


2016

# Gender-Specific Programming and Quality Improvement Ratings of Florida Residential Delinquency Programs for Girls

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Katrina A. Smith

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Walden University  
2016

Abstract

Gender-Specific Programming and Quality Improvement Ratings of Florida Residential

Delinquency Programs for Girls

by

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MA, Argosy University, 2004

MA, University of South Florida, 1995

BS, Florida A & M University, 1990

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

General Psychology

Walden University

May 2016

## Abstract

Female delinquency and adult female incarceration rates increased from the 1980s until the early 2000s. Many of these women and girls have been victimized, and their unresolved victimization issues may have led them to criminal behavior which may not be adequately addressed in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. The theoretical framework for this study consisted of 3 developmental theories (pathways, trauma, and addiction theories) that facilitated an understanding of the impact of victimization and criminality in these women and girls' lives. Florida's Department of Juvenile Justice implemented changes to address the victimization issue in the 10 female gender-specific programs in the state. The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent of that implementation by examining whether those programs use gender-specific interventions and if so, whether they address victimization issues. This quantitative descriptive study investigated the correlation between remedial programming, victimization remediation, and the delinquency facility quality improvement (QI) rating in Florida's gender-specific delinquency programs for girls. Using a checklist questionnaire to gather information on programming content and archival data that reported the state QI ratings, a Fisher's Exact Test was used to determine the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. The results indicated that there was no relationship between the QI ratings and victimization intervention. This study's implication for social change includes the use of findings for future programming and empirical strategies, including victimization interventions. These strategies may decrease future recidivism rates for female delinquents and adult criminality.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents, Ben Smith, Jr. and Catherine R. Smith. This project was a long journey and I never gave up or waived because of you. I would also like to include my extended family and friends who encouraged and supported me throughout this journey. Thank you for everything.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Rates of female delinquency and the conviction and incarceration of women increased in the mid 1980s through the early 2000s (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Sokoloff, 2005). Feld (2009) reported a 46% increase in female delinquent arrest rates between 1980 and 2003 and this number remained stable between 2003 and 2006 according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2012). Between 1980-2010 the arrest rate for incarcerated women doubled (The Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013). In 1992 there was a federal call to action to implement gender-specific programming in juvenile residential programs for girls as a consequence of the increase in female delinquency rates (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Sokoloff, 2005).

Gender-specific programming is defined as remedial programming within the correctional system that focuses on the unique needs of women and girls (McDonald, 2008). The 1992 call to action included the addition of the Challenge Activity E amendment to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJJPA) adopted by Congress in 1974 (Feld, 2009). In 1992, Congress adopted the Challenge Activity E amendment requiring all states applying for federal grants to examine their juvenile justice systems, identify gaps in services to juvenile female offenders, and develop a plan for providing needed gender-specific services for the prevention and treatment of female juvenile delinquency (Feld, 2009).

Additionally, Cauffman (2008) suggested that since the mid-1990s after Congress added the Challenge Activity E, the focus has been on the development and implementation of gender-specific programming for female delinquents. Such

interventions may include programming in areas which are considered effective for this population and are believed to lead to a decrease in recidivism rates (Cauffman, 2008). However, there is a paucity of research on gender-specific programming offered in residential programs for delinquent girls. Researchers have not examined the extent of gender-specific programming currently implemented and which specific topics are covered during interventions. Additionally, researchers have not examined whether the implementation of gender-specific programming is associated with positive outcomes. Research is necessary to determine how residential programs for female delinquents are responding to the call for gender-specific programming and the effects of program implementation on facility state quality improvement (QI) ratings.

The purpose of this research study was to determine the extent of gender-specific programming offered in residential treatment programs for female delinquents in the state of Florida, determine what topics are covered during programming, and whether the inclusion of gender-specific programming was related to a high facility QI state rating. According to Florida's Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) website, QI ratings are indicators for how well programs meet the required operating standards set by the state. The findings from the investigation added to the literature on this topic and created social change by identifying programming strategies currently in use and determining whether the existence of gender-specific programming was positively related to a facility's QI rating. This information may encourage programming directors to recognize the value of programming specifically designed for female delinquents and expand current programming strategies. Specifically, the programs identified as gender-specific to

female delinquents should use strategies to address the risk factors affecting girls. The findings from this research are essential as effective strategies may decrease future recidivism rates for female delinquents and adult criminality.

### **Background**

The arrest rate for incarcerated women nearly doubled between 1980-2010 according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2013) website. Between 2005 and 2006 the number of incarcerated women increased 4.5% compared to 2.7% for men (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009). In addition, Feld (2009) reported a 46% increase in female delinquent arrest rates between 1980 and 2003. That rate remained stable from 2003-2006 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012). Growth within the female delinquency population is similar to the growth in the population of incarcerated women (Cauffman, 2008).

The recidivism rate is similar between the female delinquency and incarcerated women populations. That is, both of these populations appear to be reoffending because they share the same risk factors and needs which are not addressed within the system's rehabilitative programming strategies (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Steffensmeier, Schwartz, Zhong, & Ackerman, 2005). Another similar factor among these populations is that they are typically women from a marginalized group, specifically, African-American/Black. In 2008, the racial composition of juveniles aged 10-17 in the United States was 78% White, 16% Black, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian (Puzzanchera, 2009; Puzzanchera et al., 2012 ). Puzzanchera (2009) and Puzzanchera et

al. (2012) reported that juvenile arrests disproportionately involved members of marginalized populations.

Historically, adult women offenders and female juvenile delinquents have been overlooked in regards to rehabilitation within the criminal justice system as well as within the juvenile justice system (JJS), as the perception of criminality and delinquency has been largely masculine (Freudenberg, 2002; Harris, 1998; Heriques & Manatu-Rupert, 2001; Sokoloff, 2005; Spohm & Beichner, 2000). Dohrn (2004) stated that no information regarding the risk factors, needs, or effective rehabilitation on the female delinquent and incarcerated women populations existed. Traditional rehabilitative programming for men was not effective for this population (Dohrn, 2004; Mapson, 2005). Therefore, because of the recent increasing rates among incarcerated women and female delinquents, and the realization that women offenders and female delinquents have special needs associated with their involvement in the criminal justice system (CJS) and the JJS, Congress implemented rehabilitation programs specifically designed to meet the needs of female delinquents in juvenile residential programs (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Sokoloff, 2005).

### **Gender-Specific Programming**

Gender-specific programming provides remedial interventions designed to address the specific needs of female offenders and delinquents. Zahn, Day, Mihalic, and Tichavsky (2009) and Welch, Robert-Lewis, and Parker (2009) stated that because of the characteristic differences between male and female delinquents, traditional programming for boys may not help girls as male programming often focuses on crime prevention.



Women and girls may have more personal issues that are not addressed in typical crime prevention programs. Zahn et al. (2009), Welch et al. (2009), and Colman, Mitchell-Herzfeld, and Shady (2009) noted that, compared to boys, girls have higher rates of mental health issues (i.e., major depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and substance abuse), victimization issues (i.e., physical, sexual, and emotional abuse), and relational issues (i.e., family dysfunction, teen pregnancy, and teen parenthood). These issues seem to create a crisis of identity for women and girls involving low self-esteem and poor perception of self-worth (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004). Cauffman (2008), Dohrn (2004) and Mapson (2005) concluded that traditional programming in the JJS may not be addressing the specific needs of girls.

The discrepancy in programming strategies is further fueled by society's perspective of female development (Cauffman, 2008; Zahn et al., 2009). Girls and women are not typically viewed as criminals who engage in violent crimes (Harris, 1998). Women and girls typically engage in status offenses and less violent crimes than males resulting in different remedial needs (Zahn et al., 2009). What is unclear is the extent of how the state of Florida has responded to the identified need for gender-specific programming in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. As a result of the 1992 amendment to the JJDP of 1974, states were to examine this issue and begin to implement programming addressing female delinquency needs. In the current research, I proposed that a critical component of the new strategies should address victimization.

## **Victimization**

Researchers have suggested that issues related to victimization may be the link to female offending and recidivism. That is, a critical risk factor for female criminality is the persistence of victimization that often begins in childhood (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; From, 2008; Gavazzi, Yarcheck, & Chesney-Lind, 2006; Hall, Golder, Conley, & Sawning, 2013). As a consequence, researchers have issued recommendations to address victimization topics when developing programs for female offenders (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Hall et al., 2013).

According to Dohrn (2004), Feld (2009), and Mapson (2005), although gender-specific programming targeting females has been implemented in several states, (e.g. Minnesota, Maryland, Oregon, Ohio, and Illinois) including Florida, there continues to be an increase in the number of female delinquents and women incarcerated. It is unclear to what extent gender-specific programming is currently implemented and what specific topics are covered during interventions. This increase has led researchers to investigate whether implemented programming addresses gender-specific needs, specifically victimization issues to rehabilitate this population of incarcerated females. This study examined whether facilities claiming to offer gender-specific programs actually addressed topics such as victimization, and whether or not the inclusion of such topics was related to the facility's quality improvement rating. Florida uses a quality improvement rating system, which is an objective rating system to assess how well programs are meeting the contractual standards set by the state (Office of Program Accountability, n.d.). It was unclear if the quality improvement ratings were related to

how well the programs were actually addressing the needs of the female delinquents as the standards give no indication about the success of the residents only if the program has certain elements in place.

### **Problem Statement**

There has been an a 46% increase in the female delinquency rate (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009) and well over 50% increase in the female incarceration rate (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009) since the 1980s. The increase may reflect a revised conceptualization of female criminal behavior (Freudenberg, 2002; Harris, 1998; Heriques & Manatu-Rupert, 2001; Sokoloff, 2005; Spohm & Beichner, 2000) or it may reflect an actual increase in criminal behavior perpetrated by women (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; From, 2008; Gavazzi et al., 2006). Opinions among researchers vary regarding the cause for the increase. Some purported that victimization experiences in youth may predispose females to be more likely to commit crimes against society (Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Mapson, 2005). That is, unresolved victimization issues may lead to criminal behavior; however, there is limited research to support this theory.

As a result of the 1992 reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, all states were tasked to develop intervention programs for female delinquents in an attempt to reduce criminal behavior and recidivism. It is unclear from the literature how states' delinquent residential programs have responded to this call for implementation of gender-specific remedial programs. Specifically, it is unknown if existing programs cover victimization topics, and whether institutions that offer remedial programs specifically designed to address victimization issues are rated higher in quality

by the state in which they are implemented. This information is vital and may help to mitigate the current increases in female criminality rates. Specifically, an empirical investigation of the extent and content of gender-specific programs administered in female delinquency residential programs in Florida, and the relationship between the content of programming and state quality ratings was essential to ensuring Florida's incarcerated female delinquents were adequately served. This quantitative correlational study investigated the relationship among state quality improvement ratings and content of remedial programming, specifically victimization issues, to provide insight on this topic and impart valuable information to the juvenile and adult justice systems. This information provided insight into the continuing increase in incarceration rates for girls and women and how to combat the trend.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to describe the current status of gender-specific remedial programming in female residential programs in Florida, especially as it relates to victimization topics. A second purpose was to explore the correlation among the independent variables, the extent of gender-specific remedial programming, types of victimization remediation, and the dependent variable, the state facility quality improvement rating.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The following research questions and hypotheses were proposed for investigation.

Research Question 1: What topics are included in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 2: Is the topic of victimization addressed in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 3: Are facilities that address gender-specific remedial programming rated higher in quality by the state?

*H<sub>03</sub>*: There will not be a correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>13</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

Research Question 4: Are facilities that address victimization rated higher in quality by the state?

*H<sub>04</sub>*: There will not be a correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>14</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

### **Theoretical Framework for the Study**

The theoretical framework guiding the current investigation consisted of three developmental pathway theories. Covington and Bloom (2006) proposed three theories to facilitate the understanding of female criminality and expedite developing gender-specific programming: pathways theory, trauma theory, and addiction theory. Each theory addresses the distinct differences between factors related to male criminality/delinquency and female criminality/delinquency, particularly how victimization may play a critical role in understanding female criminality. Hall et al.

(2013) discussed the role of victimization in incarcerated women. These authors indicated that the majority of women in the criminal justice system have been victimized at least once in their lives and for others there is a long history of victimization beginning in early childhood and continuing into their adult years. Dorhn (2004) indicated that understanding of the interplay and synthesis of incarcerated women and female delinquent needs will provide a better understanding on how to address this population's needs. I agreed with these authors and used the pathways theory because pathways theory gives a clear understanding of the interplay and synthesis of factors that lead to criminality and delinquency in these populations. Pathways theory also states that programming and interventions that selectively target the complicated issues presented by this population are best met through integrated intervention models. These models should address the most salient issues facing this population—victimization, mental disorders, and substance use (Hall et al., 2013). Hall et al. (2013) stated that “interventions providing highly integrated treatment of victimization, substance use, and other mental disorders exhibited a greater effect on drug use severity and mental health outcomes than interventions with less integration” (p. 33).

### **Pathways Theory**

The pathways theory examines the life experiences of women and girls. Based on extensive interviews, researchers can detail the unique life events that place this population at risk for offending (Bloom 2004; Covington & Bloom, 2006). Bloom (2004) and Covington and Bloom (2006) described these events as unique to gender. That is, there are gender differences in developmental life events that place women and girls on a

pathway to criminal offending. Salisbury and VanVoorhis (2009) described three models that detail the unique pathways to criminal offending for women and girls: childhood victimization model, relational model, and social human capital model. These models will be described in Chapter 2.

### **Trauma Theory and Addictions Theory**

Women offenders and delinquent girls' pathway to criminal offending appears to involve significant traumatic life events (Bloom, 2004; Covington & Bloom, 2006). Bloom (2004) and Covington and Bloom (2006 ) further suggested that many who lacked sufficient coping skills turned to substances to cope with the early traumatic experiences. Many of the girls began to abuse substances as a coping mechanism to deal with trauma and the substance abuse appears to lead to an addiction. These theories will also be further detailed in Chapter 2.

### **Nature of the Study**

A quantitative approach using a correlational design was implemented for the study. Program directors or administrators from approximately 52 delinquency residential facilities were invited to participate in the investigation. Ten of these facilities are specific to female delinquents. Participants responded to a questionnaire that included questions about the extent of the remedial programs offered by the facility (Appendix A). Archival state quality ratings were obtained from the state of Florida and were used in the correlational data analysis to be compared to the remedial topics addressed within the programming strategies.

Descriptive information of the gender-specific topics covered and interventions used covering victimization were collected. Inferential statistics consisting of the Fisher's Exact Test was used to determine the extent of the relationship between the dependent variable of state quality improvement rating, and the independent variable victimization interventions in remedial programming.

### **Definitions**

For clarification, the following terms and definitions are provided:

*Arrest rate*: The number of arrests per 100,000 persons in the demographic group (Definition of Terms).

*Delinquency residential programs*: Public or private institutions that house male or female juveniles, typically under the age of 18 who have been committed by court order for a specific time frame. The time frame depends on the level of restrictiveness of the program (Residential Services, 2012)

*Gender-specific programming*: For the purposes of this research, gender-specific programming is defined as remedial programming within the correctional system that focuses on the needs of women and girls and that are unique to their gender (McDonald, 2008).

*Felony*: A criminal offense punishable by imprisonment for more than a year

*Female delinquent* is a female juvenile criminal offender who is typically under the age of 18.

*Female offender*: An adult female criminal offender who is typically over the age of 18.



*Jails:* Institutions that serve several detainment functions for the less serious offenders. Typically, jails detain (a) offenders awaiting trial, if they cannot afford or are ineligible for bail; (b) misdemeanants sentenced to a year or less or non-serious felons; and (c) detained juveniles temporarily awaiting transfer to the juvenile authorities (Siegel & Welch, 2006).

*Misdemeanor:* A crime less serious than a felony and typically punishable by a fine and less than a year of incarceration.

*Polyvictimization:* The exposure to multiple traumatic events such as childhood abuse and neglect, adult domestic violence, and sexual abuse either by personal experience or as a witness to the act(s) (Hollin & Palmer, 2006).

*Prison:* A public institution that houses serious offenders for more than a year of imprisonment.

*Recidivism:* The repeated criminal behavior of a female offender and/or female juvenile delinquent.

*Serious Offenders:* Those offenders typically 18 and older who commit serious offenses that violate federal or state law and are incarcerated in prison.

*Victimization:* The exposure to a traumatic event either by personal experience or as a witness to the act (Hollin & Palmer, 2006)

*Violent Crime Index:* A nationwide compilation by the FBI of the rates of four serious crimes as reported by law enforcement. These four crimes are murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (Puzzanchera, 2009).

*Property Crime Index*: A part of the FBI's nationwide compilation and includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (Puzzanchera, 2009).

### **Assumptions**

One assumption of this study was that quality improvement ratings were an accurate measure of the facility's programming. Specifically, whether the facility meets contractual standards and included and addressed gender-specific interventions. Another assumption was that the program director would respond honestly to the questionnaire about the extent of gender-specific programming.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

#### **Scope**

Although there has been a national mandate to increase gender-specific programming for female delinquents, there has been little research on the extent of the implementation of these programs. The current research described the extent of gender-specific programming for females in the state of Florida. The current research also provided information on the topics included in facilities that provided programming. This information is important for future researchers as well as for program directors working with female delinquents.

#### **Delimitations**

The research was restricted to the 52 residential delinquency programs in the state of Florida which include 10 gender-specific to female delinquents. Therefore, the results of the study may not generalize to facilities in other states and it is not intended to be generalized to male programs nor adult females. The research was also limited to the

questionnaire responses completed by the investigator and as described by the DJJ administrator and not those of the program administrators nor the incarcerated residents. Specifically, a resident's perceptions of the extent of gender-specific programming was not assessed in the current research. Therefore, a limitation of the current investigation was the extent to which gender-specific programming was objectively described from the perspective of the DJJ administrator and not the residents. That is, the subjective experiences of the residents was not considered in the current investigation. Another limitation was that the efficacy of program evaluation, as measured by recidivism, was not evaluated in the current research. A final limitation reflects the generalizability of the research findings. As data from programs in Florida was considered, the results of the study may not generalize to other states or geographic areas.

### **Significance**

The current research effects social change by examining and providing insight into the needs of a population that has historically been overlooked, female delinquents. The research on juvenile delinquency risk factors and resultant programming has historically focused on males because males are represented in both the juvenile and adult justice systems in higher numbers than females (Freudenberg, 2002; Harris, 1998; Heriques & Manatu-Rupert, 2001; Sokoloff, 2005; Spohm & Beichner, 2000). However, because of recent increases in female delinquency rates in the juvenile justice system, as well as an increase in incarcerated women, risk factors and programming for this population are now gaining attention. Specifically, in 1992 there was an amendment to the JJDP A of 1974 to implement gender-specific programming for female delinquents.

Since this amendment was adopted in 1992, the rates of female delinquency have increased as well as that of incarcerated women. What was unknown was the extent to which residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida were implementing gender-specific programming and, if so, what topics were included in the programming. It was also unknown whether the extent of such program implementation was positively correlated with facility state quality ratings. The current research added to the literature on these topics.

### **Summary**

Because of the increasing number of women being incarcerated and a similar increase in female delinquency, there is a need to research factors related to female delinquency. In 1992 an amendment to the JJDP A of 1974 called for gender-specific programming as an intervention/prevention strategy to decrease recidivism rates for female delinquents. However, there continues to be an increase in the number of girls involved in the juvenile justice system and a similar increase in women in the criminal justice system (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Sokoloff, 2005). The purpose of this study was to determine the extent of gender-specific programming for female delinquents in the state of Florida, determine what topics were covered in the programming, and determine whether or not a correlation exists between program content and state quality improvement ratings.

It is assumed that specific programming addressing the unique needs of women and girls; especially, that of victimization, may decrease recidivism in female delinquency and criminality; however, there is no empirical evidence to support this

claim. Chapter 2 will present information about the problem of increased female involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems in detail as well as review the theoretical perspectives that may explain female delinquency. Chapter 3 will provide information on the research method, design, participants, instruments, data collection and analysis strategies, and ethical considerations for participants.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

The reauthorization of the JJDP in 1992 included a requirement that states provide an analysis of and a plan to implement gender-specific services for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency (Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009). However, initially the analysis and subsequent implementation did not occur (Dohrn, 2004). Preliminary data were collected about what should be required in programs, but no programs were developed or assessed (Dohrn, 2004). Dohrn suggested that female delinquents have been overlooked, similar to women offenders, as there was no information on girls' needs. Dohrn stated, "when we better synthesize the interplay and interconnected analysis of girls and of women, effective use can be made of the outstanding research on imprisoned women for the benefit of incarcerated girls, and vice versa" (p. 311). Dohrn also noted that, in order to implement effective programming in gender-specific programs for girls there must be an understanding of this population's needs. Dohrn suggested that this understanding will become clearer via an analysis of the needs of incarcerated women as there appears to be an interplay and synthesis of each population's unique gender needs. Dohrn suggested that incarcerated women and female delinquents share common risk factors and needs and an examination of these factors in one population would help inform what may work in remediation of that population as well as the other.

Hall et al. (2013) and Mapson (2005) stated that the increase in female delinquency and offender rates are related to specific factors that affect girls and women.

Some of the factors include victimization, addiction, health care, pregnancy and parenting, reentry housing, job training, and job placement (Hall et al. 2013; Mapson, 2005). Most researchers agree that traditional programs should not be applied to females as they were designed for boys and do not focus on gender-specific issues, that is, issues of specific significance to girls (Dohrn, 2004). Mapson (2005) added “current correctional programs have not adequately addressed the multidimensional gender-specific problems of female youth offenders as they were designed to serve predominately the male population” (p. 85) Mapson suggested that delinquency programs continue to follow a traditional male model that does not take into consideration the unique needs of girls. Furthermore, Dohrn argued that girls’ participation in traditional male programs can actually cause them more harm than good because girls are typically incarcerated for nonviolent offenses and have issues that require different management approaches. Researchers have suggested that if these issues are not addressed in programming, there can be dire consequences such as continued offending and eventually adult criminality (Dohrn, 2004, Hall et al. 2013; Mapson, 2005).

In 1992 an amendment to the JJDPA of 1974 was the impetus for a national call to action for all states to develop gender-specific intervention programs for female delinquents in an attempt to reduce criminal behavior and incarceration recidivism. It is unclear within the literature to what extent these residential programs have responded to this call to action by implementing gender-specific remedial programs. It is also unknown if these programs cover victimization topics and, if so, whether institutions in which they are implemented are rated higher in quality than institutions in which programming does

not include victimization. A quantitative correlational study that investigates the relationship among state quality improvement rating and remedial programming may provide insight on this topic and valuable information to the juvenile and adult justice system.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

This literature review was compiled from several databases within Walden University's library: Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete, ERIC, PsycBooks, PsycCritiques, PsycExtra, PsycInfo, and SocIndex. The primary keywords used included: *developmental pathways theory, female delinquency, female delinquent, female offender, recidivism, risk factors, repeat offenders, gender-specific programming, program evaluation, protective factors, quality assurance, quality improvement, residential program, social learning theory, and victimization*. Although the focus of my search concentrated on current research published in the last five years, at times my span reached back at least 20 years to accommodate some historical aspects of juvenile justice. In addition, the use of certain websites was necessary because many governmental agencies related to delinquency post their annual reports and statistical data online.

Chapter 2 began with identification of the problem and the focus of this study, which was the increase in female incarceration rates and female delinquency rates, especially among marginalized (e.g., African American/Black) women and girls. Chapter 2 also includes an explanation to account for the increasing trend and examines parallels between incarcerated women and delinquent girls. Theoretical explanations are offered to account for rate increases with a focus on victimization. It is suggested that both girls and



women share similar risk factors for criminality and delinquency as well as gender-specific needs and, if these needs are not met, numbers of repeat offenders in both populations, particularly the female delinquent graduating to adult criminality, are likely to increase. The review of the literature also includes an explanation of the extent of gender-specific programming and the inclusion of victimization interventions.

### **Incarceration Facilities**

There are three types of incarceration facilities: delinquency residential programs, jails, and prisons (Siegel & Welch, 2006). Each type of facility typically serves either a male or female population. Delinquency residential programs are intended for juveniles typically under 18 years of age. These facilities can be public or private institutions governed by state agencies. In many states the facilities also range in level of restrictiveness based on assessed risks of the delinquent (Siegel & Welch, 2006). For example, according to the DJJ website, in Florida the levels of restriction in delinquency facilities range from the low-risk to maximum-risk. Delinquents are assigned to a low-risk facility if assessed as being nonviolent and as not having an extensive pattern of offending. These delinquents typically have committed property crimes. Moderate-risk facilities are described as secure facilities that house delinquents whose pattern of offending has escalated but does not necessarily include crimes against people. High-risk facilities are described as secure and these delinquents have been assessed to be high-risk because their frequent pattern of offending and their type of offending includes crimes against people. Maximum-risk facilities are secure and house the chronic offending

delinquent who commits violent and other serious felony offenses such as auto theft, substance crimes, or gang-related crimes.

Prisons serve a different population, mostly older individuals and individuals who commit more serious crimes that violate federal law; however, they use a similar system of restrictiveness as the delinquency programs (Differences between Federal, State, and Local Inmates). For example, according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons' website, federal prison levels of security range from minimum to high security (U.S. Department of Justice, 2013). Minimum-security prisons house the least violent offenders, for example, white collar criminals (Siegel & Welch, 2006). These facilities are also known as Federal Prison Camps (FPCs) and are like dormitory style housing surrounded by limited or no fencing. The inmates are a part of the work oriented program as they help serve the labor needs of the larger prisons to which they may be adjacent.

The low security prisons, known as Federal Correctional Institutions (FCIs) are similar with the exception that they tend to have a higher staff-to-inmate ratio than minimum security. The larger institutions include the medium and maximum security prisons. According to the federal prison website, medium security facilities have strengthened, double fenced, perimeters and cell type housing. Medium-security prisons contain less violent offenders as compared to the maximum-security prisons that house the potentially dangerous offender and the super-maximum prisons that house the dangerous offenders (Siegel & Welch, 2006). Maximum-security prisons contain those prisoners who display chronic violent offending patterns, typically against people.

According to the prison website, these facilities have highly secured perimeters with electronic detection systems (U.S. Department of Justice, 2013).

According to the Florida Department of Corrections' website, state prison levels are similar to federal levels as they also range from minimum to super-maximum security levels. The apparent difference is related to the extreme ends of custody as, according to Florida, the lowest level of custody is referred to as the community level of custody where offenders are usually transferred as a result of their good behavior. Offenders in this level of custody are those who are eligible for placement at a community residential facility known as Community Work Squads. According to the Florida Department of Corrections website, these offenders are supervised by state or private agencies that allow the offenders to work in various services related occupations in the local area.

The minimum-level facility is similar to the community level because the offender would also be transferred to this level based on good behavior. The exception is that the minimum-level offenders would not be eligible for community residential placement. Although these offenders have similar work privileges they live in dormitory style housing with limited security as there are no surrounding walls, fences or guard towers. Florida Department of Corrections website also described the medium-level prisons. These facilities do not allow offenders to leave without an armed escort; however, these offenders have movement privileges around the facility managed by a high staff-to-offender ratio. These offenders also live in locked housing units with secure outside perimeters similar to federal prisons.

Interestingly, Florida has a close-level security system that is parallel to maximum-security in federal prisons. Florida's website states that these offenders in the close-level system are those who must be managed within and without by armed security. In addition, in Florida, the website of the correctional system states that the state's maximum-security facilities are reserved for death row inmates.

Jails are also incarceration facilities and serve several other functions. Typically, jails detain (a) offenders awaiting trial, if they cannot afford or are ineligible for bail; (b) misdemeanants sentenced to a year or less or non-serious felons; and (c) detained juveniles temporarily awaiting transfer to the juvenile authorities (Siegel & Welch, 2006). The focus of the proposed investigation is on delinquent residential programs.

### **Female Incarceration Rates in Delinquency Residential Programs and Prisons**

Since 1980, the incarceration rates in prisons and delinquency residential programs have been on the rise for females (Feld, 2009; Puzzanchera, 2009). During this time, female juvenile delinquency rates for arrest and incarceration have mirrored the arrest and incarceration rates of older incarcerated women. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (2013) website indicated that the arrest rate for incarcerated women has nearly doubled between 1980-2010. Feld (2009) examined juvenile arrest statistics and found that between the years of 1980-2003 female juvenile arrests increased by 46%. This number held steady between 2003 and 2006 according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2012). There were two significant trends in this population of girls. First, "the overall total number of juveniles (male and female) arrested had dropped by approximately 18% primarily because the arrest rates for boys decreased by 22%, while those for girls

decreased only 13%” (Feld, 2009, p. 233). Second, between the years of 1994-2003, there was a significant increase for juvenile female arrest rates for simple assault and drug offenses. In the category of offenses in which the number of arrests of juveniles of both genders increased during that decade (e.g. simple assault, drugs, driving under the influence liquor offenses, and curfew violations) girls’ arrests were higher than for boys (Feld, 2009). It was also reported that police arrested girls more than five times as often for simple assault as for aggravated assault (Feld, 2009). Based on these reported statistics, it appears that females are committing more violent crimes than nonviolent crimes when compared to previous female crime rates and delinquent females are committing violent crimes at a rate similar to their male delinquent counterparts.

Other researchers corroborated the increase in female arrest rates in specific crime categories. Puzzanchera (2009) compiled the arrest statistics for juveniles in 2008 by examining the Violent Crime and Property Crime Indices and confirmed the same pattern of increased arrests rates among female delinquents during the 1999-2008 time periods. Puzzanchera (2009) reported that overall juvenile arrests for violent crimes declined between 2006 and 2008. However, juvenile arrests for aggravated assault decreased more for males (22%) than for females (17%). Moreover, during this period, juvenile male arrests for simple assault declined by 6% and female arrests increased by 12% (Puzzanchera, 2009). Puzzanchera (2009) purported that the increase in juvenile arrest rates was the result of an increase in female delinquency. In 2008, females accounted for 30% of all juvenile arrests (Puzzanchera, 2009). This percentage, according to Puzzanchera (2009), is a reflection of a minor decrease in some crime categories and a

significant increase in other crime categories for females as compared to males who have continued to show a decline or no significant movement in crime categories.

For example, according to the Violent Crime Index, Feld (2009) noted that simple assault accounted for the largest proportion of arrest for girls in 2008. The Property Crime Index reported that juvenile arrests declined for males more than for females between 1999 and 2008. Feld (2009) investigated the types of arrests and revealed that girls make up large proportions of youth arrested for larceny theft (40%), prostitution (71%), and runaways (59%). According to Puzzanchera (2009), these results mirror the adult population of offenders in that adult female arrests increased by 29% while adult male arrests only increased by 4%.

Although their numbers in arrests have increased, females make up a relatively small proportion of the delinquency caseload nationwide. Juvenile courts handled 448,900 cases involving females in 2007, more than twice the 1985 number (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010). As a result of these arrest trends, the female population of the delinquency case load rose steadily from 19% in 1985 to 27% in 2007 (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010). Furthermore, from 1985 to 2007, female caseloads increased more than male caseloads for each of the four general offence categories; person (violent) offenses, property offenses, drug law violations, and public order offenses (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010).

## **Disproportionate Representation of Marginalized Populations in Delinquency**

### **Residential Centers**

**Racial difference.** Puzzanchera (2009) reported that juvenile arrests disproportionately involved members of marginalized populations. In 2008, the racial composition of juveniles aged 10-17 in the United States was 78% White, 16% Black, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian (Puzzanchera, 2009 and Puzzanchera et al. 2012). Most juveniles of Hispanic ethnicity were included in the White racial category (Puzzanchera, 2009 and Puzzanchera et al.2012). In that same year, the racial composition of juveniles arrested for violent crimes included 47% White youth, 52% Black youth, 1% Asian youth, and 1% American Indian youth (Puzzanchera, 2009). Black youth were over represented in juvenile arrests for violent crime (Puzzanchera, 2009). The Property Crime Index reported the arrest rate for Black juveniles was more than double the arrest rate for White juveniles and American Indian juveniles, and nearly six times the rate for Asian juveniles (Puzzanchera, 2009). Overall, in 2008, although Black youth accounted for just 16% of the youth population ages 10-17 they were involved in 52% of juvenile Violent Crime Index arrests and 33% of juvenile Property Crime Index arrests (Puzzanchera, 2009).

Another concern noted by Puzzanchera (2009) was the disproportionate rates in adjudication for marginalized populations. In 2008, 66% of arrested juveniles belonging to marginalized populations were referred to juvenile court whereas 22% who were eligible for referral were released on the discretion of law enforcement agencies, and the remaining 10% were referred to criminal court (Puzzanchera, 2009).

Knoll and Sickmund (2010) compiled statistics of delinquency cases in juvenile court in 2007 and found similar trends. These researchers noted an increasing trend of delinquency cases involving Black youth from 1985 through 1997 (61%); however, from 1997 to 2007 the case load had dropped 11% and leveled off. Knoll and Sickmund (2010) compared the rate at which cases involving different groups of youth proceeded from one decision point to the next as they went through the court system. This comparison revealed an overall disparity in the system in which the rate at which Black youth were referred to juvenile court for a delinquency offense was about 140% greater than the rate for White youth (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010). Puzzanchera et al.(2012) confirmed Knoll and Sickmund (2010) and reported that between 1985 and 2007 delinquency cases involving Black youth were likely to be petitioned compared to any other racial group. Interestingly, these researchers also reported that between 2008 and 2009, Black youth and American Indian youth were likely to be petitioned (Puzzanchera et al.2012)..

Knoll and Sickmund (2010) also noted that the rate at which petitioned cases were adjudicated was about 8% less for Black youth than for White youth and those waived to criminal court was about 9% greater for Black youth than the rate for White youth. Puzzanchera et al.(2012) reported that for both White and Black youth, the number of delinquency cases waived to criminal court in 2009 was well below the peak of the mid-1990s as White youth waivers fell 41% in 2009. However, between 2001 and 2008, the number of waivers grew for Black youth and then fell 19% in 2009, (Puzzanchera et al. 2012). Knoll and Sickmund (2010) also noted that placement for Black youths in residential placements was 27% greater compared to White youth and those ordered to



probation were 14% less compared to White youth. Puzzanchera et al. (2012) reported that the racial profile of adjudicated cases changed between 1985 and 2009. For example, for delinquency cases involving White youth, the likelihood of adjudication decreased between 1985 and 1995 from 66% to 59%. By 2009, the likelihood increased to 61%. For Black youth, the likelihood of adjudication decreased as well between 1985 and 1994 from 57% to 53%, however, by 2009 there was a 56% increase in the likelihood. Puzzanchera et al. (2012) also reported that after adjudication, the likelihood of “out-of-home” placement in 2009 was greater for Black youth (31%) and American Indian youth (29%) compared to White youth (25%) and Asian youth (23%) (p. 53). These findings indicate that Black youth are more likely than White youth to be adjudicated with an offense and sentenced to a residential placement/program (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010).

Livsey (2010) reported on the juvenile delinquency probation caseload for 2007. One third of all delinquency cases disposed in 2007 received probation as the most serious disposition (Livsey, 2010). Most cases placed on probation involved White youth; however, Black youth were likely to be given other sentences including residential placement (Livsey, 2010). Puzzanchera et al. (2012) reported that between 1985 and 2009 the cases adjudicated delinquent and resulted in probation increased 51% with the peak of this increase between 1985 and 1997. However, these researchers also reported that between 1985 and 2009, the overall likelihood for placement on probation increased for American Indian youth, 40% -61%, White youth, 57%-62%, and Asian Youth, 67%-68%. The likelihood for Black youth decreased 60%-55%.

**Gender differences.** Dohrn (2004) discussed the over representation of marginalized girls' incarceration rates and concluded that when gender and race coincide, Black girls are more likely than White girls to receive a sentence to a secure residential placement program. Dohrn (2004) found that this disparity occurred in court dispositions where seven of every 10 cases involving White girls were dismissed, compared with only three of every 10 cases for Black girls.

### **Prison Incarceration Rates for Females**

There has been a significant increase in women in state and federal prisons in the United States since the mid 1980s (Sokoloff, 2005) with a steady increase from 1990 to 2005 (Glaze, 2010). In 2000, there were 94,336 women in prison and 72,621 in jail (Sokoloff, 2005). In 2009, there were 7,225, 800 adults under correction supervision and, of these, 2, 284,900 were in jail and prison (Glaze, 2010). In that same year, 1,250,000 women were incarcerated in either prison or jail. As evidenced in the last decade, the rate of incarcerated women has shown a steady increase.

Alfred and Chlup (2009), Freudenberg (2002) and Sokoloff (2005) described incarcerated women as being typically young (i.e., median age 35), poor, single, mothers of small children, undereducated, unemployed or underemployed, and often times homeless. Alfred and Chlup (2009) and Sokoloff (2003) indicated that a disproportionate number of these women represented marginalized populations. In 2003, Black women made up 13% of the overall female population in the United States; however, they made up half of all the women imprisoned in the United States (Sokoloff, 2003). Hispanic women were the second largest group imprisoned and made up even less of the U.S.

population compared to Black women (Sokoloff, 2003). McCarthy (2009, March 31) reported on the Bureau of Justice website that as of June 30, 2008, that although female incarceration rates were substantially lower than the male rates, Black females were twice as likely as Hispanic females and over 3.5 times as likely than White females to be incarcerated. Alfred and Chlup (2009) and Sokoloff (2005) also stated that women's crimes were traditionally nonviolent and included larceny-theft, fraud, and prostitution with the critical addition of drug possession and sales since the 1980s. Interestingly, Sokoloff (2005) also reported that Black women were more likely incarcerated on drug offenses, a nonviolent crime compared to White women who were involved in more violent crimes.

### **Reasons for Rate Increases in Females**

#### **Policy Changes**

Historically, prisons were managed based on the ideology of public policy to discipline and reform male prisoners (Harris, 1998). Incarcerated women were seen as an immoral anomaly and their confinement was seen as simply that, confinement with an attempt to reform (Harris, 1998). Harris further stated that incarcerated women were actually disregarded because prisons did not know what to do with women who were contrary to law and social norms. Harris also stated that when reformations were finally made to the prison system and included policies for women, these reformations served two purposes: to regulate sexual behavior and to provide vocational training to help the women reassume their rightful and dutiful positions in society as mothers and wives. Harris suggested that the reformations oppressed women because they emphasized the

custodial status of women, especially Black women. Currently, although more women are being incarcerated today, there is a lack of agreement on the goal of reformation and how to achieve it for women. One reason for this lack of agreement is that much of the growth in women's imprisonment is attributed not to an increase in seriousness of crimes women commit but to the crime control policies pursued during the 1980s and 1990s (Spohm & Beichner, 2000).

**Policy changes and Black women.** Like Spohm and Beichner (2000), Sokoloff (2005) also argued that criminal justice system policies have not changed women's rates of criminality; however, they have resulted in a change in women's incarceration rates. The changes in policy have created a widening net that brings more and more women into prison for the lower levels of all types of crime, especially so-called violent crimes (Sokoloff, 2005). Cauffman (2008) argued that policy changes may be a factor in the increase in the structural forces shaping the violent offending rates of females and males. In Cauffman's (2008) review of studies that examined policy and arrest rates, she supported Steffensmeir et al. (2005), who found that

the statistical shift in aggressive offending among females may be nothing more than an artifact of changes in criminal justice policy and practice where ... increases in female arrest rates for violent offenses may therefore be due, at least in part, to net widening policies, such as more aggressive policing of low-level crimes, and the increasingly common reclassification of simple assaults as aggravated assaults. (p. 122)

For example, domestic violence law requires mandatory arrests and often the battered woman is arrested with the batterer (Sokoloff, 2005). Furthermore, historically, Black women were popularly viewed as more masculine, violent, aggressive, dominating, physically powerful, sexually loose, and criminal than their White counterparts (Harris, 1998). Some researchers have purported that this is another reason the rate of incarceration for Black women is significantly higher compared to women of other races. Sokoloff (2005) stated that another factor that affects Black women is the implementation of policies for the War on Drugs. Sokoloff (2005) proposed that this war should be renamed “the War on Poor Black Women” (p131) who now comprise more than 50% of the female population [in corrections] incarcerated on drug related charges despite the fact that they represent only 12% of the general population in the United States. Black women are more likely to be incarcerated for minimum drug offenses because they have no bargaining power to negotiate either monetarily or as an informant (Sokoloff, 2005). That is, because they usually have no money or information on the drug organization or leaders; they cannot negotiate their sanctions in these matters as an informant and are more likely to be given mandatory minimum sanctions (Sokoloff, 2005).

**Policy changes and Black female delinquents.** Gaarder and Belknap (2002) reported that policy change was the reason for the increase in female delinquency. These researchers noted that media factors had a significant influence on policy as it portrayed youthful offenders as increasingly dangerous, out of control, and in need of punishment rather than rehabilitation. The authors further stated that based on these current influences the policy makers have developed a tough on crime attitude creating changes within

criminal policy that affect how charges are made (Gaarder & Belknap, 2002). Mapson (2005) agreed stating that the increase in female delinquency may be because of changes in the way females are charged with crimes. Mapson referred to this change in how charges are made as a net-widening explanation stating that policy re-labels status offenses as violent offenses and what may appear to be an increase in violent crime is more likely not a change in the type of crime committed but more of a relabeling of the crime.

In their examination of the increase in girls' violent arrest rates, Steffensmeier et al. (2005) examined two perspectives for the rise in arrest reports. It appears the researchers agreed with one of the perspectives, the constructionist perspective, that suggested that crime waves are usually socially constructed typically because of changes in criminal justice policy and prevailing punishment philosophies (Steffensmeier et al, 2005). This perspective also recognizes the gender-specific impact of policy shifts. That is, the criminalization or relabeling of less serious or minor forms of violent acts creates a widening net that increases female arrests because their violent offending is typically less serious and less chronic (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010). For example, Knoll and Sickmund stated there is discretionary power at the point of arrest because the distinction between one type of assault and another rests with law enforcement's subjective judgment of intent and assessment of bodily harm to the victim. There appears to be discretion on the part of police officers where the practice today is to categorize disorderly conducts, harassments, and resisting arrest as simple assaults. Many crimes that were considered simple assaults at one time are now being deemed aggravated assaults (Knoll &

Sickmund, 2010). Charging up, which is to charge an offender with the more serious crime and more expansive definitions of crimes have led to enhanced sanctioning among youth overall but especially among girls, who tend to commit the milder or less serious forms of physical attacks or threats (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010).

Another gender-specific impact is the criminalization of violence occurring between intimates and in the private setting such as at home or school. These are social arenas in which female violence levels closely approximate male levels that generally occur between strangers or take place in public or street settings (Knoll & Sickmund, 2010). Domestic violence now includes simple assaults (Feld, 2009; Knoll & Sickmund, 2010). Feld suggested that these same incidents of domestic violence between intimates now lower the threshold to arrest for an assault and may create an artificial appearance of a crime wave when the underlying behavior remains more stable. That is, as Feld suggested, the increase in female delinquency involving simple and aggravated assaults may more accurately reflect minor incidents of status offenses and lesser offenses. Therefore, the increase in violent delinquency acts by girls may in fact be a result of relabeling status offenses as simple or aggravated assaults. As a consequence, domestic violence, now viewed as an assault, may be described as more prevalent in girls who fight with siblings and family members more frequently than boys who are more likely to fight with strangers or friends (Feld, 2009).

Sokoloff (2005) stated that the War on Drugs that has resulted in an increase in the incarceration rates of adult Black women has also been evidenced in the Black female delinquent population. Feld (2009) stated that in the 1980s and early 1990s, the epidemic

of crack cocaine, increased gun violence, and the get tough on youth crime initiatives had a significant impact on Black delinquents. This crackdown led to legal changes that resulted in some level of sanctioning for the delinquent including being transferred to adult court (Feld, 2009). Feld also suggested there was an indirect impact on Black girls, stating that, although the legal changes were intended for boys, especially Black boys, Black girls were affected because, like adult women, these girls were perceived as insignificant to the overall drug organization and more frequently given required minimum sentences as opposed to reduced sentences for bargaining.

Dohrn's (2004) examination of the increase in female delinquency also suggested the influence of administrative policies on how delinquents were being charged. According to Dohrn, this influence resulted in four shifts involving girls between 1994 – 2004: (a) the incarceration of girls in detention and corrections spiked; (b) girls' arrests for assault and aggravated assault or battery skyrocketed; (c) race, particularly being Black, characterized girls' arrests and incarceration; and (d) private institutions for girls in the form of private juvenile correctional facilities, mental health treatment facilities, and hospitals increased.

### **Policy Reformation**

Feld (2009) stated that historically juvenile courts sanctioned boys primarily for criminal misconduct and girls mainly for status offenses. Feld provided a historical treatment of female delinquents and noted that juvenile courts most often focused on controlling female sexuality by detaining and incarcerating females for minor and status offenses at higher rates than they did boys. Similar to the plight of incarcerated women,



there were reforms that were implemented for girls. The turning point came with the Supreme Court's *In re Gault* (1967) decision which precipitated a critical reexamination of juvenile court procedure, jurisdiction, and practice (Feld, 2009). This Supreme Court case created two significant changes in juvenile justice (Feld, 2009). First, it gave procedural rights to delinquents charged only with status offenses. That is, youths charged with criminal behavior could be detained and incarcerated but not those charged with status offenses (Feld, 2009).

Secondly, the Gault decision gave courts the jurisdiction that potentially encompassed all delinquents. That is, it gave juvenile courts greater autonomy to divert status offenders to the jurisdictional *soft end* of the justice system, which included more diversion programs, and to transfer serious offenders for adult criminal prosecution at the *hard end*. Finally it gave juvenile courts the purview to punish more severely the delinquents who remained within the "tougher juvenile justice system" (Feld, 2009, p. 226). The result was that the youth were more likely adjudicated and sentenced to residential programs. However, by the early 1970s critics of *In re Gault* (1967) objected to the court's decision because it allowed judges to incarcerate noncriminal offenders with delinquents in detention facilities and institutions, to stigmatize juveniles with delinquent labels, to discriminate against females, and it provided few beneficial services for delinquents (Feld, 2009). As a result of this expanded jurisdiction, status offenses overloaded the juvenile courts. There were increased numbers of domestic disputes, scarce resources were diverted from more serious offenders, and troublesome legal issues about vague jurisdictional definitions, procedural definitions, and procedural deficiencies

were constantly brought to question (Feld, 2009). To combat this issue, JJDP A was passed and included provisions to withhold federal funding from states that failed to remove status offenders and other nondelinquents from public detention and correctional facilities (Dorn, 2004).

Feld (2009) stated that the JJDP A Act of 1974 as well as Supreme Court decisions and state law reforms provided the impetus for three types of reforms in jurisdiction to be used with status offenders: diversion, deinstitutionalization, and decriminalization. First, increased procedural autonomy and administrative costs provided impetus to divert many troublesome juvenile cases and to handle them informally and outside of the juvenile justice system. Second, federal prohibitions on confining noncriminal status offenders with delinquents in secure detention facilities and training schools spurred efforts to deinstitutionalize status offenders, which greatly benefitted girls. Third, states redefined status offenders to remove them from the generic definition of delinquency and relabeled them as Persons or Children in Need of Supervision (PINS or CHINS) or other euphemisms, or shifted them into juvenile courts' delinquency or neglect jurisdiction.

Although this was a step in the right direction, in 1980, the JJDP A was amended to exclude juvenile violations of a valid court order from the deinstitutionalization requirement for status offenders. Specifically, judges were allowed to issue court orders for status offenders, and the violation of that court order would then become a delinquency offense for which detention or incarceration would be permitted or justified (Dohrn, 2004). In 1992 another amendment to the JJDP A required that all youth being

detained by a valid court order must appear before a judge and be given full rights to due process (Dohrn, 2004).

As a consequence of these reforms after JJDPA of 1974, there was a reduction in the number of incarcerated girls in public detention and correctional institutions (Dorhn, 2004). However, the reforms did not adequately provide for resources in the realm of prevention and intervention to deal with the challenges that delinquents were facing, especially girls. Again, similar to incarcerated women, policy changes have had an impact on female delinquent rates of incarceration. However, it appears that these policy changes have not directly addressed the needs of delinquent girls.

### **Risk Factors of Incarcerated and Delinquent Females**

The literature suggests that along with changes in policy, incarcerated women and female delinquents share some unique characteristics and risk factors that contribute to the increase in their involvement with the justice system. Hollin and Palmer (2006) discussed the risk-needs model which is closely related to Bandura's social learning theory's explanation about criminal behavior. The social learning theory describes criminal behavior as the outcome of an interaction between certain situational and personal factors, which increases the likelihood of a crime (Hollin & Palmer, 2006). Hollin and Palmer proposed that some aspects of an individual's functioning are risk factors for delinquency and these factors are historical to the person. That is, historical factors are the product of the person's demographic background and individual needs reflect current functioning and are amenable to change. Hollin and Palmer went further and made the distinction between criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs stating that

criminogenic needs are a subset of an offender's risk level as they are individual risk factors associated with the overall risk of reoffending. The previously mentioned researchers further drew a distinction between static needs and dynamic needs. Static needs are events in an individual's history that cannot be changed such as a history of physical abuse. A dynamic need is an aspect of an individual's current situation such as unemployment, which can be changed (Hollin & Palmer, 2006). It appears that Hollin and Palmer's conceptualization of static and dynamic needs are relative to the concept of risk factors associated with certain aspects in the lives of men and women.

Hollin and Palmer (2006) argued two points: (a) criminogenic needs (e.g. risk factors) are common to men and women; however, (b) women have women-specific criminogenic needs. Hollin and Palmer suggested that, although men and women share common criminogenic needs, it does not mean that the nature of the association between the need and offending is the same for males and females. The authors suggested that needs for male and female offenders may be qualitatively different in terms of development and of the nature of their association with offending (Hollin & Palmer, 2006). For example, in regards to static needs, some events such as physical and sexual abuse are arguably criminogenic needs of women as these events have been identified as factors correlated to female criminality and delinquency (Hollin & Palmer, 2006).

### **Exposure to Victimization**

Women offenders have unique risk factors or as Hollin and Palmer (2006) noted, criminogenic needs. Hollin and Palmer (2006) identified some of these needs as issues of self-esteem and assertiveness, medical care, mental health care, parenting and childcare,

and the maintenance of significant relationships. Hollin and Palmer (2006) also identified exposure to victimization as a significant static need or risk factor (i.e. event) in these women's lives. Victimization is the exposure to a traumatic event (i.e. witnessing or suffering). For women offenders, trauma is generally related to personal abuse.

There are mixed results related to the impact of victimization on criminal behavior in women. Hollin and Palmer (2006) noted that there are those women with abusive histories who do not become criminal. However, the authors also noted that significantly more incarcerated women than men have suffered childhood abuse, which persisted into adulthood. Hollin and Palmer (2006) maintained that persistent abuse or victimization is a key risk factor indirectly related to criminal behavior for incarcerated women along with mental health issues and drug abuse issues. Roe-Sepowitz, Bedard, and Pate (2007) also found support for the role of victimization in criminal behavior when examining the link between childhood abuse and adult criminal behavior. These researchers also suggested that the risk factors females face are related to victimization and include emotional stress, physical and sexual abuse, negative body image, suicide, and pregnancy. Roe-Sepowitz, et al. (2007) also examined the impact of different types of childhood abuse and adult dissociative symptoms in female offenders and found that most female offenders were victims of physical and sexual abuse. They further suggested that dissociation is an adaptive response to childhood abuse in which victims attempted to distance or numb themselves because of an inability to physically distance themselves from the abuse they are experiencing (Roe-Sepowitz, et al. 2007). The authors concluded that victims' mechanisms to cope with trauma also involve self-harm behaviors such as

self-infliction of cuts or burns, which are correlated with the development of dissociative or mental illness symptoms. Still other victims resort to substance abuse or criminal activity to deal with their trauma (Roe-Sepowitz, et al. 2007). The researchers found strong evidence that the abuse- pain-trauma cycle continued into adulthood (Roe-Sepowitz, et al. 2007).

**Victimization across the lifespan.** Many researchers reported that victimized women often find themselves involved in the criminal justice system, both as adolescents and as adults, when in fact they were victims of crimes first. Roe-Sepowitz, et al. (2007) stated that childhood abuse has been found to be a risk factor associated with a direct pathway to becoming abusive and victimizing others. The cycle is exacerbated and continued because survivors of abuse, whether physical, sexual, mental, or verbal, may need to express their emotional pain in a variety of ways. Dehart's (2008) work identifies victimization as a key factor involved in the pathway to crime. Dehart (2008) examined ways in which victimization is pervasive among incarcerated women and delinquent girls and how it may contribute to criminal involvement. She suggested that victimization plays a critical role along with other factors such as poverty, family fragmentation, school failure, and physical and mental health problems in contributing to a developmental pathway to crime. According to Dehart (2008), a prevailing criminological developmental perspective is that women's imprisonment is the consequence of unresolved historical problems/events that are specific to women. Dehart (2008) argued that the criminal behaviors in which women engage (i.e., drug abuse, prostitution, domestic violence) have been conceptualized as crimes as opposed to possible survival

strategies to cope with overwhelming physical, sexual, and psychological victimization. As mentioned previously, gender-specific programming is designed to address these risks and needs. However, due to the continued increase in female criminality and delinquency, it is unclear if existing programming is sufficient.

Victimization may continue from youth to adulthood and it may be the link to criminality. The link between victimization and criminality may begin early in life as over half the incarcerated women investigated by Dehart (2008) were first arrested as juveniles. Other studies of female juvenile offenders indicated that the majority were first arrested for running away from home to avoid abuse (Dehart, 2008). For runaways, prostitution and property crime often became a means of survival, and drugs are both a way of numbing emotions and making fast cash (Dehart, 2008).

Dehart (2008) discussed how victimization can have a direct or indirect impact on delinquent and criminal activity. According to Dehart (2008) the direct impact of victimization compels women to commit crimes because incarcerated women have consistently dealt with static needs that have perpetuated throughout their lives. Therefore, the women are compelled to criminal behavior and for most it began early and continued to adulthood. For example, Dehart (2008) found that many of the women in her sample had committed at least some of their current criminal acts as a direct response to physical victimization. Criminal behavior was a display of externalizing their emotions as a result of the victimization. As a result, many displayed aggressive behaviors in some way.

The indirect impact of victimization on delinquency and criminal activity has been shown to influence women's physical and mental health, their psychosocial functioning, as well as their families and other social relationships (Dehart, 2008). Women and girls tend to internalize their emotions. That is, they tend to experience distress, worthlessness, shame, self-blame, and embarrassment. The process of internalization has been linked to mental disorders, suicidal ideation, and addiction because women and girls tend to withdraw and or turn to addictive behavior as a means of coping with the trauma and as a way to numb themselves (Dehart, 2008).

These findings were very similar to Kimoni, Skeem, Edens, Douglas, Lilienfeld, and Poythress (2010) who examined 256 female offenders with a history of victimization of child abuse. These authors suggested that victimization of child abuse was a risk factor related to criminal behavior, suicidal-related behavior as well as some other mental disorders. The purpose of their study was to examine whether child abuse was related to externalizing-internalizing psychopathology, suicidal-related behavior, and criminal behavior. The authors defined internalizing psychopathology to include the mood disorders such as depression and externalizing psychopathology as symptomatic of substance abuse, child conduct disorder and adult anti-social personality disorder (Kimoni et al. 2010). Specifically, externalizing psychopathology has been identified with personality traits related to impulsivity, aggression, low constraint, alienation, and emotional dysregulation (Kimoni et al. 2010). These traits the authors found mediated the relation between childhood abuse and later suicidal-related behavior and criminal behavior. Overall, their findings suggest that a history of child abuse, channeled



specifically through externalizing psychopathology, raises the likelihood of suicidal and criminal behavior among female offenders (Kimoni et al. 2010).

Dehart (2008) discussed poly victimization's direct impact on pathways to crime. According to Dehart (2008) many incarcerated women had suffered multiple traumas such as childhood abuse and neglect, adult domestic violence, and sexual abuse. Dehart (2008) defined poly victimization as experiencing simultaneous episodes of different types of victimization and reported that these episodes had the potential to create a ripple effect in multiple areas in the women's lives compelling them to a pathway of crime. According to Dehart (2008), criminal pathways are derived from the traumatized women's childhood experiences.

Hart, O'Toole, Price-Sharps, and Shaffer (2007) stated that research has established the fact that the risk factors related to delinquency are very similar to those encountered by women offenders. Gaarder and Belknap (2002) examined the experiences of incarcerated female delinquents and found them to be consistent with other research on female offenders. The females reported lives fraught with violence and victimization, sexism, racism, and economic marginalization. Chamberlain (2003) identified risk factors that were also similar to incarcerated women: trauma and abuse, childhood sexual abuse, family factors, mental health problems, and criminal and antisocial behavior.

Dohrn (2004) discussed three characteristics of girls that support their experiences compared to incarcerated women. First, the girls have been victimized prior to their experience with juvenile justice. Second, they are increasingly identified as girls who are members of a marginalized population (i.e. Black girls). Third, many have demonstrated

resilience (Dohrn, 2004). Dohrn confirmed that victimization is a key issue as the girls who are confined are perceived as violent but, in fact, they have been victims of or witnesses to violence. Dohrn found that the majority (61.2%) of the incarcerated girls in her study reported experiencing physical abuse, and nearly half of them reported being abused more than ten times. Similarly, the majority of girls (54%) who were confined reported experiencing sexual abuse beginning at nine years of age or younger, and a third reported that it happened three to twenty times (Dohrn, 2004)).

Responses to victimization vary. According to Dohrn (2004) depression is common but rarely diagnosed because girls tend to internalize the symptoms of depression: sadness, isolation, and the sense of loss that comes from childhood trauma. Dohrn (2004) further suggested that some girls respond to their violent victimization with aggression and may be labeled oppositional or disruptive without any corresponding investigation into the origins of their behavior. Dohrn (2004) explained that either pathway (i.e., withdrawal and depression or oppositional resistance to control) may be considered a reasonable coping response to the violations that girls experienced. Both the irritability that accompanies depression in adolescent girls and the aggression that may be a common defense against helplessness often contribute to the ease with which these girls may engage in criminal behavior (Dohrn, 2004). Dohrn stated that running away from home is a principal coping response related to survival. However, it is unfortunate that this behavior has been criminalized and has become a major pathway for girls into prison. That is, the coping mechanism has become the crime.

Similar to findings by Kimoni et al. (2010), Ariga et al. (2008) reiterated that victimization is often caused by trauma and chronic exposure to violence results in the numbing of feelings or substance use and increased risk-taking behaviors, including violent activities, in an attempt to cope with or adapt to the feeling of being unsafe. According to the researchers, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a stress related disorder in which fear and related symptoms continue to be experienced long after a traumatic event. According to the *DSM-TR-IV*, the key symptoms are (a) re-experiencing the traumatic event, (b) avoidance, (c) reduced responsiveness, and (d) increased arousal, anxiety, and guilt. People who have been abused or victimized often experience lingering symptoms over their life time (APA, 2000).

Ariga et al. (2008) examined PTSD symptomology in a group of female delinquents and found that those participants who reported a history of PTSD symptomatology (14.5%) were more likely than those without such a history to have behavioral or emotional problems, interpersonal problems, academic failure, suicidal behavior, and health problems. In fact, they reported evidence that suggested that young female offenders with PTSD have more comorbidity with depression, substance abuse/dependence, psychoses, and eating disorders than those without PTSD.

### **Protective Factors**

Dohrn (2004) stated that female offenders are also resilient as there are some researchers who have identified protective factors for this population suggesting that the more protective factors and the fewer the risk factors an adolescent possesses, the less likely he or she is to be involved in delinquent or violent activities. Hart et al. (2007)

found that five significant protective factors existed including: extracurricular activities, absence of an aggressive response to shame, parental responsiveness, parental demanding, and having a caring adult at school. These 5 factors appeared to be best at discriminating between nondelinquent female adolescents and nonviolent delinquent females. The authors argued that females who lack protective factors should be closely monitored and, if necessary, placed into programs. This placement would provide structured after school activities to ensure that these girls are involved in constructive activities to build upon the positive factors that are missing from their individual lives (Hart et al., 2007).

### **Theoretical Explanations for Rate Increases Related to Victimization**

There are theoretical explanations offered to account for increases in the incarceration rate related to victimization. Bloom (2004) stated that most theories of crime were developed by male criminologists to explain male crime. Bloom (2004) also stated that until recently, most criminology theory did not address the influence of race, class, and gender on criminal behavior. The common belief was that adding gender to a mix of class and race complicated the theory and that it was better to ignore it. Alfred and Chlup (2009) also addressed this point of mixing class, gender and race and because of this lack of attention, Bloom (2004) referred to the female offender as an “invisible woman” (p. 28).

However, Bloom (2004) reported that theorists argue that in order to get an accurate understanding of the female offender, there must be an analysis of the integration of race, class, and gender. Based on this perspective, two primary approaches

to explaining female criminality have been used. The first involves theories that attempt to explain female criminality separately from male criminality. However, Bloom (2004) argued that these theories are often based on empirically unfounded assumptions about the female psyche. The second approach is demonstrated in traditional theories of crime developed to explain male criminality (Bloom, 2004). Both perspectives have been surrounded by skepticism as to how they explain female criminality.

### **Pathways Theories**

Covington and Bloom (2006) proposed three theories to facilitate understanding of female criminality as well as to develop gender specific programming: pathways theory, trauma theory, and addiction theory. These ideologies appear to provide the best explanation of how gender, race, class, and victimization play critical intersecting roles in understanding female criminality. For example, the pathways theory incorporates the whole life perspective in the study of crime causation (Covington & Bloom, 2006). That is, according to Covington and Bloom, research on the pathways theory consists mostly of extensive interviews with women to uncover the life events that place girls and women at risk of criminal offending while other studies use only presentence investigative reports and official records. The diverse data collection strategies describe a sequence of events in the lives of women and girls that shape their choices and behaviors (Bloom, 2004).

Bloom (2004) and Covington and Bloom (2006) agreed that research on women's pathways into crime indicates that gender matters significantly in shaping criminality because there are profound differences between the lives of women and men that shape

their patterns of criminal offending. Researchers utilizing the pathway theory to guide their research have identified key issues in producing and sustaining female criminality, and many are related to female delinquency. Examples of issues include histories of personal abuse, mental illness tied to early life experiences, substance abuse and addiction, economic and social marginality, homelessness, and dysfunctional relationships (Bloom, 2004; Covington & Bloom, 2006). Specifically, for women, the most common pathways to crime are based on survival of abuse, poverty, and substance abuse. Salisbury and VanVoorhis (2009) reiterated Dehart's (2008) theory as well as those of Bloom and Covington and Bloom and described three models of gender-specific pathways to the incarceration of women offenders.

**Childhood victimization model.** According to the first pathway, the childhood victimization model assumes that among the effects of childhood abuse, mental illness occurs prior to substance abuse (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). Interestingly, Salisbury and VanVoorhis' analysis indicated that although childhood victimization was not directly related to prison admission, it was an indirect influence on the onset of major mental health problems, especially depression and anxiety, as well as addictive behaviors. That is, women offenders more frequently described poly substance abuse as a way to manage depressive symptoms related to PTSD resulting from childhood trauma (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). Therefore, childhood abuse cannot be ignored in regards to understanding the etiology of female criminality because the majority of women offenders struggle with mental illness and substance abuse throughout their lives. Symptoms of depression and anxiety as well as current drug addiction were the two

variables that directly lead to women's recidivism (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009).

However, at the root of women's addiction, depression, and anxiety were experiences of childhood abuse (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009).

**Relational model.** The second pathway, the relational model, purports that dysfunctional intimate relationships lead to reduced levels of self-efficacy and greater likelihood of adult victimization followed by struggles with depression/anxiety and substance abuse (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). Salisbury and VanVoorhis used the work of Miller (1986, 1988) and relational theory to develop their explanation of the relational model. According to the relational theory, a woman's identity, self-worth, and sense of empowerment are said to be defined by the quality of the relationships she has with others (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). Women's dysfunctional relationships with significant others may lead to feelings of hopelessness and intense feelings of shame, self-blame, and guilt, which in turn could result in drug-abusing behaviors (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009).

Covington and Bloom (2006) corroborated this explanation stating that dysfunctional relationships characterized the childhood experiences of most women in the criminal justice system and, because women are far more likely than males to be motivated by relational concerns, their behaviors are a consequence to the negative emotions in dysfunctional relations. For example, women offenders who indicated a desire to numb the pain as their reason for drug abuse often identified personal relationship difficulties as the cause of their pain (Covington & Bloom 2006).

Salisbury and VanVoorhis (2009) found that women's unhealthy intimate relationships with others were indirectly related to prison admission through adult victimization, reduced self-efficacy, depression and anxiety, and addiction. However, via path analysis, the researchers found that each factor directly or indirectly affected recidivism. Specifically, similar to the childhood victimization model presented above, the researchers found that symptoms of depression and anxiety and current drug addiction were variables that directly led to women's recidivism (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). That is, although women's unhealthy relationships with their partners were not directly related to their likelihood of imprisonment, the dysfunctional relationships were still important in creating pathways toward criminal behavior because such relationships increased the likelihood of abuse and diminished the women's sense of self-confidence (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). Due to decreased self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-worth, women experienced difficulty coping without substances, and in turn sustained addiction via their criminal behaviors. Generally, their crimes were related to their coping and survival (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009).

Morgan and Patton (2002) referred to Gilligan's ideas regarding female adolescent development and noted that relationships are as important to girls as they are to women because relationships give girls a sense of connection and belongingness. According to Morgan and Patton females tend to internalize failures by assuming that the failure is their fault and externalize success by giving credit to others. Therefore, girls tend to look to external sources to build their self-esteem (Morgan & Patton 2002). Morgan and Patton also provided a detailed explanation for Gilligan's finding of a



fundamental shift that happens to girls around age 13. They explained that, at this age girls begin to give up their voice to be in a relationship. According to Morgan and Patton, Gilligan defined voice as inner strength or sense of identity that diminishes because, for many girls, social and societal expectations begin to crush their identity as they enter adolescence. That is, at this point in development, girls begin to lose their identity, the sense of who they are as individuals and who they want to become.

A prime example is peer pressure, specifically trying to attract the attention of boys by competing with other girls. To add to the pressure, the standards for the competition are set by societal expectation via the media, which begin to dominate girls' focus in adolescence (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Therefore, as girls enter adolescence and begin to develop into women they begin to form their identity in relation to other's perceptions. That is, they begin to define themselves through their relationships and how well they get along with others (Morgan & Patton, 2002). In Pipher's 1994 *Reviving Ophelia* (as cited in Morgan & Patton, 2002), she stated "girls today live in a more dangerous, overly-sexualized and media-saturated culture...and as a society we protect our girls less in how we socialize them and at the same time we put much more pressure on them to conform to the female role prescriptions" ( p58).

Researchers agree that relationship building should be a critical part of remedial programming for female delinquents because girls are socialized to be more empathetic and relational than boys (Morgan & Patton, 2002). However, it should be noted that incarcerated women have been repeatedly exposed to non-empathetic relationships and, as a result, they may not develop empathy for both self and others, or they may be highly

empathetic toward others but lack empathy for themselves (Bloom, 2004). In order to create change in their lives, women need to experience relationships that do not repeat their histories of loss, neglect, and abuse (Bloom, 2004). Therefore, in order to be effective and efficient, criminal justice policy must address the element of the dysfunctional relationships in women's and girls' lives. This relational component is critical because it speaks to the motivation to develop a voice in women and girls. It also speaks to the element of change in their lives via programming (Bloom, 2004). That is, because relationships are that important in women and girls lives, repairing and building healthy relationships should be critical components in gender-specific programming. Healthy relationships will create a sense of belonging, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-efficacy that in turn will combat the trend of recidivism based on loss of their unique voices.

**Social human capital model.** The third pathway reflects a social human capital model, which describes how women's social relationships with intimate others and family produces human capital to create opportunities to deter them from criminal activity (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). Social human capital is essentially a model of protective factors that create opportunities in the lives of those at risk of dysfunction. According to Salisbury and VanVoorhis, researchers investigating this theory found that women with fewer educational achievements, lower self-efficacy, and problems related to employment and financial assistance were significantly more likely to be incarcerated. These results indicated that the greater the dysfunction in women's intimate relationships, the more likely they were to have lower self-efficacy and limited socioeconomic status

(Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009). According to Salisbury and VanVoorhis women with insufficient social human capital often have lower self- confidence, little to no support from family, and greater problems with keeping and maintaining a job and establishing financial independence.

### **Trauma Theory and Addictions Theory**

Bloom (2004) and Covington and Bloom (2006) suggested two other theories that relate to incarceration rates and victimization because they are interrelated issues in the lives of women offenders; trauma and addiction theories. Covington and Bloom (2006) defined trauma as a response to violence and noted that women may have different responses to violence and abuse. The researchers stated that some women may respond without displaying trauma due to adequate coping skills. They also noted that a traumatic response may not be recognized immediately because the violent event may not have been perceived as being traumatic but, rather, as being normal (Bloom, 2004; Covington & Bloom, 2006). Therefore, trauma may occur on multiple levels because it is not limited to suffering violence; it includes witnessing violence, as well as stigmatization because of gender, race, poverty, incarceration, or sexual orientation (Bloom, Owen, Deschenes, & Rosenbaum, 2002).

Covington and Bloom (2006) also suggested that trauma included not only direct trauma, but also indirect trauma and insidious trauma, which includes but is not limited to emotional abuse, racism, anti-Semitism, poverty, heterosexism, dislocation, and ageism. Specifically, in regards to insidious trauma, the impact may be cumulative and experienced across the course of a lifetime. For example, because Black women may be

subjected to varying degrees of insidious trauma throughout their lives, survival behaviors that this population may display might be easily mistaken for criminal responses. Bloom (2004) suggested that this misinterpretation is a consequence of a lack of understanding of the impact of insidious trauma on women who have lived their lives under the impact of racism, heterosexism, and/or class discrimination.

In a sample of substance abusing women, Grella, Stein, and Greenwell (2005) explored correlations among exposure to childhood abuse and traumatic events, adolescent conduct problem, substance abuse, and adult psychological distress and criminal behavior. Their interest was in the relationship between different types of childhood traumatic exposure, adolescent behavior, adult criminal behavior and current psychological status. They found among substance abusing women offenders that their varied experiences of childhood abuse and trauma were related to their adolescent problem behaviors as well as to later manifestations of psychological distress and criminal behavior (Grella et al. 2005). They also found that childhood sexual abuse was both directly related to adult criminal behavior and indirectly related through adolescent substance abuse (Grella et al. 2005). Further, the authors found that adolescent substance abuse was also positively related to later drug and property crime. This finding suggested that early substance abuse is related to gradual and greater drug severity, which may motivate involvement in such criminal behavior over time (Grella et al., 2005).

Johansson and Kempf-Leonard (2009) examined Howell's (2003) female-specific pathway to serious, violent, and chronic offending model. According to Johansson and Kempf-Leonard (2009), Howell proposed five risk factors related to girls' involvement in

serious, violent, and chronic offending: child abuse and victimization, mental health problems, running away, gang involvement, and juvenile justice involvement. Johansson & Kempf-Leonard (2009) stated that Howell's argument was that, except for child abuse, boys and girls have equal experiences; however, the combination of all these experiences may have greater negative effects on girls than on boys, propelling a subgroup of girls toward serious, violent and chronic offending. However, in their analysis, Johansson and Kempf-Leonard reported that, except for the statistical relationship of abuse and maltreatment, which was insignificant for females and males, Howell's risk factors predict serious, violent, and chronic offending for females and males. Their general conclusion was that mental health problems, running away, gang involvement, and juvenile justice involvement were the risk factors that predicted serious, violent, and chronic offending among males and females. However, victimization due to abuse was the main factor that led to all the other significant factors for females (Johansson & Kempf-Leonard, 2009).

In summary, pathways theory, trauma theory, and addiction theory suggest a recurring theme in the life of the female offender, victimization via some exposure to trauma initially in childhood. From the literature it can be surmised that victimization is an issue that needs to be addressed in remedial programming targeting incarcerated women and delinquent girls. If this issue is not adequately addressed, it may exacerbate the challenges women face when released, which may lead to recidivism. However, there is a paucity of research on efficacy both of programs that address victimization and those that do not. There is also little research on the aspects of successful programs for

incarcerated women. This is an area in need of research and, if future research indicates that the addition of discussions of victimization into programming would prove effective in resolving these issues, future interventions should be constructed to include this component.

Alltucker, Bulis, Close, and Yonanoff (2006) stated that an important goal for our society is to identify and intervene with all youth who are likely to become chronic adult criminals. The authors also argued that there needs to be an aggressive investigation into the variables on the developmental trajectory that lead to a youth's first arrest because accurately identifying the different pathways experienced by early and late start juvenile delinquents will help inform both practice and policy pertaining to them. Alltucker, et al. (2006) also stated that a potent variable associated with negative developmental outcomes is child maltreatment, including child physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and child neglect, which are associated with future violent behavior. In order to intervene with females in the judicial system, many researchers have suggested that gender-specific programming should be implemented in order to mitigate criminal behavior in females by addressing gender-specific developmental factors.

### **Gender-Specific Programming to Mitigate Incarceration Rate Increases**

Harris (1998) stated that women offenders have always been treated differently than male offenders and that the differences in treatment often have harmed rather than helped women. This harm was postulated to be due to the historical assumption that women have similar experiences to those of men and programs and policies that lead to effective programming for men will work for women (Harris, 1998). However, because

gender differences were not considered, remediation programs were often ineffective (McDonald, 2008). Because of the lack of efficacy of applying male programming to incarcerated females in remedial efforts, researchers have called for the development of gender-specific programs for females.

McDonald (2008) cited recommendations by the National Institute of Corrections that proposed that treatment within the correctional system be gender-responsive as this approach takes into consideration the need for creating an environment that reflects an understanding of the realities of women's lives and addresses the issues of women. Moreover, Roe-Sepowitz et al. (2007) stated that the kinds of services that should be available to female offenders are influenced by their high level of traumatic experiences and resulting mental health issues. Roe-Sepowitz et al. also recommended that the programs' staff should be educated regarding the high levels of trauma potentially suffered by female offenders and trained in more positive ways in which to care for them. They argued that the reciprocal relationship that appears to exist between criminal behavior, mental health problems, and childhood abuse must be addressed by correctional facilities if the cycle of recidivism is to slow down and/or stop.

### **Recommendations for Program Implementation**

Because of trend increases and recognition of different pathways to criminal behavior, there has also been a call to action for gender-specific programming (GSP) to address female delinquent needs. Chamberlain (2003) stated that treatment for girls should be gender-specific as male treatment models do not adequately address the unique needs of girls. Thornberry, Huizinga, and Loeber, (2004) further stated that to reduce

delinquent behavior and improve societal well-being, it is essential to develop effective intervention programs based on empirical understanding of the origins of delinquency. In their review of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) investigation of the causes and correlates of delinquency, one of the key risk factors identified for delinquency was child maltreatment. That is, children who were victimized in childhood and whose victimization persisted throughout adolescence scored significantly higher on an assessment of abuse than those who never were victimized. The problem is translating these recommendations into practice in the face of the lack of research on the topic of gender-specific programming in incarcerated female populations.

Of the research that exists on programming, the results indicate that current programming strategies for women are not meeting the gender-specific needs of this population especially in regards to victimization. Federal policy changes have called for programming to address the needs of women and girls. However, historically, programming has focused on males. According to the OJJDP, if women's and girls' issues are not addressed, we will continue to see a pattern of recidivism that extends to adulthood. It is evident that additional research is needed on the topic to determine the extent of gender-specific programming currently being implemented and the extent of treatment addressing victimization within such programming attempts.

Bloom et al. (2002) stated that the OJJDP increased federal support to state and local efforts to address the issue of gender-specific services for girls; however, the federal efforts have been limited in scope and it is up to the state to take action. Bloom et al. reported that states faced challenges in their attempt to implement gender-specific



services and programs for girls because there was limited resources and information regarding what works for girls as well as an effective comprehensive needs assessment to identify what was needed. Moreover, there were a growing number of female juvenile offenders who were in custody for committing more serious crimes.

### **Research on Gender-Specific Programming**

Bloom et al. (2002) reviewed national and state efforts to address gender-specific programming for girls in the juvenile justice system and summarized findings from an assessment in the state of California that was conducted in 1997 and 1998. As previously mentioned, on the national level, the call to action included adding the Challenge Activity E component to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. In 1992, this amendment required all states applying for federal grants to examine their juvenile justice systems, identify gaps in services to juvenile female offenders, and plan for providing needed gender-specific services for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency. However, since the passage of the amendment most of the progress on a national level has focused on program planning, training for practitioners and policy development, with little attention to research and evaluation (Bloom et al., 2002).

Bloom et al. (2002) also reviewed the work of Greene, Peters & Associates. In 1997, Greene, Peters & Associates was awarded a three-year grant by the OJJDP to identify “promising programs” (p40) for juvenile girls throughout the United States and to develop curricula and implement training for practitioners working with girls involved in the juvenile justice system. At the completion of the three year project Greene, Peters & Associates (1998) published their findings in a report entitled *Guiding Principles for*

*Promising Female Programming*, which focused on structural issues and programmatic elements. In developing a program, Greene, Peters & Associates suggested that attention should be paid to organization and management; diversity among staff; and staff training in female development risk factors and cultural sensitivity (Bloom et al. 2002). They also suggested that the intake and reentry process should be individualized.

According to Bloom et al. (2002), Greene, Peters, and Associates' results also revealed that specific programmatic elements should include education, skills training, and elements that promoted positive development such as problem solving, relationship building, culturally relevant activities, career opportunities, health services, mentoring, community involvement, positive peer relationships, and family involvement. Specific treatment concerns such as prenatal or postpartum care, parenting and health care for babies, and substance abuse were also mentioned. However, there was no suggestion to include mental health services to address victimization specifically or an assessment of the inclusion of victimization in the program review.

On the state level, Greene, Peters, and Associates (1998) found that in 1997, 24 states embarked on efforts to follow the amendment. They noted some states developed unique approaches to addressing the needs of female juvenile offenders (Bloom et al. 2002). Of all the states, these researchers noted Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Oregon had developed promising mentionable programs but Oregon was the only state that had added factors to address victimization directly in regards to physical and sexual abuse.

### **Oregon's Gender-Specific Program to Reduce Female Incarceration Rates**

In 1993, the Coalition of Advocates for Equal Access for Girls helped pass a unique gender-responsive bill in Oregon. This bill resulted in Oregon becoming the only state in the nation at that time with a law (ORS 417.270) that required state agencies serving children under 18 years to ensure that girls and boys have equal access to appropriate services, treatment, and facilities (Morgan & Patton, 2002). However, equity did not mean identical access to these statewide services as these agencies were also to ensure that services provided were appropriate and equally meaningful to each gender (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

Based on this law, Morgan and Patton (2002) recommended guidelines for an effective program in Oregon. The guidelines were based on the ideology that girls face different challenges than boys (e.g., eating disorders, depression, violence and abuse, homelessness, running away, and prostitution). Morgan and Patton developed guidelines and a manual to assist Oregon organizations in developing gender-responsive (specific) programs. Morgan and Patton described the guidelines by first defining gender-specific services for girls as services that comprehensively address the needs of a gender group (female or male) by fostering positive gender identity development. Morgan and Patton also defined gender-responsive programming for girls as programming that intentionally allows gender to affect and guide services in regards to site selection, staff selection, program development, content, and material to create an environment that reflects an understanding of and is responsive to the issues and needs of girls and young women.

**Guideline sections.** Morgan and Patton (2002) detailed the guidelines in two sections. One addressed the administration and management of gender-specific programs and the other program content. Accordingly, Morgan and Patton detailed the administrative guidelines to include program policies, collection of data on girls, program design, intake processes and assessment tools, and outcome measures. Administration and management was deemed critical to success but program content and delivery was considered the key to a girl's individual success. These components addressed building a sense of self-efficacy in girls' lives. The content guidelines included environmental safety, building positive relationships, identity development, and fostering self-control.

**Environmental safety.** The guideline of environmental safety addressed physical and emotional safety. In regards to physical safety, girls not only need to be safe but also need to feel safe in their physical surroundings. Emotional safety includes feeling safe, nurtured, and free to express emotions. Environmental and emotional safety provides an environment that encourages girls to express themselves, share feelings and allow time to develop trust within the context of building positive relationships (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

**Emotional safety.** Another aspect of emotional safety is protection from self. That is, a program's environment must protect girls from self-destructive behaviors such as self-mutilation, suicide attempts, development of eating disorders, and/or drug and alcohol abuse. In addition, girls need to feel emotionally safe from other girls. Relational aggression is a form of expression for girls that can create an unsafe environment. This type of aggression includes verbal put downs; gossiping to damage a girl's relationships;

or telling others not to associate with a certain person as a means of retaliation (Morgan & Patton, 2002). The staff/program must develop a structure in which it is not only unacceptable for girls to physically and emotionally hurt each other but also unacceptable to hurt each other through relational aggression.

**Building positive relationships and identity development.** Promoting and developing emotional safety is considered vital in facilitating the development of identity and healthy relationships. As mentioned previously, interpersonal relationships are key to girls developing their identities. Therefore, another guideline proposed that girls need to build positive relationships because of the significance of relationships in the lives of young women (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Morgan and Patton suggested that healthy relationships and positive connections should be at the core of a program. Morgan and Patton quoted Carol Gilligan and stated "attachment, interdependence, and connectedness to a relationship are critical issues that form the foundation of female identity (p. 61)." That is, a girl's relationship with staff and the staff's relationship with girls are considered fundamental to a program's effectiveness (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

However, more importantly, Morgan and Patton (2002) concluded that programs should teach appropriate relational skills to girls so they can replace harmful relationships with positive ones and address negative behaviors in relationships. Trust in relationships is a major issue and, although the quality of staff-to-client relationships is critical to success, girls also need to learn how to have healthy relationships with other girls (Morgan & Patton, 2002). In addition, Morgan and Patton stated that girls must be given tools to avoid relational aggression. It was recommended that formal mechanisms be built

into a program to enhance relationships and trust through one-on-one interactions, as girls need to learn to communicate verbally with one another as well as with adults (Morgan & Patton, 2002). The key is to have space in the programming schedule that allows for this type of interaction.

**Skill building.** Because many adolescent girls have low self-esteem and feelings of powerlessness, other guidelines that support identity development were suggested (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Teaching girls new skills based on their personal and cultural strengths is important. Morgan and Patton agreed that teaching personal respect facilitates the development of self-esteem and teaches girls to appreciate and respect themselves as opposed to relying on others' external evaluations for validation. Programs must integrate programming approaches that teach young women how to value their perspective, celebrate and honor the female experience, and respect themselves for the unique individuals they are and who they are becoming (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

**Fostering self-control.** Building on this guideline of self-respect, Morgan and Patton (2002) also suggested that fostering feelings of control may be another aspect for successful programming. Programs need to help girls find their voices and to be expressive and powerful in positive and productive ways. Key to this development is problem solving and decision making skills (Morgan & Patton, 2002). That is, girls need to learn how to make good decisions by practicing making decisions in a safe environment and learning from the consequences or outcomes of personal decisions in a supportive environment (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

**Health and substance abuse issues.** Morgan and Patton (2002) also included guidelines to address health and substance use/abuse issues. It was acknowledged that girls need accurate information about positive emotional and mental health especially to address traumatic issues, depression, and substance abuse. However, physical health is also critical; if a girl's sense of worth is diminished, so will be her health. These guidelines are similar to some of the more general components of traditional programs but also include information about female issues, including personal care, exercising, physical health, menstruation, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, and sexuality.

Research indicates that girls have four times as many health issues as boys; it is vital that girls receive information about their bodies in order to take ownership over their physical being (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Because body image is important to young women, it is essential to consider the process of physical development. As girls' bodies develop, they change outwardly as well as inwardly. The result is that young women not only have to deal with their own feelings about bodily changes but they have to respond to the comments and opinions of others (Morgan & Patton, 2002). For example, the media and its sexualized images of women and girls confuse and pressure girls into unhealthy and risky practices (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Instead, girls need to be able to love themselves and feel comfortable with their bodies no matter their size and shape (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

**Spiritual health component.** Morgan and Patton (2002) also provided a guideline for spiritual health suggesting that time should be set aside for girls to explore

their spirituality and inner strength; to develop hope; and to become strong, centered, and at peace. Research suggests that spiritual connectedness is one factor that enables a girl to maintain self-esteem and a sense of self during difficult developmental periods (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Some of the activities during puberty and adolescence could include meditation, music, and keeping a journal (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Morgan and Patton (2002) also suggested that programs integrate a type of celebration or ritual into treatment programs to teach girls to celebrate themselves.

**Single-gender programming.** Another proposed guideline was for *Single-Gender Programming* (Morgan & Patton, 2002). The idea was to focus on relationship building and identity building. The critical component was that the entire program should be focused on a single gender because this type of programming gives girls the time, environment, and permission to work on overcoming a value system that commonly prioritizes male relationships over female relationships (Morgan & Patton, 2002). According to Morgan and Patton, girls need to have time by themselves, to be themselves, and to focus on their own issues and growth. This means that they need to be taught that relationships with self and other females are just as important as being with boys and that it is acceptable for them to make self-care a priority (Morgan & Patton, 2002). Girls-only programs or groups teach girls to cooperate with and support one another (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

Another component implicit in the single-gender program approach is the matching of girls to a mentor. Matching a girl with a mentor who has a similar ethnic heritage, culture, and background is encouraged because it is critical that girls have adult



women in their lives who can serve as examples of internal strength and ability (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

**Victimization.** Of all the components that are thought to influence building self-identify and augmenting appropriate relationships, a critical guideline identified in the literature as having the most devastating impact on women and girls is victimization and trauma. According to Morgan and Patton (2002) the guidelines for Oregon were the first to propose that programs address this debilitating factor.

[The Oregon program] address the sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, emotional/ verbal abuse, trauma, domestic violence, and loss that many girls have faced. These issues deeply affect many parts of a girl's life and how she views herself as a female. Many girls have been victims of crimes of abuse, and they need help in learning not to view themselves as victims, but instead, as survivors and thrivers. (Morgan & Patton, 2002, p. 63)

Although victimization needs were recognized as important, it is also important for program staff to support girls in understanding the connection between their anger and acting out or acting in (i.e., self-destructive) behaviors, their reluctance to trust others, and their victimization. As mentioned previously, girls need to learn how to develop and maintain healthy boundaries and how to develop healthy relationships (i.e., nonsexual, mutual, and empathic). It has been recognized in the literature that females' pathways to crime, violence, substance abuse, exploitation, prostitution, pornography, and other criminal behaviors often stem from an experience of abuse or trauma. In order for programs to be effective, program stakeholders must first understand and address

issues of victimization. Therefore, it was proposed that victimization issues should be addressed in either one-on-one or in single-gender group format (Morgan & Patton, 2002).

The guidelines proposed by Morgan and Patton (2002) constitute an extensive model other systems can adopt and from which they can learn. Missing from the literature are empirical investigations and outcome studies in regards to the implementation of this program and topic. It is also unclear to what extent such programs and program components are being implemented in other parts of the country. This investigation adds to the literature on this topic.

### **Program Components Intended to Mitigate Female Recidivism**

A review of the literature suggested that GSP should include components that address girls' developmental pathway to delinquency. Van Wormer and Kaplan (2006) stated that gender-specific mental health and substance abuse treatment are critical for women in prison and those formerly incarcerated. They further stated that, because this population of women has experienced repeated exposure to trauma ranging from stigmatization and powerlessness to sexual, emotional, and physical abuse without effective mental health treatment, it is likely that the cycle of inappropriate coping strategies will continue with an increased likelihood of repeated incarceration. Because the criminality cycle does not begin in the adult woman's life but early in childhood and/or adolescence, it may be important to address victimization across the lifespan; however, additional research is needed on this topic. As previously mentioned, researchers have maintained that the pathway that leads a girl to crime and incarceration

often begins with physical and sexual abuse in childhood, running away, and the seeking of solace in drugs and corrupt company. Self-hatred and low self-esteem are a part of the pattern.

Welch, Roberts-Lewis, and Parker (2009) described the Multi-level Risk Model, which draws on a bio-psycho-social framework. This model recognizes the interwoven multiplicity of factors that may place females at high risk for developing and sustaining substance dependency and engaging in delinquent behaviors (Welch et al. 2009). Based on this model, Welch et al. proposed that successful gender-specific programming must provide emotional and physical safety and address the specific needs of female offenders comprehensively. That is, treatment components, such as counseling and substance abuse education, must not stand alone but rather must be included as critical elements of holistic programming with focus on mental health, physical health, and relational context. The researchers detailed six components for effective programming indicating that the components address the following issues:

- (a) victimization issues including empowerment, self-sufficiency, sexuality, domestic violence, self-esteem, gender roles, and socialization;
- (b) demographics such as age, race, ethnicity, and culture;
- (c) interventions that build self-identity and relationships;
- (d) strengths-based orientation that builds resiliency of girls and their families, and communities;
- (e) giving girls a voice in the development, implementation, and evaluation of programming and the components of treatment; and
- (f) the needs and concerns of girls who have physical disabilities and learning disabilities. (Welch et al. 2009, pp. 73-74)

Although excellent and theory driven information has been published about program requisites, there is a paucity of research establishing the current inclusion of gender-specific programming in our current judicial system. Furthermore, it is currently unclear how such policies and programs that reflect what we know about women's and girls' victimization rather than policies that seek to punish would serve to mitigate recidivism. Additional research is needed on this topic (Van Wormer & Kaplan, 2006). The effects of a major policy change and intervention at the onset of delinquency with gender-specific programming that addresses gender-specific needs, especially childhood/adolescent victimization may be effective; however, there is no research on this topic.

#### **Research on the Inclusion of Victimization into Gender-Specific Programming**

Although researchers have indicated that victimization should be addressed in programming, it is not typically a part of current programming. Bloom et al. (2002) reviewed California's 67 delinquency programs via surveys of officials from various state agencies as well as focus groups with girls and professionals serving this population. The results of this investigation indicated that family problems, victimization, violence, and drugs are critical factors that contribute significantly to female involvement in juvenile offending. Survey and focus group respondents reported that their families were their primary risk and protective factors, and family problems such as conflicts and lack of communication, as well as parents who were ill-equipped or unprepared were associated with a range of problems presented by the parents themselves. Survey respondents

indicated that positive family communication, along with rules and structure within the family, were primary protective factors.

Bloom et al. (2002) also found that the lack of self-esteem was a primary problem displayed by many delinquent girls. Further, substance abuse was often a sign of other problems that lead to risky behavior. Sexual, physical, and emotional abuses were significant factors in producing risky and delinquent behavior among girls and young women. As mentioned in the focus groups, the effect of abuse was long lasting and created problems with running away, emotional adjustments, trust and secrecy, future sexuality, and other risky behaviors (Bloom et al., 2002). Gang involvement and fighting with peers contributed to delinquency for a significant number of girls. According to survey respondents, creating a positive self-image and helping youth with skills related to problem solving, conflict resolution, and relationship building were among the primary protective factors for the young women (Bloom et al., 2002).

Interestingly, none of the program respondents directly addressed victimization. However, the majority of programs included individual, family, and group counseling, as well as specific skills training such as education, life skills, and anger management; it was unclear if victimization issues were addressed in these settings (Bloom et al. 2002). About half of the agencies provided individual counseling for substance abuse and more than half referred clients to 12-step groups (Bloom et al. 2002). The results of the focus group interviews suggested that few programs addressed the serious problem of victimization or provided needed services for prevention or treatment of substance abuse (Bloom et al. 2002). Additional research should be conducted to determine the extent of

program implementation and to determine if victimization is likely or unlikely to be included as a program component.

### **Research on the Overall Efficacy of Programs**

Although there is limited research available on the efficacy of gender-specific programming in incarcerated females, there is some empirical evidence from which needs assessment conclusions can be drawn. Bloom et al., (2002) found that the majority of the respondents to their survey in California indicated that they wanted additional information about effective programming for girls. Half of the respondents indicated a need to identify the best practices and provide program models. In focus group interviews, respondents indicated that the juvenile justice system does not identify and address the needs of girls and young women in policy and program development. Most female delinquents continue to commit relatively minor offenses, which suggest a need for prevention and intervention programs as opposed to increased security in institutions. Furthermore, program managers were found to lack information about available models and program effectiveness and that funding for gender-appropriate programs is critically inadequate (Bloom et al. 2002).

Chamberlain (2003) discussed the outcomes of a program implemented in Oregon to address girls' needs. Although the program did not include incarcerated females, the results of the investigation relate to the current investigation as the subjects were girls with a prior history of delinquency. This program adapted the Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) model and compared outcomes with girls randomly assigned to a Group Care (GC) model. In MTFC, one girl is placed in a family home

where the foster parents have been recruited and trained who are supervised to provide a set of treatment components that are hypothesized to be related to specific short- and long-term outcomes. In GC, girls are placed with from 6 to 15 peers who are experiencing similar problems with delinquency.

The primary purpose of the study was twofold: to evaluate systematically the short- and long-term outcomes for girls participating in the experimental intervention (MTFC) relative to those in the control condition, and to evaluate the contribution of the treatment components to immediate and long-term outcomes. Specifically, differences in short-term outcomes (i.e., association with antisocial peers, negative departures from treatment, contact with prosocial peers, school adjustment and performance, and high-risk sexual contacts) and long-term outcomes (i.e., drug use; relationships with non-antisocial romantic partners; and rates of school completions, occupational functioning, early pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases) were assessed.

Chamberlain (2003) hypothesized that, regardless of placement setting (MTFC or GC), girls' better short and long-term outcomes would be determined by the extent to which they received a set of key treatment components that included close supervision, consistent discipline, positive caring by a mentoring adult, relationship-building skills, monitoring of and help with school work, and education on how to avoid high-risk sexual contacts. The findings of the investigation revealed that, as expected, these basic components were important; however, because of their chaotic developmental histories, the girls were still considered at risk for delinquency. Chamberlain concluded that a better understanding of the developmental histories and gender differences in females

with conduct problems will lead to better defined targeted treatments. Specifically, she recommended that future treatment targets should focus on prior victimization.

In another empirical investigation, Walsh, Pepler, and Levene (2002) examined a gender-specific treatment intervention program in a Canadian girls' program, the Earls court Child and Family Centre (ECFC). The Earls court Girls' Connection (EGC) intervention model was based on a theoretical framework of developmental theories, relational theory, social learning theory, and a multisystem approach. Taken together, the developmental context for the intervention focused on the impact of aggressive girls' adjustment difficulties and functioning not only during childhood but also during adolescence and adulthood. There were three intervention groups based on three cognitive-behavioral treatment approaches. The groups focused on managing behaviors; however, none appeared to address any mental health issues, especially depression, trauma, anxiety or substance use.

The purpose of the research was to examine the effectiveness of a gender-specific intervention model. It was hypothesized that girls would be less aggressive and more prosocial as a result of their involvement with EGC. The results indicated that some girls demonstrated significant improvement; however, other girls were still demonstrating the clinical range of aggressive behaviors, possibly suggesting that these girls were more vulnerable as well as more at risk due to comorbidity. That is, the externalizing behaviors and depression were found to be chronic with more complicating factors among these girls, and comorbid factors were thought to impede responsiveness to treatment. The researchers indicated that it is essential that the role of depression is assessed especially



in girls who exhibit behavior problems because the girls who experienced comorbid aggression and depression problems required comprehensive, responsive clinical support. Therefore, the girls who exhibit problem behaviors at a young age are at risk for being on a trajectory for long-term problems (Walsh et al. 2002). The researchers also noted it was a particular challenge working with the girls because their highly alienating and disruptive behaviors diverted attention from their other problems, such as depression.

### **Status of Gender-Specific Programming in the United States**

Although there has been a national mandate for the development and implementation of GSP to address female delinquent needs; the response appears to be falling short in addressing a key need related to continued female delinquency and incarcerated women, that of victimization. Furthermore, there is a paucity of research describing the extent of current GSP and what components are involved in the programs if they do in fact exist. There is also limited research on the efficacy of GSP and additional research is needed on this topic.

The National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA) recommended the development of gender-specific treatment programs for female delinquents (Gender-specific Programming in Juvenile Detention and Corrections Facilities and Programs, 2005). It was recommended that programs for female offenders, which embrace the elements necessary to meet the unique needs of girls in the juvenile justice system, should be created. It was also suggested that programs should be designed to emphasize the importance of relationships to girls including the importance of a physical and emotionally safe environment and positive female role models. Additional guidelines

such as specialized staff training and the development of comprehensive and integrated programs that can be sustained over time were also identified (Gender-specific Programming in Juvenile Detention and Corrections Facilities and Programs, 2005). These were very similar to the guidelines proposed by Bloom, Owen, and Covington in their 2003 report on gender-specific strategies for female offenders (Morton, 2007).

Although Welch et al. (2009) presented a Multilevel Risk Model (MRM) for the assessment of adolescent female offenders to illustrate how components of effective gender-specific programming are germane to incarcerated teenaged girls with substance abuse issues and comorbid mental health disorders; there has been little research conducted to assess the efficacy of GSP on female inmates. The Multilevel Risk Model is based on the ideology already proposed that there are distinctive developmental and social pathways that contribute to girls' delinquency. Specifically child victimization and trauma have been identified as consistent and primary pathways for girls in the juvenile justice system although there are other factors related to these pathways (i.e. family dysfunction, substance abuse/dependency, teen parenting). Outcome studies are needed to determine the extent of program adoption, the components included in the programming, and the efficacy of such programs on female offenders.

### **Status of Gender-Specific Programming in Florida**

The purpose of this investigation was to (a) describe the current status of Florida's female delinquency programs; (b) to determine if the programs include a component to address victimization; and (c) to determine if there are differences between programs'

state quality improvement ratings of programs who address gender-specific topics and victimization topics. According to the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice there are approximately 52 residential programs in Florida of which 10 are gender-specific for female delinquents. According to DJJ's website an adjudicated delinquent's placement depends on a risk assessment, which concludes with the development of a commitment plan rather than on the location of the arrest. The Office of Residential Services oversees the maintenance and management of programs and only a Florida judge can place a youth, male or female, in a commitment program. However the level of commitment is determined by the DJJ commitment manager and the delinquent's juvenile probation officer (JPO). The goal is to match the delinquent to the appropriate level of commitment for treatment and rehabilitation needs. Florida's DJJ's programs are designed to rehabilitate through counseling and treatment.

### **State Quality Improvement Rating System**

According to the Florida DJJ website, all delinquency programs are mandated to adhere to the residential standards outlined in the Florida Statutes 985.632(5). DJJ has a quality improvement process in place to ensure that programs are in compliance. According to a memorandum published January 6, 2012 by Wansley Waters, DJJ Secretary, "the Department shall conduct quality improvement reviews of all state-operated and contract provider programs at least once each fiscal year using approved quality improvement standards" (p.1). In an attempt to stay abreast and current within the quality improvement standards, Secretary Waters' memo indicated an overhaul of the state's rating process that was effective the date of her memo. According to the DJJ

website, programs are now rated based on three categories: satisfactory compliance, limited compliance, and failed compliance. Satisfactory compliance indicates that the residential program meets or exceeds the standard practices as prescribed in the Florida statute. According to the website, a satisfactory rating means that the program can demonstrate via documentation or observation that it adheres to the standards and, if there is any variance, it is limited and does not affect the care, custody, or services provided to the detained youth.

Limited compliance, according to the DJJ website, indicates that the program can demonstrate that it adheres to the standard but there are some exceptions in some areas that affect the overall care, custody, and services provided to the detained youth. In this case, immediate corrective action is required. Failed compliance is an indicator of an overall systemic breakdown that has the potential to endanger youth in the care of the program and immediate corrective action must be taken to bring the program up to the DJJ standard.

Prior to Secretary Waters' memo, the rating status for programs included: Exceptional, Commendable, Acceptable, Minimal, and Failed. A program with an Exceptional rating, according to DJJ website, indicated that the program consistently met all requirements, and a majority of the time exceeds most of the requirements, using either an innovative approach or exceptional performance that is efficient, effective, and readily apparent. A Commendable rating indicated that all requirements were met without exception and an Acceptable rating, according to the website, indicated the requirements were met, although a limited number of exceptions occur that are unrelated to the safety,

security, or health of the youth. A program given a Minimal status did not meet requirements by one of the following: exceptions that jeopardize the safety, security, or health of the youth; frequent exceptions unrelated to care of the youth; or ineffective completion of items, documents, or actions necessary to meet requirements. A program given a Failed rating, according to the website, indicated that items, documents, or actions were missing or done poorly to constitute compliance and there are frequent exceptions that jeopardize the safety, security, or health of the youth.

It was noted that, in the 2010-11 and 2011-12 review of terms of the 12 gender-specific programs, 10 held Commendable status, and 1 retained Superior-Deemed Status, and 1 Acceptable status. Several of the Commendable programs also earned exempt status. It appears, based on the website's archival reports, that this status gives the programs somewhat of a reprieve from review. It also appears, to date, that two of 12 programs are no longer listed on the website without explanation for the removal. The issue at hand is, although the gender-specific programs are holding esteemed status, the delinquency statistics for girls continue to show an increase. For the purpose of this project, I proposed that the issue was due to gender-specific programming that did not address victimization as a key component of treatment and counseling. However, Florida appears to be taking steps toward ameliorating this issue.

In 2012, according to DJJ's website, Florida created a Roadmap to System Excellence Transferring Florida into a National Model for Juvenile Justice. This roadmap described the overall goals of DJJ for two years (i.e., 2012-2014): (a) to reduce juvenile delinquency, (b) redirect youth away from the juvenile justice system, (c) provide

appropriate less-restrictive sanctions, (d) reserve serious sanctions for those youth deemed the highest risk to public safety, and (e) focus on the rehabilitation of at-risk and delinquent youth. This roadmap was a detailed script on how the state planned to implement changes toward these stated goals. Florida's *Quality Improvement Standards* for residential delinquency programs includes a specific standard to address gender-specific programming. According to DJJ's website, the goal of the standard is to monitor whether the program provides assessments and treatments that promote physical and emotional healing.

### **Program Evaluation**

To address the efficacy of the gender-specific programs in Florida program evaluation is necessary. However, there are some noted weaknesses in the process as it relates to whether the evaluation is actually evaluating the efficacy of the components of the program compared to outcome measures as a matter of contractual compliance (Winokur, Tollett & Jackson 2002). That is, the purpose of evaluations should be to assess how well the programs are meeting the needs of the population served in the program and not only how well programs are in compliance with contracts. Contract compliance is critical but not necessarily related to resident success. For example, to evaluate the delinquent residential programs in Florida, Winokur et al. (2002) created a program evaluation methodology that would account for programmatic differences related to underlying risk factors of the population of the youth served in the program compared to cost-effectiveness.

Their methodology is referred to as PAM (Program Accountability Measures) and its purpose is to calculate how well a program is expected to do based on the program youth's risk of re-offending (expected success) compared to how well the program actually performed (observed success). One of the issues that Winokur et al. (2002) addressed was that this comparison would ensure that programs serving more difficult youth would not be held to inequitable standards due to a higher re-offense risk of the youth they serve, and would provide a realistic measure of program effectiveness for those programs serving less challenging youth. The purpose of comparing the cost-effectiveness, which compared the program's average cost per successful completion to the statewide average cost was to examine another factor of efficacy programming, effective management (Winokur et al., 2002).

Winokur et al. (2002) proposed that PAM would provide an effective measure of efficacy because it assesses program models, security levels, and other factors that may impact the relative likelihood of reoffending of the youth served by individual facilities. They argued that PAM analysis would allow program evaluators to take an important step beyond simple recidivism measures and program monitoring as a matter of indicating program effectiveness/success. Winokur et al. argued that program monitoring, the most common method of program evaluation, does provide valuable information about contract compliance; however, it cannot predict and is not intended to predict program outcomes related to resident success. That is, current program evaluation does not address whether the program model of intervention is effectively addressing the needs of the intended population.

For example, Winokur et al. (2002) reviewed delinquency residential programs in Florida from July 1998 to June 2000 and found that the comparison between program monitoring performance and PAM-based program effectiveness revealed that monitoring outcomes are unrelated to effectiveness. They offered a few explanations for this observation. First, and probably the most significant, was that the factors that contribute to successful juvenile rehabilitation are still not fully understood and are difficult to be written into compliance contracts or operational policies (Winokur et al. (2002) Secondly, ensuring the delivery of services such as counseling and education does not necessarily ensure the quality of those services. Winokur et al. (2002) argued that the effectiveness of interventions within program models may actually be highly related to factors too intangible to be measured by even careful contract monitoring. They suggested that the quality of management and its impact upon the culture within a program, the nature of staff-to-client interactions, staff turnover, and the level of dedication of key staff members may be more predictive of treatment success than objective measures such as program monitoring outcomes (Winokur et al. (2002) However, according to DJJ's website, since 2002, DJJ's Office of Residential Services has focused on increasing effectiveness of service delivery by implementing Evidence Based Practices (EBP). The view of the department is that EBP assessment, intervention, treatment and management practices will reduce the risk of re-offending. As a matter of implementation of EBP, the Residential Positive Achievement Change Tool (R-PACT) was created specifically for the state's residential programs (Office of Accountability, 2011). One purpose of this assessment tool, according to the website, is to develop a



Youth Needs Assessment that will effectively identify risk/needs and protective factors in a youth's life. Once those risks, needs, and factors are identified, an individualized Performance Plan would be developed indicating specific interventions to be used with the youth while in placement. Interestingly, it appears that this plan will also be used as the basis for determining a youth's release (i.e., success) from a residential program. In addition, according to the website, the R-PACT provides assessment data in relation to a program's treatment successes by domain (Office of Accountability, 2011). That is, it appears data will be aggregated to help identify how well programs are succeeding in certain areas of identified needs. Apparently, according to the website, this information will also assist commitment personnel in identifying appropriate placements for youth being presented for commitment.

Florsheim, Behling, South, Fowles, and DeWitt (2004) also discussed effective program evaluation and also reasoned that program evaluation has limitations when evaluating effectiveness of components. They stated that the challenge to program evaluators interested in whether a particular type of treatment is effective is due to the difficulty of disentangling the effects of one treatment program from those of another or in determining which component is having a significant impact. Florsheim et al. (2004) argued the need to develop a conceptual framework and technique for assessing program effectiveness at the systemic level to address this problem. The researchers proposed an evaluation that would address the questions: (a) what exactly are you providing, (b) how and for how long are you providing, and (c) is what you are providing working for you population. These are questions related to the current investigation. Florsheim et al.

(2004) hypothesized that delinquent youth who spent more time in treatment-oriented programs would be less likely to become adult offenders after accounting for differences in the severity of delinquent histories.

Surprisingly, the results of Florsheim et al. (2004) study were not encouraging because they found that there were no associations between time spent in programs and positive outcomes, suggesting that none of the programs they reviewed had the intended effect of preventing or even reducing recidivism. Interestingly, the authors reported that their failure to identify any positive effects of time in treatment was not consistent with other studies of interventions with serious delinquents that suggested that several models of institution-based treatment actually reduce the likelihood of recidivism. Florsheim et al. (2004) offered explanations for their findings and one was that the major difference of their study was that the incarcerated youth in the programs they reviewed were those who reportedly received what was referred to as “treatment as usual” rather than “state-of-the-art treatment” approaches (p136).

Moreover, Dembo et al. (2008) found that there are specific interventions that reduce recidivism. These researchers evaluated the Post-Arrest Diversion (PAD) program, which is a program that utilizes innovative standardized psychosocial risk and needs assessments to provide individualized treatment for first-time non-violent juvenile offenders to reduce recidivism. They found that youth involved in the Miami-Dade Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC), a juvenile arrest processing facility in Miami, FL, who completed the PAD program had significantly fewer arrests and charges than those who did not complete PAD.

Larence (2009) in conjunction with the Government Accountability Office reviewed juvenile justice reentry and substance abuse program research and efforts by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to provide information on effective programs (i.e., whether a program achieves its intended goals) and cost-beneficial programs (i.e., whether the benefits of programs exceeded their costs). These researchers found that programs that used cognitive-behavioral therapy, which are interventions that help change beliefs in order to change behavior, and family therapy, which are interventions that focus on improving communication in family relations are effective and cost beneficial when addressing reentry (recidivism) and substance abuse issues.

### **Program Evaluation of Gender-specific Programs**

In 2004, the OJJDP convened the Girls Study Group, an interdisciplinary group of scholars and practitioners to develop a comprehensive research foundation for understanding and responding to female delinquency. The Group had several goals related to female delinquency: (a) to review literature on female delinquency; (b) to analyze secondary databases; (c) to assess programs that target female delinquents; and (d) to review risk assessments and treatment-focused instruments for delinquent girls. The main goal of the Group was to identify and examine what leads to delinquency and what interventions and treatment programs will work effectively for girls. According to Zahn, Hawkins, Chiancone, and Whitworth (2008) the Group worked diligently towards

its goals. However, some of the significant findings of the Group that address gender-specific programming were not as encouraging.

Specifically, many states have designed programs to prevent and treat female delinquency; however, in an examination of how effective these programs were was not clear. Zahn et al. (2008) indicated that the Group found that 17 of the 61 programs that were reviewed nationwide had published evaluations but none could be rated as effective, effective with reservation, or ineffective. Indicated in their results was that most of the programs reviewed could only be rated as having insufficient evidence to establish effectiveness.

Zahn et al. (2008) also stated that the Group reviewed 26 programs (male and female) deemed by the Blueprint for Violence Prevention database as promising model programs and found that only eight programs analyzed whether program outcomes differed between male and female programs and that 23 were classified as equally effective. The researchers indicated that these model programs targeted multiple risk factors for delinquency, had individualized treatment plans for each resident, and connected each resident to resources in the community. It appears that even this convened Group suggests that there are still unanswered questions as they indicated that there continues to be a lack of reliable, accurate, and comprehensive information about good prevention and intervention programs for girls. Again, the goal of the current project was to add to the this gap in the literature to address what works effectively for female delinquents.

Fejes and Miller (2002) developed a model to evaluate the components of a gender-specific program. Based on a feminist pedagogy these researchers proposed that “any attempt to understand what the needs and desires are of female juvenile offenders requires the inclusion of the experiences and perspectives, not just outside ‘objective’ views” (Fejes and Miller, 2002, p.58). That is, similar to Florsheim et al. (2004), Fejes and Miller (2002) proposed that program evaluation should focus on the concerns, interests, and needs of the population being served. In their study, the authors held focus groups and interviews with the administration and residents of a 74 bed female delinquency residential program in Iowa. This process resulted in an 11 component survey model based on ideals of what would constitute a framework that would address the needs of the female population in the program. The 11 components included:

provide emotional and physical safety, be culturally appropriate, be relationship based, provide positive female role models and mentors, address the abuse in girls’ lives, be strength-based, not deficit based, address sexuality, including pregnancy and parenting, provide equitable education and vocational opportunities, address the unique health needs of females, including nutritional concerns and regular physical activity, nurture the spiritual lives of participants, and involve individual families. (Fejes & Miller, 2002, p. 59)

However, as indicated above, there is insufficient evidence to indicate overall effectiveness of programs. According to Larence (2009) the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act requires that the OJJDP publishes an annual plan for research and evaluation of delinquency programs. Larence indicated that the US Office of

Management and Budget (OMB) recommended that the OJJDP develop a comprehensive evaluation plan of juvenile justice programs. Larence indicated that since 2002 there has been no published plan and in December 2009 OJJDP proposed a plan to incorporate public comment into the evaluative plan. The plan is expected to be published when the comments have been incorporated.

As previously demonstrated, there seems to be a paucity of research on what is effectively working in girls' programs. In 2004, the OJJDP convened a group of interdisciplinary scholars and practitioners to form the Girls Study Group. The purpose of this group was to form a foundation of research that examined the patterns and causes of female delinquency and identify evidence based gender-responsive interventions to prevent or reduce girls' involvement in violence and delinquency (Girls Study Group, 2009). In 2009, the Girls Study Group conducted an Evaluation Technical Assistance workshop to equip select organizations with the resources needed to evaluate their gender-responsive delinquency prevention and intervention programs (*Workshop Assists Participants in Evaluating Gender-Sensitive Programs*(2009). At the workshop 10 selected programs were matched with experts who helped tailor evaluation instruments specifically customized for the program to document the effectiveness of the program's ability to prevent and reduce girls' involvement in delinquency. It was not indicated whether any of the programs were located in Florida. It appears that since 2009 Florida has been showing some indication of moving toward gender-specific programming. As mentioned previously, DJJ's website indicates that there is a QI standard specific to gender-specific programming. This standard requires that programs are to provide

delinquency intervention and treatment services that are gender-specific. However, according to the guidelines for this standard it does not specifically address interventions related to victimization. The standards specifically state the following:

The program demonstrates a program model or component that addresses the needs of a targeted gender group. Health and hygiene, the physical environment, life and social skills training, and recreation and leisure activities are key components in providing a gender-specific program (Office of Program Accountability. (n.d.). p2-82).

### **Summary**

In summary, there has been a national mandate in the form of adding the Challenge Activity E component to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. This mandate was added to direct states to develop gender-specific programs to address the unique needs of female delinquents. One of the prevailing factors that was identified as a critical element of this population's increased delinquency rates and recidivism is their exposure to victimization. It is critical that this mandate for programming addresses this factor. However, it is unclear if programs are including victimization as an issue. Therefore, program evaluation is needed to determine the efficacy of programs in meeting the needs of girls. However, the evaluations should go beyond the question of program contractual compliance to include whether the program is actually meeting the needs of the population served. For the purposes of this investigation a questionnaire was used to gather data to determine if delinquency

programs were addressing the specific needs of the female delinquents housed in residential programs in Florida (Appendix A).



## Chapter 3: Methodology

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to describe the current status of gender-specific remedial programming in female delinquency residential facilities in Florida. Of special interest was the inclusion of victimization topics in the curriculum. A second purpose was to explore the correlation among the extent of remedial programming, level of victimization remediation, and state facility quality improvement rating.

Because of recent increases in female delinquency rates in the juvenile justice system, risk factors and programming for this population are now gaining attention. Specifically, since 1992 with the adoption of the Challenge Activity E of the JJDP Act of 1974, there was a national mandate to implement gender-specific programming for female delinquents. Since the call to action and implementation, the rates of female delinquency have increased as well as those of incarcerated women. What was unknown was the extent of gender-specific programming, especially in regards to victimization, in residential programs for girls. It was also unknown whether the extent of such program implementation was positively correlated with facility state quality improvement rating. The current research added to the literature on these topics.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

A quantitative approach and correlation research design was proposed for the current investigation. According to Creswell (2009) using quantitative methodology is appropriate when there is a need to explain or validate relationships between two or more

variables based on a theory being investigated. Creswell also noted that it is best to use quantitative methods when the goal is to identify or predict variables that may influence an outcome or the efficacy of an intervention. As the topic of the current investigation was to examine continuous quantitative variables and report on the relationships among the independent variables of extent of remedial programming, level of victimization remediation, and dependent variable state facility quality improvement rating, the quantitative approach is deemed most appropriate.

Creswell (2009) reported a correlational design is a type of descriptive quantitative research method that is used to investigate whether a significant relationship exists among variables. A correlational design was deemed appropriate for this current study as the objective was not to determine causation between variables but rather to determine if there is a relationship among the independent variables of extent of remedial programming, level of victimization remediation, and dependent variable state facility quality improvement rating. According to the pathways, trauma, and addiction theories delinquent girls are similar to incarcerated women and are more likely to have experienced some form of victimization. These experiences have been linked to the onset of delinquency and continuation of adult criminality for this population. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on victimization and to determine if a correlation exists. Also, in studies mentioned previously in Chapter 2, descriptive methods have been used to identify the needs of female delinquents via surveys, focus groups, and interviews. These methods are also those identified in pathway theories.

## **Population**

### **Sample**

Program directors and administrators from the existing 52 residential programs currently in operation in Florida were invited to participate in the investigation. The programs were located across the entire state of Florida.

### **Sampling Procedures**

According to DJJ's website, there are approximately 52 delinquent residential programs in Florida. Listed on the site are also the names and contact information for the programs' administrators. An invitational e-mail (Appendices B and C) was sent to all of the administrators of these programs inviting them to participate in the study by completing a self-administered questionnaire (Appendix A). Potential participants were advised that they could complete the questionnaire online or via mailed paper and pencil copy. Approximately one week after the e-mailed study introduction, an invitational package was mailed to each administrator. Included in the package was a letter of informed consent (Appendix D), instructions on how to access the online questionnaire, as well as a hard copy of the questionnaire and stamped return envelope for participants who prefer to respond via paper and pencil copy.

## **Instrumentation**

Participants were to respond to a checklist-type questionnaire that included questions about the extent of the remedial programs offered by the facility (Appendix A). Specifically, the questions ask whether the facility used gender-specific remedial interventions with the female delinquents, and if so to identify the type of intervention.

The questionnaire also asked if victimization was addressed in the remedial programming and if so was it via group or individual therapeutic sessions. The reason for using this type of research tool was based on ease and simplicity of gathering the data for the independent variables. There is also no published instrument available that measures aspects of current remedial programs in residential facilities. Furthermore, this type of data collection is in line with the methods described in pathways theory ideology. As previously mentioned, research on the pathways theory consisted of extensive interviews with women and girls to uncover their life events that placed them at risk of criminality and delinquency (Covington & Bloom, 2002). This type of descriptive methodology was also used by other researchers, previously mentioned, who described in their work the components of gender-specific programming. For example, Bloom et al. (2002) reviewed national and state level efforts to address gender-specific programming for girls. Their review was conducted via surveys and focus groups with juvenile justice administrators as well as the population of girls being served.

As well, Fejes and Miller (2002) also indicated that program evaluation should focus on the concerns, interests, and needs of the population being served. These researchers also used focus groups and interviews to develop a framework to address 3 specific questions (a) what are you providing, (b) how and for how long have you been providing, and (c) is it working. As the goal of the current investigation was to describe quantitatively the extent and focus of remedial programs and not program evaluation, a questionnaire was deemed most appropriate to easily gather remedial programming data

for the study. Specifically, the current investigation's focus was what interventions were being provided (i.e. victimization).

Archival state quality improvement ratings were obtained from the state of Florida and were used in the correlation data analysis. These ratings were changed in January 2012 and include the rating levels/categories of *satisfactory compliance*, *limited compliance*, and *failed compliance*. According to the DJJ website, the ratings are used to ensure residential programs meet minimum compliance from the Department of Juvenile Justice Standards or the program will be considered to pose a potential danger to the youth and immediate correction must ensue (Office of Accountability, n.d.). A satisfactory compliance rating indicates the program met all requirements, limited compliance indicates that some exceptions were noted and needed corrections, and failed compliance indicates that the program does not meet the minimum requirements set by the standards and immediate correction is needed.

According to the DJJ website, an annual review of programs is conducted and these reports are published on the website for each program displaying the current review and the previous year's review. For the purposes of this study the report from the fiscal year 2014-2015 was used and because the rating levels are ordinal a 3-point scale was used where 3 = satisfactory, 2 = limited and 1= failed compliance. While these ratings are based on the standards used by the State of Florida there is concern that the limited variability they offer may impact the data analysis strategies.

## **Operationalization of Constructs**

**Topics covered in remedial programming.** The topics covered in remedial programming are nominal measures and can vary by program but generally consist of topics germane to male and female development. Nominal measures are those that indicate different labels for categories without quantitative distinctiveness (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007). Delinquent residential program directors in Florida were to respond to a questionnaire asking them to indicate the topics currently covered in their program. These topics were tallied and the frequencies noted by percentages. According to the DJJ website, the guideline for gender-specific programming indicated that these topics should include health and hygiene, physical environment, life and social skills training, and recreation and leisure activities.

**Victimization remediation.** Respondents were asked to indicate if the topic of victimization was covered in their residential program. According to DJJ website, there is an initiative in place to incorporate Trauma Informed Care in programming. The goal of this initiative is to provide assessments and treatments to promote physical and emotional healing. This variable includes a nominal measure indicating inclusion/exclusion of victimization remediation.

**State quality ratings.** Quality Improvement ratings are indicators for how well programs meet the required operating standards set by the state. These ratings are based on an annual review conducted by the Department of Juvenile Justice. Currently, they include Satisfactory, Limited, or Failed Compliance. Florida has a Gender-Specific

standard. These ratings represent ordinal measures and access to state quality ratings was made via data collection from the annual Quality Improvement reports.

A statistical examination of the validity of the questionnaire will not be undertaken. Instead a panel of social science students at a local community college in Florida reviewed the administration protocol and content for face validity.

## **Procedure**

### **Data Collection**

Following approval from the Walden University Internal Review Board (IRB) the researcher sent an email to the program administrators of each residential program in the state of Florida informing them of the study. Approximately one week later each program director received a mailed package including the informed consent form, instructions on how to access the online questionnaire and a hard copy of the questionnaire with a return envelope. Program directors were asked to participate in the study online or return the mailed questionnaire copy within two weeks from receipt of the mailed package. Approximately two weeks after the mailing date, the directors received a reminder via e-mail requesting participation.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted. Descriptive information on the gender-specific topics covered, the inclusion of victimization intervention, and the overall quality ratings are provided. Demographic characteristics are described using the frequencies and percentages for categorical scaled variables.

Inferential statistics consisting of correlation Fisher's Exact Test analyses was used to determine the extent of the relationships among the dependent variable of state quality rating, and the independent variable victimization in remedial programming. Correlational analysis is used to determine the degree of a relationship between 2 or more variables and the most common correlational analysis is the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The variables for this type of analysis are measured on an interval/ratio level or continuous scale. However, in this study, Fisher's Exact Test was used due to the nature of the dichotomous nominal and ordinal level measures. The independent variable is victimization intervention which is a nominal measure and the dependent variable, the state quality improvement ratings are ordinal measures. McDonald (2014) stated that Fisher's Exact Test is used to determine whether one variable is influenced by another variable. All statistical analysis will be performed using SPSS for Windows with a minimum alpha level of .05.

The following research questions and hypotheses were proposed for the investigation.

Research Question 1: What topics are included in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 2: Is the topic of victimization addressed in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 3: Are facilities that address gender-specific remedial programming rated higher in quality by the state?



*H<sub>03</sub>*: There will not be a correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>13</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

Research Question 4: Are facilities that address victimization rated higher in quality by the state?

*H<sub>04</sub>*: There will not be a correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>14</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

To analyze research question one, what topics are included in the gender specific remedial programs at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida, descriptive statistics were calculated and reported. To analyze research question two, is the topic of victimization addressed in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida, descriptive statistics were calculated and reported. To analyze research question three, are facilities that address gender-specific remedial programming rated higher in quality by the state, descriptive statistics were calculated and reported. To analyze research question four, are facilities that address victimization rated higher in quality by the state, a Fisher's Exact Test was calculated and reported.

### **Threats to the Validity of the Design of the Study**

Validity represents the accuracy of the study and whether one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores derived from research results (Creswell, 2009). There were no perceived threats to the internal or external validity of the study. Ohlund and Yu (n.d) reviewed the classical work of Campbell and Stanley (1963) and Cook and Campbell (1979) on experimental research design. In their review these authors described the common threats to validity. Internal validity represents the extent to which extraneous variables have been controlled so that any observed effect can be solely attributed to the treatment variable. External validity represents generalizability of the results. The relevant threats for the current questionnaire include, history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, and multiple-treatment interference all related to whether or not the respondents would have previous exposure to the questionnaire. In the current study, the administrators did have a pre-test post-test interval with the questionnaire as they were given one opportunity to complete the questionnaire either online or via paper pencil. The online version and paper pencil version were exactly the same.

The state quality ratings are based on an annual review conducted by the Department of Juvenile Justice. Currently, they include ratings of Satisfactory, Limited, or Failed Compliance and are assumed to be a valid indicator of program success. However, no information on the validity of the ratings is available.

### **Ethical Procedures**

The current study was conducted in accordance with the established procedures of Walden University's IRB to ensure the ethical protection of research participants.

Although the focus of the study was not program evaluation, program administrators were advised that their participation was voluntary, their responses confidential and anonymous, and that only the researcher would have access to their completed questionnaire. The program administrators were told that they could choose to stop participating before the study was completed and choose not to submit their questionnaire responses. Informed consent from each program administrator was requested prior to participation.

The paper and pencil questionnaire data will be maintained in accordance with the rules set forth by Walden University, kept in a locked file cabinet and destroyed after five years. Questionnaire data submitted online will be password protected and also maintained in accordance with Walden University guidelines.

### **Summary**

As a consequence of the recent increases in rates of female delinquency and incarcerated women, there has been a national call to action mandating implementation of gender-specific programming in juvenile residential programs for females. Such interventions may include programming in areas, which are considered effective for this population and may lead to a decrease in recidivism rates; however, there is a lack of research on gender-specific programming. What was unknown was the extent of gender-specific programming currently being implemented for females and what specific topics are covered during interventions. It was also unclear whether the implementation of this programming was associated with positive outcomes, or if alterations in program content should be proposed. Research on this topic is necessary to determine how facilities are

responding to the call for gender-specific programming and the effects of program implementation on facility success ratings.

The purpose of this research was to determine the extent of gender-specific programming being offered in delinquency residential programs in the state of Florida; to determine what topics are covered during programming; and to determine whether programming is related to a facility's state quality rating. Program directors or administrators from approximately 52 residential programs were invited to participate in the investigation by responding to a questionnaire that includes questions about the extent of the remedial programs offered by the facility. Additionally, archival state quality ratings were obtained from the state of Florida and used in the correlational data analysis. Descriptive information on remedial programming, including the gender-specific topics covered and the inclusion of victimization interventions are provided. Inferential statistics consisting of Fisher's Exact Test used to determine the extent of the relationship between the dependent variables of state quality rating, and independent variable inclusion of victimization interventions in remedial programming.

The findings from the current investigation add to the literature on this topic and affect social change by identifying programming strategies currently in use and determining whether programming is positively related to a facility's quality rating. This information is vital, timely, and adds to the limited research on this topic. The results of this study affect social change by providing important information to detention and correctional facilities that may affect their gender-specific programming and increase

positive outcomes for incarcerated females. The results of the investigation are presented in Chapter 4.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

As mentioned previously, since the mid 1980s through the early 2000s, there has been an increase in the rates of female delinquency and in the conviction and incarceration of women (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Sokoloff, 2005). Consequently, in 1992 Congress adopted an amendment to the JJDPA of 1974 that required all states applying for federal grants to examine their juvenile justice systems, identify gaps in services to juvenile female offenders, and develop a plan for providing needed gender-specific services for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency in females (Feld, 2009). Gender-specific programming is remedial programming within the correctional system that focuses on the needs of women and girls and that are unique to their gender (McDonald, 2008).

Cauffman (2008) suggested that after Congress adopted the amendment, the focus shifted to gathering data on the development and implementation of gender-specific programming for female delinquents; however, since then there has been a paucity of research on gender-specific programming offered in residential programs for delinquent girls. Therefore, it is unknown to what extent gender-specific programming is currently implemented and what specific topics are covered during interventions. It is also unknown whether the implementation of gender-specific programming is associated with positive outcomes. The current research is necessary to determine how residential programs for female delinquents are responding to the call for gender-specific programming and the effects of program implementation on facility state quality

improvement ratings. As mentioned previously, Florida DJJ has taken on the challenge to be a model state in juvenile delinquency prevention and treatment. Therefore, one purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to describe the current status of gender-specific remedial programming in female delinquency residential facilities in Florida

Gender-specific programming provides remedial interventions designed to address the specific needs of female offenders and delinquents. Researchers have suggested that issues related to victimization may be the link to female offending and recidivism. Therefore, researchers recommended victimization as a critical topic to include in interventions when developing programs for female offenders (Cauffman, 2008; Dohrn, 2004; Feld, 2009; Hall, Golder, Conley, & Sawning, 2013). In the current research, the inclusion of victimization topics in the curriculum was observed.

Another purpose of this study was to explore the correlation between the independent variables, the extent of remedial programming, the level of victimization remediation, with the dependent variable the facility quality improvement rating. According to Florida's DJJ website, quality improvement ratings are indicators for how well programs meet the required operating standards set by the state. The findings from this investigation added to the literature by identifying programming strategies currently in use and determining whether the existence of gender-specific programming is positively related to a facility's quality improvement rating. This information is essential as effective strategies may decrease future recidivism rates for female delinquents and also reduce continuation to adult criminality.

The research questions and hypotheses that guided this study were:

Research Question 1: What topics are included in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 2: Is the topic of victimization addressed in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 3: Are facilities that address gender-specific remedial programming rated higher in quality by the state?

*H<sub>03</sub>*: There will not be a correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>13</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

Research Question 4: Are facilities that address victimization rated higher in quality by the state?

*H<sub>04</sub>*: There will not be a correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>14</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

The purpose of this chapter is to present and explain the data analysis of each of the research questions that guided this study. Interpretations and implications of the results will be presented in Chapter 5.



### **Data Collection**

After approval from Walden's IRB on December 11, 2014, I attempted to collect the data for this study using an online survey/questionnaire (Appendix A) uploaded on Survey Monkey. Specifically, the questions asked whether the facility used gender-specific remedial interventions with the female delinquents and if so, to identify which components were included in the interventions. These components were identified by Morgan and Patton (2002) and are listed in Table 2. The questionnaire also asked if victimization was addressed in the remedial programming and if so, was it via group or individual therapeutic sessions. I also mailed each residential facility's program administrator a hard copy of the survey. Three administrators responded to the online survey and six returned a completed hard copy. These submissions were not included in the data analysis.

On January 16, 2015, the end date for the online survey, the director of Florida's Department of Juvenile Justice Institutional Review Board (FL DJJ IRB), contacted me and stated that I needed their IRB's approval before I could administer the survey. On January 28, 2015, I submitted my application for approval; however, unbeknownst to me, shortly after my submission there were several administrative changes within the FL DJJ IRB administration that created a delayed final review of my application. After several inquiries between April and June, specifically, on June 23 and 24, 2015, I had a phone conference with the current administrator for the FL DJJ IRB and it was determined that I did not need their IRB's approval because the data needed to complete the survey was published on the FL DJJ website. During these conferences, the administrator discussed

with me in detail the content of the survey and the respective data on the state's website.

The FL DJJ publishes on its website the residential facility's quality improvement reports for each fiscal year and the provider contracts for each facility.

These reports and contracts detail what is required in programming and if the requirements are met. The contracts detail the specific requirements for the gender-specific programming that will be required in that particular facility. For example, in the facility for girls, the contract stated that the "provider" (the facility) would provide gender-specific programming for girls with program components and services that comprehensively addressed the specific needs of adolescent girls. The contract would then go on to specify which components and services would be provided and generally these included evidence-based intervention curriculum for individual and group sessions. The QI reports are published annually for each facility. These reports determine if the facilities meet their contractual standards. Each standard is rated satisfactory, limited or failed compliance. After my conferences with the DJJ administrator, I was able to complete a survey for each residential delinquency program in Florida using the current published data for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. There were 52 (see Table 1) residential programs, 80.8% (42) were male and 19.2% (10) were female.

Table 1

*Gender Specificity of Residential Facilities*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	
		Number	Percent
Gender specificity of the facility	Female	10	19.2%
	Male	42	80.8%
	Total	52	100.0%

**Data Analysis**

This section is organized based on the four research questions that guided this study. Using these research questions, preliminary analyses using descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted and after these analyses it was determined to remove the male programs from the sample and only include the 10 female residential programs for further analysis. This decision resulted in a revision of Research Questions 3 and 4 and the inclusion of Fisher's Exact Test for analysis.

**Research Questions**

Research Question 1: What topics are included in the gender-specific remedial interventions at residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

On the survey, the questions asked to indicate which gender-specific components are included in programming. Morgan and Patton (2002) identified these components that are efficacious to programming for girls (See Table 2). After a review of the QI reports and provider contracts to obtain the descriptive statistics for these categorical variables

frequency tables were generated. It was determined that all 10 female residential facilities included gender-specific components in their programming. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics collected for each component.

Research Question 2: Is the topic of victimization addressed in the remedial interventions at residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

On the survey, the question was asked if the topic of victimization was covered in the facility's remedial programming. After a review of the QI reports and the provider contracts, to obtain the descriptive statistics frequency tables were generated and it was determined that 70 % (7) facilities included victimization as a topic in their remedial intervention curriculum. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for this topic.

Table 2

*Gender-Specific Programming Components*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	
		Number	Percent
Environmental Safety	Yes	10	100.0%
Emotional Safety	Yes	10	100.0%
Relationships/Identity Dev.	Yes	10	100.0%
Skill Building	Yes	10	100.0%
Fostering Self-Control	Yes	10	100.0%
Health and Substance Issues	Yes	10	100.0%
Spiritual Health	Yes	10	100.0%
Single-gender Programming	Yes	10	100.0%

Table 3

*Inclusion of Victimization Topic in Programming*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	
		Number	Percent
Is the topic of victimization covered in the facility's remedial programming?	Yes	7	70%
	Unable to determine	3	30%
	Total	10	100.0%

Research Question 3: Are facilities that address gender-specific remedial programming rated higher in quality by the state?

Each QI report indicated whether the facility met the required state standard for gender-specific programming by a rating of satisfactory, limited, or failed and because these rating levels are ordinal, a 3-point scale was used in this study to indicate 3 = satisfactory, 2 = limited, and 1 = failed. To obtain descriptive statistics, frequency tables were generated shown in Table 4, indicating 80% (8) were ranked satisfactory, 10% (1) was ranked limited, and 10% (1) failed. On the survey, a question asked to indicate whether the facility uses gender-specific remedial interventions for female residents. Again, to obtain descriptive statistics, frequency tables were generated and also shown in

Table 4, 100% (10) indicated yes. Because there was no variability with regard to this variable, further analyses were not conducted.

Research Question 4: Are facilities that address victimization rated higher in quality by the state?

*H<sub>0</sub>4*: There will not be a correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>1</sub>4*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

As stated above, each QI report indicated whether the facility met the required standard for gender-specific programming. Descriptive statistics (see Table 4) indicated 80% (8) were ranked satisfactory, 10% (1) was ranked limited, and 10% (1) failed. The analysis of research question 2 (see Table 3) indicated 70 % (7) facilities included victimization as a topic in interventions. As mentioned previously, after the removal of the male facilities only 10 female facilities remained. Fisher's Exact Test is used when there are categorical or nominal variables and when there is a small sample size. These variables in the current study are categorical and nominal and the sample size decreased to 10. According to McDonald (2014) Fisher's is at test of independence used when there are nominal variables and if the researcher wishes to determine whether one variable influences the other variable. Fisher's was utilized to test the relationship between the facilities' state QI ratings and victimization interventions to determine whether programs that provide victimization were ranked higher by the state. Table 5 displays the cross-tabulation table and the related Fisher's exact test of the relationship between the QI

ratings and the victimization intervention. The Fisher's exact probability was  $p = .067$ , which provided support to retain the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between QI ratings and victimization interventions.

Table 4

*Frequency distributions*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	
		Number	Percent
Does facility use gender-specific remedial interventions for female residents?	Yes	10	100.0%
	Total	10	100.0%
Facility State Quality Rating	Fail	1	10%
	Limited	1	10%
	Satisfactory	8	80%
	Total	10	100.0%

Table 5

*Association between QI Ratings and Victimization Interventions*

		Victimization		Total
		yes	unable to determine	
Quality Rating?	fail	0	1	1
	limited	0	1	1
	satisfactory	7	1	8
Total		7	3	10

*Note.* Fisher's Exact Test Probability = .067

### Summary

In this chapter, the survey data was compiled by reviewing Quality Improvement reports and provider contracts for all residential delinquency programs in the state of Florida for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. I used descriptive analysis to report what topics the facilities included in the gender-specific remedial interventions and whether or not the topic of victimization was included. Descriptive analysis was also used to report the QI ratings for each facility. The analysis revealed that although all female residential programs provided gender-specific interventions only 80% of the facilities were ranked satisfactory for meeting the state standard for gender-specific programming. Also, only 70% (7) of the female residential facilities provided victimization interventions. Fisher's exact test indicated that there was no relationship between QI ratings and victimization interventions. Included in chapter 5 is a discussion of these findings for each research question, the implications for positive social change, and recommendations for future research.



## Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to describe the current status of gender-specific programming in female residential programs in Florida, especially as it relates to victimization topics. A second purpose was to explore the correlation among the independent variables, the extent of gender-specific programming, types of victimization remediation, and the dependent variable, the state facility quality improvement rating. The research questions that guided the study were:

Research Question 1: What topics are included in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 2: Is the topic of victimization addressed in the gender-specific remedial interventions at female residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 3: Are facilities that address gender-specific remedial programming rated higher in quality by the state?

$H_03$ : There will not be a correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

$H_13$ : There will be a statistically significant correlation between gender-specific remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

Research Question 4: Are facilities that address victimization rated higher in quality by the state?

$H_04$ : There will not be a correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>14</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted and based on the analysis the residential facilities do utilize gender-specific components in the programming and some include victimization topics. However, there was no relationship between those meeting the standard for providing gender-specific programming and victimization. This chapter interprets these findings and will discuss the implications for social change and provide recommendations for further research.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

The interpretations of this research are organized based on the research questions that guided the study. The findings made in this study add new knowledge and insight on what are essential components to gender-specific programming, especially in female residential facilities.

### **Research Questions**

Research Question 1: What topics are included in the gender-specific remedial interventions at residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

Research Question 2: Is the topic of victimization addressed in the remedial interventions at the residential delinquency facilities in the state of Florida?

The first research question sought to determine what components are included in the gender-specific programming in the residential delinquency facilities in Florida and the second was to determine if victimization was included as a topic.

As previously mentioned, Florida took on the challenge to be a model state in juvenile delinquency prevention and treatment. The findings from this investigation confirm that Florida has responded to the call to action to provide needed gender-specific services for the prevention and treatment of female delinquency. All residential delinquency programs in Florida include the recommended gender-specific programming components identified in the literature as effective strategies to combat delinquency. One critical component was the inclusion of victimization interventions.

Research Question 3: Are facilities that address gender-specific remedial programming rated higher in quality by the state?

Research Question 4: Are facilities that address victimization rated higher in quality by the state?

*H<sub>04</sub>*: There will not be a correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

*H<sub>14</sub>*: There will be a statistically significant correlation between victimization in remedial programming and quality rating by the state.

The third research question initially sought to determine if there was a correlation between the quality rating of a program and whether it provided gender-specific programming. And the fourth research question sought to determine if there was a correlation between the quality rating of a program and whether it addressed victimization.

Again, as stated above, to be an effective program, gender-specific programming should be responsive to the specific needs of the gender being treated at the facility.

There is limited research available on the efficacy of gender-specific programming for incarcerated females and to determine the efficacy of a program, evaluation is necessary. However, as mentioned previously, there are some noted weaknesses in the process of evaluation as it relates to whether the evaluation is actually evaluating the efficacy of the components compared to a matter of contractual compliance. Florida is one of the few states that include program evaluation of its residential facilities.

According to DJJ's website, all delinquency programs are mandated to adhere to the residential standards outlined in the Florida Statutes. To ensure that the standards are followed, Florida has an annual Quality Improvement review of its facilities. Programs are reviewed on each standard and are rated based in three categories: satisfactory, limited and failed compliance. The Gender-Specific Programming standard appears vague in its wording about what is required of the program to meet this standard. However, a review of the provider contracts gives more detail as to what is required for that specific program. Again, according to DJJ's website, since 2002, the DJJ's Office of Residential Services has focused on increasing effectiveness of service delivery by implementing Evidenced Based Practices. A review of the QI reports revealed that gender-specific programming components, including the topic of victimization were generally addressed via empirically based group curriculum and individual therapy sessions by trained staff or the facility's clinical staff.

The finding for research question 4 indicated that there is no correlation between victimization in remedial programming and the quality rating by the state. Eight of the 10 programs received a satisfactory rating for providing gender-specific programming and

seven provided victimization interventions. One facility did fail for not providing victimization interventions but this was not to lack of compliance. The failed rating was a factor of timing as the facility had just implemented the victimization interventions and prior to providing the service all staff must be trained in the delivery. This facility's staff was in the midst of training. The facility with the limited rating was due to non-compliance of another component of gender-specific programming. These findings suggest that most of the female residential facilities include victimization as a topic of remedial programming, and it appears that Florida is moving toward addressing these specific needs across gender. For example, a review of the QI reports indicated that all residents male and female of the facilities are evaluated upon admission for mental health services, and one of the mental health screening instruments includes questions concerning victimization. Also, according to the DJJ website, there is in place a trauma-focused initiative that will require delinquency staff to be trained to be aware of indications of trauma in facility residents.

### **Limitations**

As previously mentioned, although there has been a national mandate to increase gender-specific programming for female delinquents, there has been little research on the extent of the implementation of these programs. Although this is a large scope, the current research is restricted to the state of Florida which included the 2014-2015 fiscal year with 10 female residential delinquency facilities, and therefore, the results of this study may not generalize to other states' juvenile justice departments. Also, another limitation, of the study was the completion of the questionnaire by the investigator and as

described by the Florida DJJ Administrator. There was no input from the program administrators at the facilities as well as from the female residents. Therefore the description of gender-specific programming was only described from the completion of the survey by the investigator.

Another perceived limitation is the consistency in all the facilities; that is, because all female delinquency facilities in Florida included gender-specific programming and at the time of this project seven of the 10 included victimization it is hard to detail the influence of one variable on the other. Overall, Florida includes gender-specific interventions and victimization interventions as components in its remedial programming. Also, another limitation was the measurement of recidivism. Recidivism is generally a measurement of efficacious strategies in prevention and intervention. Recidivism was not evaluated in the current research.

### **Recommendation for Further Research**

As previously mentioned, in 1992, an amendment to the JJDPA of 1974 was the impetus for a national call to action for all states to develop gender-specific intervention programs for female delinquents in an attempt to reduce criminal behavior and incarceration recidivism. Florida DJJ has set out to be a model state for delinquency programming. DJJ appears to be implementing strategies for rehabilitation of delinquents that are empirically based and grounded in gender-responsive services. To address the efficacy of the gender-specific programs in Florida, program evaluation is necessary, to which there is in place quality improvement annual reviews. However, the purpose of program evaluation should be to assess how well the programs are meeting the needs of

the population served in the program and not necessarily how well programs are in compliance with provider contracts. The primary recommendation for further action emerging from this study is to identify and include such measures of evaluation in the annual QI review to determine if the essential components are actually deterring recidivism.

### **Conclusions: Implications for Social Change**

This project set out to examine and provide insight into the needs of female delinquents as historically female delinquents and incarcerated women are generally overlooked in the literature. However, because of recent increases in female delinquency rates and in incarcerated women, the outlook has changed. In 1992, an amendment to the JJDP A of 1974 required states to act accordingly for female delinquents by implementing gender-specific programming that would be responsive to this population's unique needs. What ensued was preliminary data that showed what should be required in the programs, but no programs were developed or assessed. Because there was a paucity of research on gender-specific programming for female delinquents in residential facilities, the current research sits within the literature by providing a glimpse at a state that responded to the mandate of 1992. The implication for social change from this study was to provide a description of a state following through with the mandate to address female delinquency. Florida appears to be making strides in implementing effective strategies in its programming for delinquents. The state seems to be one on point with meeting its goal of being a model state for delinquency programming as DJJ has taken the empirical evidence of gender-specific programming and implemented it across the board in all of

its residential facilities. Further research could identify ways to measure the efficacy of this programming in the future.



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## Appendix A Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Your responses are completely anonymous and confidential. Only the researcher will have access to your responses on this questionnaire.

Morgan and Patton (2002) define gender-specific services for girls as services that comprehensively address the needs of a gender group (female or male) by fostering positive gender identity development. McDonald (2008) defines gender-specific programming as remedial programming within the correctional system that focuses on the needs of women and girls and that are unique to their gender. Morgan and Patton (2002) also defined gender-responsive programming for girls as programming that intentionally allows gender to affect and guide services in regards to site selection, staff selection, program development, content, and material to create an environment that reflects an understanding of and is responsive to the issues and needs of girls and young women.

Does your residential facility use gender-specific remedial interventions for female delinquents?

Please circle: Yes or N

If your facility uses gender-specific remedial interventions for females please indicate with an X which components are include:

\_\_\_ Environmental Safety: Includes feeling safe, nurtured, and free to express emotions by providing an environment that encourages self-expression by sharing

feelings and allowing time to develop trust within the context of building positive relationships (Morgan and Patton, 2002)

\_\_\_ Emotional Safety: Includes protection from self and others by providing an environment that protects from self-destructive behaviors such as self-mutilation, suicide attempts, development of eating disorders and or substance use/abuse (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Building Positive Relationships and Identity Development: Includes teaching appropriate relational skills to build healthy relationships (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Skill Building: Includes teaching strength and culturally based personal skills to facilitate development of self-esteem, self-respect as opposed to relying on others' external evaluations for validation (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Fostering self-control: Includes helping to find their voice to express their needs positively by developing problem solving and decision making skills (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Health and substance abuse issues: Includes providing information about mental health and specifically physical health by addressing personal care, body image/development, exercising, pregnancy, sexuality, sexual transmitted diseases, and contraception.

\_\_\_ Spiritual health: Includes setting aside time to develop a sense of self, hope and peace by exploring their spirituality and inner strength (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Single-gender programming: Includes connecting to the resident to a same-gender mentor (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

If your facility does not use gender-specific remedial interventions for females please indicate with an X which components are included:

\_\_\_ Environmental Safety: Includes feeling safe, nurtured, and free to express emotions by providing an environment that encourages self-expression by sharing feelings and allowing time to develop trust within the context of building positive relationships (Morgan and Patton, 2002)

\_\_\_ Emotional Safety: Includes protection from self and others by providing an environment that protects from self-destructive behaviors such as self-mutilation, suicide attempts, development of eating disorders and or substance use/abuse (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Building Positive Relationships and Identity Development: Includes teaching appropriate relational skills to build healthy relationships (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Skill Building: Includes teaching strength and culturally based personal skills to facilitate development of self-esteem, self-respect as opposed to relying on others' external evaluations for validation (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Fostering self-control: Includes helping to find their voice to express their needs positively by developing problem solving and decision making skills (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Health and substance abuse issues: Includes providing information about mental health and specifically physical health by addressing personal care, body image/development, exercising, pregnancy, sexuality, sexual transmitted diseases, and contraception.

\_\_\_ Spiritual health: Includes setting aside time to develop a sense of self, hope and peace by exploring their spirituality and inner strength (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

\_\_\_ Single-gender programming: Includes connecting the resident to a same-gender mentor (Morgan and Patton, 2002).

Victimization is the exposure to a traumatic event either by personal experience or as a witness. Polyvictimization is the exposure to multiple traumatic events either by personal experience or as a witness. Such events include childhood abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, and domestic violence experienced or witnessed as a child or as an adult.

Is the topic of any type of victimization covered in your remedial programming?

Please circle: Yes    or    No

If the topic of victimization is covered in your remedial programming is there a formal evaluation for the residents to determine their specific victimization needs?

Please circle: Yes    or    No

If victimization is covered in your remedial programming is it covered in:

Please circle: group therapy sessions or individual therapy sessions

Thank you very much for your participation!

## Appendix B: Study Invitation

Dear Program Administrator

My name is Katrina Smith and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. As a part of the requirement for the completion of my doctoral studies I am conducting a survey of the extent of rehabilitative interventions in gender-specific residential delinquency programs. I am reaching out to you as the administrator of a residential program in the state of Florida and asking you to complete a short survey regarding the remedial services offered at your facility. If you choose to complete the survey, you will have access to the survey from January xx-xx, 2015 at this link, [www.xxxx...com](http://www.xxxx...com). In approximately 1 week you will also receive a copy of the survey in the mail that you can complete and return postage paid, if you prefer a paper and pencil version. It will take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the survey. The data you will provide will be confidential and will be handled according to the mandates of the Walden university research department and the ethical guidelines for researchers as outlined in the Code of Ethics for psychologists. I expect that the information you provide will fill a glaring gap in the literature on remedial programming for delinquents, especially female delinquents. Further, my hope is that the results of this survey can be used to drive future research in this area.

Thank you for your consideration and your time. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or [katrina.smith@waldenu.edu](mailto:katrina.smith@waldenu.edu). If you wish to speak with a representative from Walden University, please contact Dr. Leilani Endicott, 621-321-1210 or [irb@Waldenu.edu](mailto:irb@Waldenu.edu). I am

very much looking forward to hearing from you and I will be happy to provide you with the survey results upon your request.

Sincerely,

Katrina A. Smith



### Appendix C: Online Survey Informed Consent Letter

You are invited to participate in a research study regarding the extent and effectiveness of rehabilitative interventions in gender-specific residential programs. You were invited to participate in the study because you are an administrator for a residential delinquency program. This form is part of the process of “informed consent” and is intended to make you aware of the nature of the study before you decide whether or not to participate.

My name is Katrina Smith and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. This study is being conducted as a part of the requirements for completion of my doctoral work at the University.

#### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to identify the extent and content of interventions implemented in gender-specific residential programs for females. However, the study will examine interventions in all delinquent residential programs in Florida.

#### **Procedures**

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to:

- Complete a 10-15 minute anonymous survey online about the content of the programming and interventions implemented at your facility. The survey is available online at [xxxx.com](http://xxxx.com) until xx/xx/xx.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study**

Your participation in this study is voluntary and your decision to participate or not will be honored. You may, at any time, stop the process if you decide not to complete the survey.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study**

The risks of this study are minimum to the participant as at any time the participant can stop participating without consequence. The risks are further minimized due to the removal of any identifying information that could link the participant to the data collected. The benefit of your participation in the study is being a part of a project that has the potential to influence the efficacy of rehabilitative interventions in gender-specific programming for female delinquents as well as filling a long neglected gap in the literature.

**Compensation**

There will be no compensation for being in the study.

**Confidentiality**

All information obtained will be kept confidential and may only be disclosed with your permission.

**Contacts and Questions**

You may address any questions or concerns now or later by contacting Katrina Smith via phone at XXX-XXX-XXXX or [Katrina.smith@waldenu.edu](mailto:Katrina.smith@waldenu.edu). If you wish to talk privately about your rights and protection as a participant, you may call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number

is 1-612-312-1210 or irb@Waldenu.edu. Walden University's approval number for this study is **12-11-14-0092389** and it expires on **December 10, 2015**.

**Statement of Consent**

I have read the above information and I understand the nature of the study well enough to make an informed decision about my involvement. I am agreeing to the terms described above by completing the survey.

Please a print/keep a copy of this consent form for your records.

## Appendix D: Mailed Survey Informed Consent Letter

You are invited to participate in a research study regarding the extent and effectiveness of rehabilitative interventions in gender-specific residential programs. You were invited to participate in the study because you are an administrator for a residential delinquency program. This form is part of the process of “informed consent” and is intended to make you aware of the nature of the study before you decide whether or not to participate.

My name is Katrina Smith and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. This study is being conducted as a part of the requirements for completion of my doctoral work at the University.

### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to identify the extent and content of interventions implemented in gender-specific residential programs for females. However, the study will examine interventions in all delinquent residential programs in Florida.

### **Procedures**

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to:

- Complete a 10-15 minute anonymous survey online or via mail about the content of the programming and interventions implemented at your facility. Enclosed is a copy of the survey and a stamped return envelope. The survey is also available online at [xxxx.com](http://xxxx.com) until xx/xx/xx.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study**

Your participation in this study is voluntary and your decision to participate or not will be honored. You may, at any time, stop the process if you decide not to complete the survey.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study**

The risks of this study are minimum to the participant as at any time the participant can stop participating without consequence. The risks are further minimized due to the removal of any identifying information that could link the participant to the data collected. The benefit of your participation in the study is being a part of a project that has the potential to influence the efficacy of rehabilitative interventions in gender-specific programming for female delinquents as well as filling a long neglected gap in the literature.

**Compensation**

There will be no compensation for being in the study.

**Confidentiality**

All information obtained will be kept confidential and may only be disclosed with your permission.

**Contacts and Questions**

You may address any questions or concerns now or later by contacting Katrina Smith via phone at xxx-xxx-xxxx or [Katrina.smith@waldenu.edu](mailto:Katrina.smith@waldenu.edu). If you wish to talk privately about your rights and protection as a participant, you may call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number

is 1-612-321-1210 or irb@Waldenu.edu. Walden University's approval number for this study is **12-11-14-0092389** and it expires on **December 10, 2015**.

**Statement of Consent**

I have read the above information and I understand the nature of the study well enough to make an informed decision about my involvement. I am agreeing to the terms described above by completing the survey.

Please a keep a copy of this consent form for you records.