contributing risk factors, researchers must continue to explore these factors with different variables to obtain new results and to identify "what works and what it does not work" about reducing recidivism. Future research should involve participants of a larger sample and from other regions of the state of Georgia. Understanding a more in-depth effect on the risk factors regarding recidivism among the subgroup of African American juveniles, the study utilized a theoretical phenomenological approach to examine the perceptions of probation officers in the juvenile justice system on juvenile recidivism.

This research served its purpose in filling the gap in the literature by indicating that environment dynamics, family economics, substance abuse, school experiences, peer influence, and probation officers' training have a significant effect on recidivism among

juvenile offenders in the African American community. Overall, to effect positive social change, this research may assist the field of juvenile justice in implementing, modifying, and improving protocols for intervention strategies that are geared toward counteracting the risk factors and their influence on recidivism for juveniles of African American youth in Fulton County, Georgia.

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Appendix A: Letter of Cooperation

Presiding Judges
[REDACTED]Associate Judges
[REDACTED]Chief Administrative Officer
[REDACTED]

JUVENILE COURT OF FULTON COUNTY
 Judge Romae T. Powell Juvenile Justice Center
 395 Pryor Street, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30312-2713
 Phone: 404-612-4402

January 28, 2019

Dear Mr. Olateru

Please receive this letter as confirmation that you have been granted permission to conduct the study entitled *Exploring Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta* within Fulton County Juvenile Court. As part of this study, I authorize you to conduct interviews with Juvenile Probation Officers. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that Juvenile Court's responsibilities include providing room to conduct the interviews. Further, Juvenile Court understands that you will not be naming our organization in the to-be-written doctoral project report that is planned to be published in ProQuest. As discussed, we reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve this research and that this plan complies with the Juvenile Court's policies.

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

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
 Chief Administrative Officer
 Fulton County Juvenile Court

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form (Probation Officers)

Informed Consent Form (Probation Officers)

My name is Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi, I am currently a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am now working on my dissertation entitled "Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta." The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate and what can be done to impede risk factors from the perceptions of probation officers who have experience working with juvenile delinquents, coupled with juveniles who have experienced recidivism. I am the sole researcher on this study under the supervision of Dr. , Ph. D. The examination will consist of an interview approximately one-hour long and will be audio recorded. Before committing to participate in this study, you will be given the opportunity to review this informed consent form.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate and what can be done to impede risk factors from the perceptions of probation officers who have experience working with juvenile delinquents, coupled with juveniles who have experienced recidivism.

Procedures:

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be required to bond by the following:

Participate in the face to face, audio recorded interview for approximately one hour in a private, reserved room at the Fulton County Public Library about your experience working with juvenile delinquents, identify any collaboration with different agencies that will benefit the research. Your perception of juvenile delinquency recidivism, lack of services or what could help the reduction of juvenile delinquent recidivism.

Here are all of the questions that I will ask you:

1. How long have you been a juvenile probation officer?
2. Approximately how many juvenile delinquents have you supervised on probation in your career?
3. Can you describe your education and training for dealing with delinquent juveniles?

4. In your experience, with regard to juveniles who recidivate after being involved in the juvenile justice system, can you describe the various factors that seem to contribute the most to their reoffending?
5. For each of these contributing factors, can you describe in detail why they contribute to the juveniles reoffending?
6. Do you have any suggestions on how to better address juvenile delinquency recidivism?
7. Why do you believe that your suggestions will be effective?
8. For juveniles who do not recidivate, what factors seem to contribute the most to keeping them out of trouble?
9. Why or how do these factors keep juvenile delinquents from recidivating?
10. In your experience, does juvenile recidivism tend to lead to adult offending?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. The researcher will respect your decision to participate or not participate. If you decide to join now and later decide to withdraw your participation, the researcher will adhere to your choice. During the interview, you can refuse to answer any questions if you choose. You are also free to stop the interview at any time should you become stressed or uncomfortable.

Risks and Benefits of Participants in the study:

For risks, you may feel fatigued at the end of the one-hour interview. There is no anticipated direct benefit to participants. The benefit from this study will be that information obtained during the research could lead to an in-depth understanding of the impact of risks factors on juvenile delinquency recidivism in Atlanta. This study may initiate effective programs that will enable lawmakers and the community for a significant social change, to impede juvenile justice recidivism. The results of the study will be emailed to all participants.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for your participation in this study

Confidentiality:

Any information obtained for this research will be kept confidential. The report will not be used for any other purposes outside of the study. Your names or any other personal identifiers that could identify you will not be included in the study.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions now regarding the study. You can also contact me if you have questions later at 1-404-000-0000. You can also contact my dissertation chair with questions at @mail.waldenu.edu. A copy of this form will be provided to you. You can also contact Walden University's Research Participant Advocate for questions you may have about your rights as research participants @ 1-800-925-3368 ext. 312-1210 from within the USA, or 001-612-312-1210 from outside or email irb@mail.waldenu.edu.

Statement of Concern:

I have read the above consent form and understand the contents well enough to decide about my involvement. By signing, I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form (Adult participants)

Informed Consent Form (Adult participants – former juveniles)

My name is Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi, I am currently a student at Walden University. I am currently working on my dissertation entitled “Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta”. The purpose of this study is to look at and understand why juveniles commit crimes after being involved in the juvenile justice system. I am the sole researcher on this study under the supervision of Dr. . The study will be individual interviews that last about an hour and they will be audio recorded. Before you decide to participate in this study, you will be given the chance to read this informed consent form and make a choice about whether you want to do this.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine and understand why juvenile offenders commit crimes after being involved in the juvenile justice system.

Procedures:

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

Participate in the face to face, audio recorded interview for approximately one hour in a private, reserved room at the Fulton County Public Library about your experience as a juvenile and being involved in the juvenile justice system. Your opinion and experience on juvenile reoffending, lack of services, or what could benefit the reduction of juvenile reoffending.

Here are all of the questions that I will ask you:

1. Can you describe your upbringing?
2. Can you describe your home life when you were a little child?
3. Can you describe your daily activities in the juvenile detention system?
4. How did you perform in class in middle and high school?
5. Were any of your friends involved in criminal activities? If so, did this influence you to engage in bad behavior acts? Why?
6. Were you involved in any criminal activities outside of school as a juvenile?

7. Did your punishments in the youth detention help put you in the right direction? Why and why not?
8. Can you describe the types of services (if any) that you received while in the juvenile justice system? Did these services help? Why or why not?
9. After being involved in the juvenile justice system, can you think back and describe what went wrong that led you to reoffend? Why?
10. Thinking back on this time when you did reoffend what do you think could have helped you to stay away from crime? Why?
11. What message would you give to current juvenile reoffenders? Why?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to choose not to do this. The researcher will respect your decision to participate or not to participate. If you decide to participate now and later decide to withdraw your participation, the researcher will respect your decision. During the interview, you can refuse to answer any questions if you choose. You are also free to stop the interview at any time should you become stressed or uncomfortable.

Risks and Benefits of Participants in the study:

As you can see from the questions provided above, I will be asking about your experiences as a juvenile, some of which may cause you to feel upset or sad. I will provide a list of psychological services that you can contact. You may also feel tired at the end of the one-hour interview.

The benefits from this study will be that information obtained during the study could lead to an in-depth understanding of the impact of risk factors on juvenile reoffenders in Atlanta. This study may start off effective programs that will enable lawmakers and the community to make a significant social change, to reduce juvenile reoffending. The results of the study will be emailed to all participants.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for your participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

Your responses to the research questions will be kept confidential, which means that I as the researcher will not report anything you tell me to anyone. Any information obtained

for this research will be kept confidential. The information will not be used for any other purposes outside of the study. Your name or anything that could identify you will not be included in the study. I have obtained a legal document from the National Institute of Health which will keep me from having to report any information, even if the police contact me.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions now regarding the study. You can also contact me if you have questions later at 1-404-000-000. You can also contact my dissertation chair with questions at [@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:mail.waldenu.edu). A copy of this form will be provided to you. You can also contact Walden University's Research Participant Advocate for questions you may have about your rights as research participants @ 1-800-925-3368 ext. 312-1210 from within the USA, or 001-612-312-1210 from outside or email irb@mail.waldenu.edu.

Statement of Concern:

I have read the above consent form and understand the contents well enough to decide about my involvement. By signing, I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D:Crisis Stabilization

Research Participants,

Here is a list of psychological services in the area should you feel the need to talk with someone.

CRISIS STABILIZATION / EMERGENCIES: Georgia Crisis and Access Line: 1 800 715-4225 ([ww.mygcal.com](http://www.mygcal.com)) Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1 800 273-8255 (TALK) Emergency Police: 911 (ask for a CIT (Crisis Intervention Trained) officer) Grady Psychiatric Emergency Clinic for Adults: 404 616-4762 United Way: 211 (211online.unitedwayatlanta.org) NAMI National Help Line: 1 800 950-6264 (NAMI) (Mon.-Fri. 10-6) Peer Support “Warm Line”: 1 888 945-1414 consumer-directed 24/7

Appendix E: Flyer for Probation Officers

Flyer for Probation Officers

Invitation to Participate in Research

Dear Fulton County Juvenile Probation Officers,

My name is Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi, I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am currently working on my dissertation entitled “Exploring Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta.” The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate and what can be done to neutralize these risk factors from the perceptions of juvenile probation officers who have experience working with African American juvenile delinquents in the juvenile justice system. I would like to conduct individual interviews with five juvenile probation officers offsite, at the Fulton County Library in a private room. The focus of the interviews would be your experiences working with juveniles and specifically explore the reasons that juveniles recidivate. The individual interviews will take approximately one hour in a private, reserved room at the Fulton County Library. If you are interested in participating in this study, I can be reached via my mobile phone at 404-000-0000.

Thank you and I look forward to talking with you soon.

This study has been approved by the International Review Board (IRB) of Walden University, The IRB approval number: 05-30-19-0401027.

Sincerely,

Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi

Appendix F: Adult Participants Flyer

Research Participants Needed

- Are you an African American male 18 years and older ?
- Have you been in the Fulton County Georgia juvenile justice system?
- Would you like to share your perception about your experiences in the juvenile justice system?

If you answered **“Yes”** to these questions,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study for my dissertation entitled “ Exploring Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta.”

- Your participation in this study is voluntary and your response are confidential.
- The interview will only take 30 minutes and focus on your experience in the juvenile system.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you think you are eligible and would like to participate, I would be happy to talk with you in a private discussion.

This study has been approved by the International Review Board (IRB) of Walden University.
The IRB approval number is: 05-30-19-0401027.

Walden University



Appendix G: Interview Questions (Adult Participants)

Interview Questions for former juvenile delinquents who are now adults

1. Can you describe your upbringing?
2. Can you describe your home life when you were a juvenile?
3. Can you describe your involvement in the juvenile justice system?
4. How did you do academically in middle and high school?
5. Were any of your friends involved in delinquent activities? If so, did this influence you to engage in delinquent acts? Why?
6. Were you involved in any activities outside of school as a juvenile?
7. Can you describe your involvement in the juvenile justice system?
8. Can you describe the types of services (if any) that you received while in the juvenile justice system? Did these services help? Why or why not?
9. After being involved in the juvenile justice system, can you reflect and describe what was going on that led you to reoffend? Why?
10. Thinking back on this time when you did reoffend after being involved in the juvenile justice system, what do you think could have helped you to stay away from crime? Why?
11. What message would you give to current juvenile delinquents? Why?

Appendix H: Interview Questions (Probation Officers)

Interview Questions for Juvenile Probation Officers

1. How long have you been a juvenile probation officer?
2. Approximately how many juvenile delinquents have you supervised on probation in your career?
3. Can you describe your education and training for dealing with delinquent juveniles?
4. In your experience, with regard to juveniles who recidivate after being involved in the juvenile justice system, can you describe the various factors that seem to contribute the most to their reoffending?

5. For each of these contributing factors, can you describe in detail why they contribute to the juveniles reoffending?

6. Do you have any suggestions on how to better address juvenile delinquency recidivism?

7. Why do you believe that your suggestions will be effective?
8. For juveniles who do not recidivate, what factors seem to contribute the most to keeping them out of trouble?

9. Why or how do these factors keep juvenile delinquents from recidivating?
10. In your experience, does juvenile recidivism tend to lead to adult offending?

Appendix I: IRB Approval Letter

Dear Mr. Olateru-Olagbegi,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "Exploring Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta," conditional upon the approval of the NIH, as documented in a certificate of confidentiality, which will need to be submitted to the Walden IRB once obtained. The researcher may not commence the study until the Walden IRB confirms receipt of that NIH certificate.

Your approval # is 05-30-19-0401027. You will need to reference this number in your dissertation and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail is the IRB approved consent form. Please note, if this is already in an on-line format, you will need to update that consent document to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on May 29th, 2020. One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

Please note that this letter indicates that the IRB has approved your research. You may **NOT** begin the research phase of your doctoral study, however, until you have received official notification from the IRB to do so. Once you have received this notification by email, you may begin your data collection. Your IRB approval is contingent upon your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the IRB application materials that have been submitted as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university. Your IRB approval is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, your IRB approval is suspended.

Absolutely NO participant recruitment or data collection may occur while a student is not actively enrolled.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within 10 business days of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes prior to receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB's approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research.

When you submitted your IRB application, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within 1 week of their occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained at the Documents section of the Walden website:

<http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Researchers are expected to keep detailed records of their research activities (i.e., participant log sheets, completed consent forms, etc.) for the same period of time they retain the original data. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Both students and faculty are invited to provide feedback on this IRB experience at the link below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkJMUx43pZegKlmdiQ_3d_3d

Congratulations!

[REDACTED]
Research Ethics Support Specialist
Office of Research Ethics and Compliance

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Walden University
100 Washington Ave. S, Suite 900
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Information about the Walden University Institutional Review Board, including instructions for application, may be found at this link:
<http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Appendix J: Department of Health & Human Services Letter



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

APPENDIX J
Public Health ServiceNational Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892
www.nih.gov

7/10/2019

Walden University
Mr. Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi
100 Washington Ave. S.
Suite 900
Mineapolis, MN 55401

Dear Mr. Olateru-Olagbegi,

Enclosed is the Confidentiality Certificate, protecting the identity of research subjects in your single-site/single-protc project entitled "Exploring Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta".

Please note that the Certificate expires on 10/10/2019.

NIH expects investigators to inform research participants of the protections and the limits to protections provided by Certificate of Confidentiality issued under the [NIH Policy](#). NIH has provided [sample language](#) for informed consent forms that researchers are free to use or adapt as needed and appropriate for their participants.

If you determine that the research project will not be completed by the expiration date, 10/10/2019, you must submit written request for an extension of the Certificate three (3) months prior to the expiration date. If you make significant changes to the protocol for this study (e.g., change of principal investigator or institution), you should contact the CC Coordinator regarding modification of this Certificate. Any requests for modifications of this Certificate must include reason for the request, documentation of the most recent IRB approval, and the expected date for completion of the research project.

Please contact the NIH CoC Coordinator if you have any questions about the Certificate of Confidentiality at NIH-CoC-Coordinator@mail.nih.gov.

Correspondence should be sent to:

NIH COC Coordinator
BG RKL1 RM 3524
6705 ROCKLEDGE DR
Bethesda, MD 20817

Sincerely,

Approved Date: 07/10/2019

NIH Certificates of Confidentiality Coordinator
Office of Extramural Research
National Institutes of Health

Appendix K:Letter of Cooperation

Letter of Cooperation
Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi

June 1, 2018

Administrative Coordinator
Fulton County Juvenile Court, Probation Division
395 Pryor Street, SW. Suite 1093
Atlanta Georgia 30312

RE: Letter of Cooperation

Dear _____,

My name is Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi, I sincerely appreciate your speaking with me in your office on Wednesday May 30, 2018, your cordial reception without an appointment is quite remarkable. I am currently a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am working on my dissertation entitled “Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta”. The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate and what can be done to impede risk factors from the perceptions of probation officers who have Five or more years’ experience working with juvenile delinquents in Fulton County GA, coupled with adults who have experienced recidivism in the juvenile justice system. I am the sole researcher on this study under the supervision of Dr. _____, Ph. D. Please allow me to recruit delinquent juvenile Probation Officers from your office willing to share their experience in supervising African American youth. The study will consist of an interview approximately not more than one-hour long and will be audio recorded for transcription. I have enclosed a consent form for your review.

Sincerely,

Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi
Doctoral Candidate
Walden University.

Appendix L: Recruitment letter

Recruitment letter

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at Walden University, and I am conducting a study a study on juvenile delinquent recidivism in Fulton County, Georgia. The title of my study is “ Juvenile Delinquency recidivism in Atlanta”. The purpose of the research is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause African Americans to youth to recidivate and what can be done to impede risk factors from the perceptions of Probation Officers with minimum of Five years’ experience and adults willing to share their experience in the juvenile justice system. Adults must have experience in the juvenile system justice system.

The results of this study will hopefully formulate strategies for policy makers to impede juvenile delinquency recidivism in African American youth.

I am interested in your experiences in the juvenile justice system as Probation Officer in a natural interview setting. The one on one interview questions will focus on your experience with the Fulton County Juvenile justice system.

I want to stress that your participation in this study is voluntary and all efforts to protect your identity and keep the information confidential will be taken. I have enclosed a consent form for your review. Please read the form and feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the study. If you choose to participate, I will contact you with the time and place for the interview.

I look forward to learning about your experiences in the study. Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi
Walden University



This study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Walden University. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the IRB Chairperson (Dr. [REDACTED]; Walden University, Baltimore MD; Phone: [REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED])



Appendix M: Certificate of Confidentiality

CERTIFICATE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Number:
CC-OD-19-386

Issued to

Walden University

conducting research known as

Exploring Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism in Atlanta


In accordance with the provisions of section 301(d) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 241(d), this Certificate is issued to the Principal Investigator, *Mr. Adekoya Olateru-Olagbegi* and *Walden University* to protect the privacy of subjects in the above named *single-site/single-protocol* research study, which is collecting or using identifiable, sensitive information. If there is a discrepancy between the terms used in this Certificate and section 301(d), the statutory language will control.

Research data containing identifiable, sensitive information collected during this study initiated on 07/10/2019 (and concluding on 10/10/2019) is covered by the Certificate. Identifiable, sensitive information protected by the Certificate and all copies thereof are protected for perpetuity.

The recipient of this Certificate shall comply with all requirements of subsection 301(d) of the Public Health Service Act.

This Certificate does not represent an endorsement of the research project by the Department of Health and Human Services. Information collected during the term of the Certificate is protected in perpetuity. However, this Certificate does not protect information collected from participants enrolled after the term of the Certificate.

7/10/2019
Date



NIH Certificates of Confidentiality Coordinator
Office of Extramural Research
National Institutes of Health

Alphanumeric Identifiers

Adult Participants

A1

A2

A3

A4

A5

Probations Officers

P1

P2

P3

P4

P5