College of Education Theses and Dissertations

College of Education

Black, Male, Juvenile: A Multi-System Perspective on Hope, Dehumanization, and Redemption in Recidivism & Education

Alexandra M. Brandt
DePaul University, ambrandt11@yahoo.com

DePaul University

College of Education

Black, Male, Juvenile: A Multi-System Perspective on Hope, Dehumanization, and Redemption in

Recidivism & Education

by
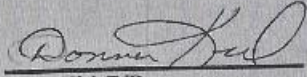
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

June 2023
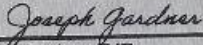
We approve the dissertation of Alexandra Brandt

Donna Kiel

Donna Kiel, EdD
Professor
DePaul University
Educational Leadership Doctoral Program
Committee Chair

4-21-23
Date

Joseph Gardner
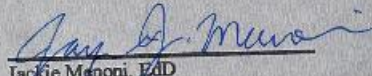
Joby Gardner, EdD
Professor
DePaul University
Educational Leadership Doctoral Program
Committee Member

4/25/23
Date

Jay J. Menoni

Jackie Menoni, EdD
Adjunct/Principal
DePaul University
Educational Leadership Doctoral Program
Committee Member

4/25/23
Date
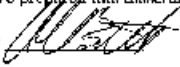
Certification of Authorship

I certify that I am the sole author of this dissertation. Any assistance received in the preparation of this dissertation has been acknowledged and disclosed within it. Any sources utilized, including the use of data, ideas and words, those quoted directly or paraphrased, have been cited. I certify that I have prepared this dissertation according program guidelines as directed.

Author Signature _____ _____ Date 4/19/2023 _____

Abstract

Across the United States millions of juveniles enter the criminal justice system each year. The foundational theories that are being used for this study are Hirschi's Social learning theory and Shaw & McKay's theory of Social Disorganization. The intention of this study is to explore the outcome of exposure factors on recidivism among male black juveniles from the perspectives of Juvenile Justice Professionals and Educators within the City of Chicago. Data will be collected from in-depth interviews with 10 minority participant's including Chicago Police Department Officers, Juvenile Detectives, a Cook County Juvenile Judge, Cook County Juvenile Correctional Officers, Educators, and a Juvenile Probation Counselor.

This study provides an in-debt investigation into several exposure factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism from professionals who deal and encounter juvenile repeat offenders daily. Through interview's, light will be shed on the voices and recommendations from each participant. The goal of this study is to find methods and strategies recommended by juvenile professionals and educators that will contribute to the reduction of recidivism among juvenile delinquents and may reduce the number of young adults entering the criminal justice system.

Keywords: *Juvenile Delinquents, Recidivism, Age, Dependent and neglected children, Social Disorganization Theory, Social Learning Theory, Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice System, Black Juvenile, Chicago Police Department*, *Exposure/Risk Factors, Mental Illness/PTSD, Diversion program*

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my dissertation chair, Dr. Donna Kiel, for their unwavering support, invaluable guidance, and persistent encouragement throughout my doctoral journey. Your dedication to my success, intellectual growth, and personal development has been instrumental in helping me overcome obstacles and achieve this milestone. Your deep knowledge and commitment to excellence have inspired me to push the boundaries of my understanding and strive for excellence in my work. I am also immensely grateful to my committee members, Dr. Joby Gardner, and Dr. Jackie Menoni. Each of you has contributed significantly to my academic progress and the completion of this dissertation. Your insightful feedback, constructive criticism, and expertise in your respective fields have strengthened my research and broadened my perspective. Your willingness to share your knowledge, time, and enthusiasm has been essential to my development as a scholar and researcher.

I wish to extend my appreciation to the entire faculty and staff at DePaul University for providing a supportive and stimulating academic environment. Your dedication to fostering the growth of the students and creating a platform for intellectual exploration is invaluable.

In closing, I acknowledge that this dissertation is not solely the product of my endeavors, but rather the result of the collective support, wisdom, and inspiration of all those who have contributed to my journey. I am forever grateful for your role in my academic and personal growth.

Dedication

To Allah, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful, who has blessed me with unwavering guidance, strength, and wisdom throughout this journey. I am eternally grateful for Your presence in my life and Your limitless blessings.

To my family, who have always believed in my potential, offering unconditional love and support, even in the most challenging times. Your encouragement and faith in my abilities have been the backbone of my academic and personal successes.

To my friends and colleagues, who have been invaluable sources of companionship and professional guidance throughout this journey. Your camaraderie, collaboration, and shared passion for public service and education have strengthened my dedication to making a difference.

This dissertation is a testament to the love, encouragement, and belief that you have instilled in me. With humble gratitude and appreciation, I dedicate this work to Allah, my family, friends, and colleagues – the pillars of my life.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Overview

The relationship between the Chicago Cook County Juvenile Justice System and

educators when encountering black male juvenile recidivists can be complex and multi-faceted.

On the one hand, educators may be seen as critical stakeholders in the rehabilitation and

prevention of juvenile delinquency. Teachers and school administrators may be the first to notice

signs of delinquent behavior or risk factors for criminal activity among their students, and they

may work closely with probation officers and other justice system officials to address these

issues. Educators may also provide critical support to juveniles who are transitioning back into

the community after serving time in detention or correctional facilities, helping them to

reintegrate into school and society.

On the other hand, the relationship between educators and the justice system can be

fraught with tension and mistrust, particularly when it comes to issues of race and bias. Black

male juveniles are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system, and educators

may be perceived as contributing to this bias if they are quick to refer black male students to law

enforcement or fail to provide adequate support and resources to help them succeed in school.

Overall, the relationship between the Chicago Cook County Juvenile Justice System and

educators when encountering black male juvenile recidivists is likely to be complex and

nuanced, with both positive and negative elements. Efforts to build strong relationships and

partnerships between these two groups may be critical to improving outcomes for young people

involved in the justice system.

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

While much has been researched and published about why juveniles choose the path toward delinquency and why they re-offend, there is considerably less on how well the overall subsystems within the juvenile justice system adequately serve youth in need and even less on their effects on recidivism. Black male juveniles in Chicago face significant challenges that can contribute to their involvement in the juvenile justice system and their likelihood of recidivism. Studies have shown that black male juveniles in Chicago are more likely to live in poverty and experience limited access to educational and employment opportunities compared to their peers. These systemic issues can increase the likelihood of juvenile delinquency and recidivism, as young people may turn to criminal activities to make ends meet or out of a lack of opportunities. Black male juveniles in Chicago also face disproportionate exposure to violence and trauma, including exposure to community violence and experiences of racial discrimination. These experiences can have long-lasting effects on mental health and behavior, increasing the risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system and the likelihood of recidivism.

According to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, in 2020, there were a total of 11,719 juvenile arrests in Cook County, which includes the city of Chicago. Of those arrests, 9,535 were for non-violent offenses, and 2,184 were for violent offenses. In terms of juvenile detention center re-commitment rates, the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice reported that as of August 2021, the recidivism rate for juveniles released from Illinois Youth Centers (IYC) was 54%. However, this statistic is for the entire state of Illinois and does not specifically break down re-commitment rates for Chicago. It's worth noting that juvenile arrest and re-commitment rates can fluctuate over time and are influenced by various factors such as changes in laws, policies,

and policing practices. It's important to regularly monitor and analyze these rates to inform efforts to prevent delinquent behavior and improve outcomes for youth involved in the justice system.

According to a study conducted by Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) for the year of 2019, eighty-seven percent of Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) exits were rearrested within three years, post-release from IDJJ. Of those rearrested, 64 percent were Black, 93 percent were male, and 47 percent were between the ages of 15 and 16. Most frequently, youth were rearrested for non-violent offenses. Further, among the IDJJ exits, fifty-five percent were recommitted to IDJJ for a new offense or technical violation. Eighty percent of recommitments to IDJJ were for technical violations and most youth recommitted were Black and male. There was an average of 251 days and a median of 176 days to recommitment to IDJJ (Gleicher, 2019).

There are various negative exposure factors and challenges that most juveniles who are involved in the justice system face along with numerous public agencies and school systems. Many go undiagnosed with a mental health condition, substance abuse problems, lack of stable housing and or family support. Previous studies have concentrated on specific factors that contribute to crime, such as mental health, homelessness and substance abuse, all prominent recidivism factors that contribute to crime. However, few studies have focused on how professionals serving juvenile offenders (e.g., educators, probation officers, mentors, etc.) experience and cope with these exposure factors.

Researchers have explored these many exposure factors for juvenile recidivism; however, these exposure factors have not been explored in terms of how they relate to recidivism in the subgroup of Black male offenders from juvenile justice professionals' and educators' perspectives, specifically juvenile justice professionals in Chicago. Chicago has had a long-standing issue with violence, particularly in certain areas of the city. Black males, both juveniles and adults, are disproportionately affected by violence in the city. According to the Chicago Police Department's 2020 crime statistics report, there were 769 homicide victims in the city that year, and 78% of them were Black. While there are not specific statistics for male black juveniles who are victims of violence, it's worth noting that young people in general are also at risk. In 2020, there were 270 homicides in Chicago involving victims who were 18 years old or younger, a 63% increase from the previous year. The issue of violence in Chicago is complex, and there are many factors that contribute to it. Some of these include poverty, lack of economic opportunities, gang activity, and easy access to firearms. Therefore, in this study, the established exposure factors were explored and how each factor relates to Black male juvenile recidivists from juvenile justice professionals' and educators' perspectives.

To better understand these issues, the current research focused on using a qualitative study to examine the perspectives of juvenile justice professionals regarding the effect of established exposure factors, such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds. Juvenile justice professionals who are currently working with juvenile delinquents bring an abundance of know-how and resources that can administer insight into the exposure factors for recidivism among

male black juvenile delinquents and how to reduce recidivism. This chapter presents the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, conceptual framework, nature of the study, and definition of terms used. This chapter also includes the assumptions, limitations, significance, and scope of the study. This chapter will conclude with an overall summary.

Background

The history of black male juveniles' relationship with the juvenile justice system in Chicago is complex and reflects broader patterns of systemic racism and inequality in the criminal justice system. Historically, black male juveniles in Chicago have been disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system, experiencing higher rates of arrest, detention, and harsher treatment compared to their white counterparts. This disparity has been linked to a range of factors, including poverty, segregation, racial profiling, biased policing practices, and discriminatory policies. For example, during the 1990s and early 2000s, Chicago implemented harsh juvenile justice policies such as "zero-tolerance" and "super-predator" laws that disproportionately impacted black male juveniles (Miller & Tennille, 2010). These policies resulted in the increased use of detention and incarceration and contributed to the overrepresentation of black male juveniles in the juvenile justice system. In 2010, Illinois passed the Juvenile Justice Reform Act, which aimed to reduce the use of detention and promote alternative, community-based interventions for youth involved in the justice system.

Additionally, community organizations and advocates have been working to promote restorative justice practices and support programs that address the underlying causes of delinquent behavior. Despite these efforts, racial disparities continue to exist in the juvenile justice system, and black male juveniles remain overrepresented in the system. Ongoing work is needed to address the root causes of these disparities and promote more equitable and inclusive practices in the juvenile justice system in Chicago and beyond.

The history of Chicago Public Schools and Black male juvenile delinquents is a complex one, spanning several decades of social, political, and economic changes. In the mid-twentieth century, Chicago was a hub of black migration from the South, with many African Americans coming to the city in search of jobs and better opportunities (Lee, 2017). However, they were met with significant racial discrimination, which was reinforced through housing segregation, employment discrimination, and inadequate access to quality education. As a result, many black juveniles in Chicago faced significant barriers to education, including inadequate resources, overcrowded classrooms, and discrimination. This often led to higher rates of delinquent behavior, as many black juveniles were unable to access the opportunities and resources needed to succeed (Lee, 2017).

In the 1960s and 1970s, Chicago Public Schools became embroiled in a series of conflicts surrounding issues of racial equity and school desegregation. This led to significant political and social unrest, with many black juveniles protesting systemic racism and demanding greater access to quality education. In the decades that followed, Chicago Public Schools continued to grapple with issues of inequality and discrimination, with many black juveniles

6

continuing to face significant barriers to success (Haney, 1970). However, there have been

efforts to address these disparities, including programs aimed at providing more resources and

support for black juveniles in under-resourced schools, as well as initiatives to increase diversity

and representation among teachers and administrators. Overall, the history of Chicago Public

Schools and male black juveniles' delinquents is a complex one, shaped by historical, social, and

economic factors. However, there is ongoing work being done to address these disparities and

ensure that all students have access to quality education and opportunities for success.

Problem Statement

The problems addressed in this research is the high recidivism rate among Black male

juveniles within the City of Chicago, Cook County area. The reason why black male juveniles

are the focus of this study is because of the researcher's personal experiences as a police officer.

This experience led to a deep awareness that that juveniles most times do not realize that they

are in a position of having one foot in the juvenile criminal system and one foot closer to the

adult criminal system. Black male juveniles are also overrepresented in the juvenile detention

center in Chicago (Siddique, 2019). There have been several studies and reports that have

examined the overrepresentation of black male juveniles in the juvenile justice system in

Chicago. Here are some examples: "Justice for Some: Differential Treatment of Youth of Color

in the Cook County Juvenile Justice System" (2014) by the Juvenile Justice Initiative and the

Children and Family Justice Center at Northwestern University. This report examined racial

disparities in the Cook County juvenile justice system, including the disproportionate

representation of black youth. The report found that black youth were more likely to be detained

and less likely to receive diversion programs than white youth. "The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in Chicago's Juvenile Justice System" (2016) by the Shriver Center on Poverty Law. This report examined racial disparities in the Chicago juvenile justice system, including the overrepresentation of black youth. The report found that black youth were more likely to be arrested, detained, and incarcerated than white youth, and were more likely to receive harsher sanctions for similar offenses.

Research has shown that systemic issues such as poverty, limited access to education and employment opportunities, exposure to violence and trauma, and systemic racism contribute to the higher rates of involvement of male black juveniles in the juvenile justice system. In the juvenile detention center, black male juveniles may face additional challenges related to the conditions of confinement and access to resources and support systems. Studies have shown that detention can have negative impacts on mental health and behavior and can increase the likelihood of recidivism, such as, "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Chicago Juvenile Justice System" (2015) by the Chicago Urban League. This report analyzed data from the Cook County juvenile justice system and found that black youth were overrepresented at every stage of the system, from arrest to incarceration. The report also found that black youth received harsher sanctions than white youth for similar offenses. Male black juveniles may also face additional challenges related to racial discrimination and bias within the justice system.

Once a juvenile turns 18 years of age they are now entering into a system where it will be harder to escape from. According to the Chicago Police Department 2018 Annual Report

arrests by age in the year 2018 was at 7,704 arrests for juveniles ages 0-17 which is down from the previous year 2017 with a total of 8,813 arrest of juveniles ages 0-17 (Chicago Police Department, 2022). Prior to the COVID pandemic juvenile arrest in the city of Chicago have decreased, juvenile reoffending had continued to be an ongoing issue.

Male black juveniles in Chicago face significant challenges that can contribute to their involvement in the juvenile justice system and their likelihood of recidivism. Studies have shown that male black juveniles in Chicago are more likely to live in poverty and experience limited access to educational and employment opportunities compared to their peers. These systemic issues can increase the likelihood of juvenile delinquency and recidivism, as young people may turn to criminal activities to make ends meet or out of a lack of opportunities. Male black juveniles in Chicago also face disproportionate exposure to violence and trauma, including exposure to community violence and experiences of racial discrimination. These experiences can have long-lasting effects on mental health and behavior, increasing the risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system and the likelihood of recidivism.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the importance identifying exposure factors of juvenile recidivism from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators and the effectiveness of efforts to prevent/avoid juvenile recidivism as perceived by the juvenile justice professionals and educators within the city of Chicago. A second purpose was to explore bridging the gap between juvenile justice professionals and educators to explore

the types of support provided by each entity and the perceived importance of each entity's

support to help specifically male black juveniles avoid recidivism. Juvenile recidivism is a social

problem that requires policies to tackle the underlying socioeconomic factors that are affecting

young people (poverty, unemployment, homelessness, substance abuse, and unaddressed mental

health) with an emphasis on rehabilitation and accountability (Jenson & Howard, 1998).

Overall, the overrepresentation of black male juveniles in the juvenile detention center

highlights the need for systemic changes that address the root causes of juvenile delinquency and

promote equitable treatment of all young people in the justice system. By addressing the

systemic issues and challenges faced by black male juveniles and providing support and

resources to address these issues, stakeholders can help to create a more equitable and just

system for all young people in the city. The goal of this study is to explore this issue in depth and

to better understand the perspectives of people who have a real connection to these issues and

most importantly find ways of helping juvenile offenders avoid recidivism while also

acknowledging the issues that have led to juvenile delinquency within Chicago Cook County

area.

Role of the Researcher

As a black female Chicago police officer, I have had my share of encounters with

Chicago youth. These have included positive police interactions, (speaking to the youth at their

schools about safety, walking kids home from school, mentorship, etc.) but the negative has far

outweighed the positive. I have seen things that no one should see, things that I wish I could have

unseen the moment I saw them, especially in terms of juveniles. For example, seeing juveniles

living in squalor, parents addicted to drugs, abuse, and the worse is seeing juveniles for live a life

of crime becoming victims of the streets and being shot and killed. Most juveniles that I have

personally spoken to do not even expect to make it to their 21st birthday.

I have been a police officer for over 10 years, and I have only worked in the high crime

areas, which are the same areas of Chicago that I grew up in. I am a product of these rough

streets. I grew up in a gang and drug infested environment. Most of my encounters with Chicago

police growing up were negative. I experienced racism and abuse of power and as a young

person that had an impact on my view of all police. So, becoming a Chicago Police Officer was

really something I never imagined I would be as that young child. It was something that as a

young child I did not think was even possible because I rarely saw minority police in my

community.

Fast forward to me becoming a Chicago Police Officer. I knew that I wanted to work in

the communities that I grew up in, because I know what it's like growing up and fearing those

who are meant to protect you and I wanted to change that perception for the young people in the

same communities that raised me. So, going into this career I knew my "why". My "why" was to

help change the lives of the youth, to find a way to connect with the youth, to give second

chances, but soon reality blurred my "why". The reality that not only have times changed from

how I was raised, but also there were so many other factors that I was not prepared for when

encountering the young people in these same communities that I grew up in, such as, drugs (pills,

molly, lean, loud, etc.) which are all street terminology that the young people use for very potent

illegal narcotics. And by the times have changed I mean when I was growing up in these

communities there was still a sense of "it takes a village" to raise a child. There was still a sense

of togetherness within the community. Nowadays, that sense of togetherness has faded, along

with jobs, resources for adults and the youth, and equity education. Putting all these elements

together along with the youth in these communities is a recipe for a journey within the criminal

justice system.

Research Questions

The essential questions that govern this research are:

1. To what degree do exposures factors such as environment, family's criminal history,

mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute

to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism?

2. What are some effective methods that can be utilized to rectify these exposure factors

from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators?

3. How do juvenile justice professional and educators describe the gap between each

other's roles when encountering juvenile delinquents specifically male black juveniles?

Researcher Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

To conduct a valid data analysis with meaningful conclusions, the following assumptions

guide this research:

1. The assumptions were confirmed in that the archival data used in this study were accurate and up to date with the online public database of the Circuit Court of Cook County Juvenile Detention Center and Chicago Police Department Information Unit.

2. The participants will answer the interview questions in an honest and candid manner. The data were collected according to recognized ethical guidelines.

3. The juvenile justice professionals' and educators' perspectives will provide significant understandings into the lives of the juveniles with whom they encounter or have encountered.

4. The open-ended probing interview questions will enable juvenile justice professionals and educators to express their thoughts and experiences concerning exposure factors of recidivism.

5. The juvenile justice professionals and educators will provide an accurate assessment of their perceptions, experiences, and knowledge.

6. The opened-ended interview questions will produce themes, categories, and concepts.

The study is limited to juvenile justice professionals and educators only from the Cook County Chicago area. Also, this study did not include the voices of the juveniles who have experienced recidivism. Another limitation of this study was my concern with my possible implicit bias due to my law enforcement background during the study. Researchers are obliged to carefully reflect on, deal with, and report potential sources of bias and error.

The goal was to remain neutral while gathering descriptive accounts from respondents regarding each participant's knowledge of juvenile recidivism. Another goal was to identify underlying harmonies and patterns and present results to the study respondents. Pre and post interviews and open communication was available to respondents. Interest, questions, respondents' commentaries, tone, and preconceived notions and biases regarding the phenomenon will be tailored throughout the study. Data was collected in this study from not only a solid sampling group but also a group that compliments each other's roles. The results were not generalized to all juvenile offenders, as the data that was collected was from juvenile justice professionals and educators in only one city within the state of Illinois.

Definition of Key Terminology

Recidivism- is the act of a person repeating an undesirable behavior after they have either experienced negative consequences of that behavior or have been trained to extinguish that behavior. It is also used to refer to the percentage of former prisoners who are rearrested for a similar offense (Looman & Abracen, 2010).

Juvenile delinquent- a person who in underage (usually below18), who is found to have committed a crime in states which have declared by law that a minor lacks responsibility and thus may not be sentenced as an adult. However, the legislatures of several states have reduced the age of criminal responsibility for serious crimes or for repeat offenders to as low as 14 (Hill, 1981-2005).

Juvenile- Youth in juvenile justice system are under the age of 17 in Illinois. However, in general, the term refers to individuals under age 18, which is a reporting category for youth

14

defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Demographic data from federal sources typically categorize juveniles as under age 18 (Loerzel, 2010).

Mental illness/PTSD- A mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling or mood. Such conditions may affect someone's ability to relate to others and function each day. Each person will have different experiences, even people with the same diagnosis (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Diversion program: An alternative intervention strategy in which juvenile offenders are redirected away from formal processing in the juvenile justice system but are still held accountable for their actions (Schwalbe et al., 2012).

Risk factor: Any variable that is associated with an increased likelihood that an individual will engage in delinquent, deviant, and/or criminal activity (Calley, 2012). In the context of this study, risk factors include personal characteristics, traits, environmental conditions, and social influences of family, school, or community that are linked to the likelihood of a juvenile engaging in recidivism.

Social learning theory: This theory posits that the behaviors of juvenile offenders may be associated with exposure to maladaptive environments related to the offender's location, age, gender, race, family background, and other social forces (Akers, 2009).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Much research has addressed the issues of delinquency in Chicago as it relates to Black male juveniles, such as, gang involvement, violence, crime, education, and so forth. Gangs are a pervasive problem in Chicago, particularly in low-income communities with high concentrations of black residents. A study by Papachristos et al. (2018) found that gang-related homicides in the city were highly concentrated within social networks of black males. The authors argue that understanding the social dynamics of gang activity can help inform efforts to reduce gang violence. Black males in Chicago are disproportionately affected by violence and crime. A study by Baskin et al. (2019) found that exposure to community violence was associated with increased risk of PTSD symptoms among black male adolescents. Another study by Cooper et al. (2019) found that neighborhood-level factors, such as poverty and crime rates, were associated with increased risk of violent behavior among black male adolescents. Black males in Chicago face significant educational challenges, including low graduation rates and poor academic performance. A study by Ali and Lyons (2018) found that black male students were less likely than their peers to be enrolled in advanced coursework and more likely to be suspended from school. The authors argue that addressing racial disparities in education requires a comprehensive approach that includes addressing systemic racism and investing in supportive resources for black students.

Black males in Chicago experience a range of health and well-being challenges. A study

by Watkins-Hayes et al. (2018) found that young black men in the city faced significant barriers to accessing healthcare, including lack of insurance and discrimination from healthcare providers. Another study by Kresovich et al. (2018) found that exposure to environmental toxins, such as lead and air pollution, was associated with increased risk of chronic diseases among black male adolescents in Chicago. Black males are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system in Chicago. A study by Haggerty et al. (2018) found that black male youth were more likely than their white peers to be arrested, detained, and placed in out-of-home placements. The authors argue that addressing racial disparities in the juvenile justice system requires a comprehensive approach that includes diversion programs, community-based interventions, and reforming policies that perpetuate racial bias. Overall, research on male black juveniles in Chicago highlights the many challenges they face and the need for targeted interventions and policy changes to improve outcomes for this population.

The broad literature review explored exposure factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism, specifically environment, family criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experiences, and social bonds. The literature that was reviewed in this chapter can potentially help professionals working in the juvenile justice system and educators communicate more effectively and better understand each other and how best to serve and assist young people who may fall victim to specific exposure factors that may lead to juvenile delinquency.

Literature search strategies

In what follows, first were explored the major theoretical models explaining juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. Secondly, recidivism was defined and discussed both its economic impacts and emerging strategies being used in Chicago and Illinois to prevent it. Having done so, "exposure factors" were explored, that is, factors identified in research on juvenile delinquency as highly predictive of offending. Next, environment, family history, substance-abuse, education, and strength or weakness of social bonds were discussed, all of which have been named as key exposure factors in the literature that was reviewed. To illustrate the potential impact of environmental exposure factors or the combined effect of exposure factors, a brief case study of a composite juvenile offender was developed from the work experience as a Chicago police officer. The chapter is concluded by exploring the effect of current school reform practices on juvenile offending, specifically exploring how school reform strategies like charter and magnet schools can weaken social bonds that in the past connected a child to his neighborhood public school and to other positive social institutions. As part of the conclusion, there is a glimpse ahead to the next chapter's discussion of study design and methodology.

This review of literature consists of articles retrieved from various online search engines such as Google Scholar, JSTAR, Criminal Justice Periodicals, National Center for Mental Health, and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ), ProQuest, and SAGE Premier. Keywords used to conduct research are juvenile delinquents, juvenile delinquency, juvenile recidivism, substance

abuse and juvenile recidivism, age of arrest, juvenile delinquency and recidivism, risk factors for juvenile delinquency, academic performance and juvenile crime, mental health disorders and juvenile and deviant behavior, and juvenile crime and perceptions of juvenile professionals.

Theoretical Foundation

Social Learning and Social Disorganization as Predictors of Juvenile Offending and Recidivism

Shaw and McKay's (1972) social disorganization theory and Bandura's (1977) social learning theory are among several theories that explain juvenile delinquency. The theories and the relationship to juvenile delinquency are discussed in detail in this section. Social disorganization theory suggests that crime and delinquency are a result of the breakdown of social institutions and structures within a community, which can lead to social disorder and the emergence of criminal behavior. This theory can be applied to male black juveniles in Chicago and their experiences in their neighborhoods. According to social disorganization theory, male black juveniles in Chicago may be more likely to engage in delinquent behavior if they live in neighborhoods with high levels of poverty, social disorganization, and limited social and economic opportunities. These neighborhoods may lack strong social institutions, such as schools, churches, and community centers, that can provide support and guidance to young people. Additionally, male black juveniles in Chicago may be exposed to high levels of violence and trauma, which can contribute to negative behaviors and attitudes. Social disorganization theory suggests that these negative factors can combine to create a criminogenic environment that increases the risk of delinquent behavior.

Social disorganization theory also suggests that community-based interventions, such as community policing, neighborhood revitalization, and community organizing, can address the root causes of delinquent behavior by strengthening social institutions and promoting social and economic opportunities. These interventions can provide at-risk male black juveniles with positive role models, access to resources and opportunities, and support and guidance from adults in their community. Overall, social disorganization theory provides a framework for understanding the complex social and economic factors that contribute to delinquent behavior among male black juveniles in Chicago. By applying this theory, community-based interventions can be developed to address these underlying factors and promote positive outcomes for at-risk youth.

Social disorganization theory is also one of the most widely accepted place-based theories of crime. Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay developed this theory which shifted criminological education from a focus on the anatomy of people to the anatomy of places. Shaw and McKay demonstrated that delinquency did not randomly occur throughout the city but was concentrated in disadvantaged neighborhoods. These impoverished neighborhoods were in a constant state of transition, experiencing high rates of residential turnover. They were also home to newly arrived immigrants and African Americans. In these areas, children were exposed to constant criminal behavior and residents were unable to develop important social relationships necessary for the informal regulation of crime and disorder. Many researchers have argued that few works in criminology have had more influence than Shaw and McKay's 1942 book *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas* (Bursik R. J., 1988). Shaw and McKay argued that three

structural factors: Low economic status, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential mobility led to the disruption of community social organization, which, in turn, accounted for variations in crime and delinquency (Shaw & McKay, 1942). In general terms, social disorganization refers to the inability of a community structure to realize the common values of its residents and maintain effective social controls (Kornhauser, 1978).

The first and most important intervening construct in Shaw and McKay's disorganization model was the ability of a community to supervise and control teenage peer groups (e.g., gangs). It has been well documented that delinquency is primarily a group phenomenon (Shaw & McKay, 1942), and according to Shaw and McKay, the capacity of the community to control group-level dynamics is a key mechanism linking community characteristics with delinquency. Undoubtedly, a pivotal fact underlying Shaw and McKay's research was that most gangs developed from unsupervised, spontaneous play groups (Thrasher. 1963, p. 25; Bandura. 1961, p. 120). Shaw and McKay (1942) thus argued that residents of cohesive communities were better able to control the teenage behaviors that set the context for group-related delinquency (Thrasher. 1963, pp. 26-27; Short.1963, p. xxiv; Short and Strodtbeck. 1965).

Socially disorganized communities with extensive street-corner peer groups are also expected to have higher rates of adult crime, especially among younger adults who still have ties to youth gangs. As Thrasher (1963, p. 281) argued:

There is no hard and fast dividing line between predatory gangs of boys and criminal groups of younger and older adults. They merge into each other by imperceptible

gradations and the latter have their real explanation, for the most part, in the former."

Similarly, Shaw and McKay pointed to the link between juvenile delinquency and adult

criminality, reporting a correlation of .90 between delinquency rates of juveniles aged 10-

16 and referral rates of young adults aged 17- 20 (1969, p. 95).

They further noted the "striking" fact that over 70% of the juveniles in high-gang-delinquency

areas were arrested as adults (Shaw and McKay 1969, p. 134). Therefore, the general hypothesis

derived from the basic Shaw and McKay model is that street-corner teenage peer groups will

increase both crime and delinquency rates.

Clifford Shaw provides an example of how the juvenile justice system worked in Illinois

in the 1920s. He published the true story of a Chicago kid named Stanley. The boy's problems

began when he kept running away from home, where his stepmother was beating him. Time after

time, Stanley was arrested for running away. He began stealing. Authorities locked him up in one

institution after another. He learned about the criminal way of life from fellow inmates. Older

inmates sexually abused him. Eventually, Stanley ended up in the Chicago House of Corrections.

It was a filthy, smelly city jail. This is how Stanley described his experience. Stanley related "I

lost all respect for myself. I felt degenerated and unhuman. I always will feel it was an insult to

put me there. It's an insult to put any human soul there. In my anguish, I planned vengeance and

hatred. Consequences? I didn't care what happened to me." Stanley's story had a happy ending.

A foster family took him in, and he began working as a salesman. Four years after leaving jail,

Stanley looked back on the way Chicago's juvenile-justice system had treated him. Stanley

stated, "Society can force children into correctional institutions, but it cannot force them to reform. To reform a boy, you must change his spirit, not break it." (Shaw C. R., 1966)

Tests of Shaw and McKay's Model

Perhaps the first research to measure social disorganization directly was carried out by Maccoby, Johnson, and Church (Maccoby, 1958) in a survey of two low-income neighborhoods in Cambridge, Massachusetts. One neighborhood had a high rate of delinquency and the other a low rate. Maccoby et al.'s (Maccoby, 1958) findings indicated that the higher delinquency neighborhood was less cohesive than the low-crime neighborhood. That is, residents were less likely to know their neighbors by name, like their neighborhood, or have compatible interests with neighbors. In addition, there were no differences in attitudes toward delinquency between the areas, but the residents of the low-delinquency area were more likely to take some action if a child was observed committing a delinquent act. Two additional studies supporting the social disorganization approach were also published in this time frame. Warren found that neighborhoods with lower levels of neighboring and value consensus and higher levels of alienation had higher rates of riot activity (Warren, 1969). Kapsis surveyed residents in three Oakland area communities and found that stronger social networks and heightened organizational activity have lower rates of delinquency (Kapsis, 1976).

Lastly another study, *The Truly Disadvantaged* reoriented urban poverty and crime research in a fundamental way and created a new foundation focused on the dynamics of urban decline (Wilson, 1987). Beginning in the 1960s, deindustrialization had devastating effects on

inner-city communities long dependent on manufacturing employment. Increasing violent crime during the 1970s and 1980s fueled "white flight" from central cities (Liska, 1995). Improvement in civil rights among African Americans, particularly pertaining to housing discrimination, increased the movement of middle-class families out of inner-city neighborhoods. As a result of those and other complex changes in the structure of the economy and their social sequelae, a new image of the "high-crime" neighborhood took hold. In Shaw and McKay's model (1969), high delinquency and crime were viewed as an unfortunate, and to some extent temporary, consequence of rapid social change. The high-crime neighborhoods depicted in Wilson's (1987) research were characterized by extreme, concentrated disadvantages. Residents who could afford to move did so, leaving behind a largely African American population isolated from the economic and social mainstream of society, with much less hope of neighborhood mobility than had been true earlier in the 20th century.

One of the most pressing issues regarding development of the social disorganization approach is the need to resolve inconsistency of measurement across studies. Without some assurance of the quality of our measures, we cannot be certain that our findings have any meaning or, at the least, that our findings mean what we think they mean. When social scientists measure concepts, they aim to achieve *reliability* and *validity* in their measures (Creswell J. W., 2018). Achieving consensus on that issue will clearly require careful conceptualization and focused research. Overall, the future of social disorganization and collective efficacy theory looks very promising with consistent measurements and focus.

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

Social learning theory suggests that individuals learn from the people around them and their environment through observation, modeling, and reinforcement. Bandura explained social learning theory and human behavior as a continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences (Bandura A. , 1977). This theory can be applied to black male juveniles in Chicago and their experiences in the justice system. According to social learning theory, male black juveniles in Chicago may learn delinquent behaviors from peers, family members, and the larger community. They may also be exposed to violent or traumatic experiences that can contribute to negative behaviors and attitudes. Additionally, they may experience discrimination and systemic racism that can limit their opportunities and contribute to delinquent behavior.

Social learning theory also suggests that positive role models and supportive environments can promote positive behaviors and attitudes. Programs and initiatives that provide mentoring, positive relationships with adults and peers, and access to resources and opportunities can promote positive social learning and reduce the risk of delinquent behavior. Furthermore, social learning theory highlights the importance of reinforcement and consequences. Programs and initiatives that reinforce positive behaviors and provide consequences for negative behaviors can promote positive social learning and reduce the risk of delinquent behavior. Overall, social learning theory provides a framework for understanding the complex interactions between individuals, their environment, and their experiences in the justice system. By applying this theory, programs and initiatives can be developed to promote positive social learning and reduce the risk of delinquent behavior among black male juveniles in Chicago.

In addition, learning is observational and develops by imitating models. Further, persons imitate actions that result in rewards and avoidance behaviors that elicit a negative response. Cognitive processes are central, as learners must make sense of and internalize what they see to reproduce the behavior. Psychological processing is required to match cognition and behavior between the observation and the performance (Horsburgh, 2018). The following diagram (Figure 1) represents the three interconnected underlying themes of the SLT: environmental, personal, and behavioral factors (Bandura A. , 1977b).
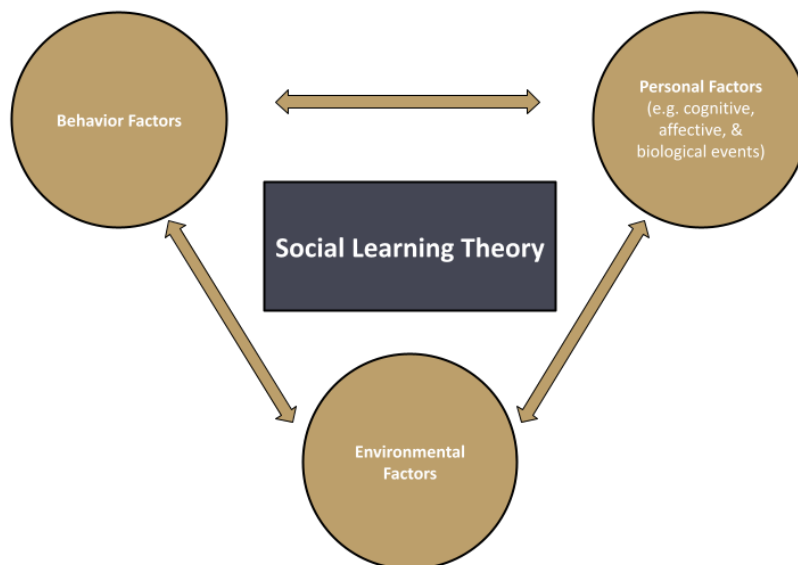
Figure 1 The three interconnected underlying themes (Bandura A. , 1977b).

Furthermore, Bandura and Ribes-Inesla (1976) posited that social learning theory has a prominent place in the study of criminal behavior (Bandura & Ribes-Inesta, 1976). They argued that one's environmental experience influences the social learning of violence in children. Bandura and Ribes-Inesla noted that peers could contribute juvenile's delinquent behavior

because juveniles spend most of their time with their peers. If the juveniles have not received proper guidance from their parents, then the influence from their peers can lead to delinquent behaviors (Bandura & Ribes-Inesta, 1976).

In addition to Bandura and Ribes-Inesla's and Bandura's views on social learning theory, Akers posited that social learning theory has also been used to explain crime and criminality (Akers R. L., 1994). According to the social learning theory, "aggressive behaviors are learned through reinforcement and the imitation of aggressive *models*" (Gross, 2020, p. 489). Bandura showed that aggressive tendencies, especially in children, are *vicariously reinforced* by seeing others rewarded for or benefiting from their aggressive behavior. The SLT is also valuable in understanding criminal and deviant behavior. A review of existing studies found that the SLT could make sense of events at both a micro and a macro level, considering the temporal and ecological context (Akers R. L., 2006).

Tests of SLT Model

Numerous studies of social learning theory as it relates to the concepts of differential association, definitions, differential reinforcement, and imitation and behavior have been conducted (Cullen, 2011). How associations with family and peers affect behaviors have received considerable attention (Kjellstrand & Eddy, 2011). Researchers have also applied these concepts to juvenile delinquency. Estevez, Emler, and Wood (2009) found that the quality of relationships between juveniles and their parents, together with parenting skills, are central areas of importance. Juveniles who have negative relationships with their parents are more likely to be involved in delinquent activities (Estevez, Emler, & Wood, 2009). Akers and Sellers (2009)

27

explained that persons who are more exposed to criminal or deviant models are more likely to imitate criminal or deviant behavior and expect reward rather than punishment for the behavior.

Akers, along with several scholars, has tested his SLT over the years across a variety of samples and on a range of behaviors from minor deviance to serious criminal behavior. The first of these projects, and by far the most well-known and cited, is the Boys Town study (Akers R. L., 2006). This research project involved primary collection of survey data from approximately 3,000 students in Grades 7 through 12 in eight communities in the Midwest. Most of the survey questions focused on adolescent substance use and abuse, but it was also the first survey that included questions that permitted Akers and his associates to fully test the four components of social learning theory. The results of the studies relying on the Boys Town data provided overwhelming support for Akers' social learning theory, including each of its four main sets of variables of differential association, definitions, differential reinforcement, and imitation. Lanza-Kaduce, Akers, Krohn, and Radosevich (1984) also demonstrated that the social learning variables were significantly correlated with the termination of alcohol, marijuana, and hard drug use, with cessation being related to a preponderance of non-using associations, aversive drug experiences, negative social sanctions, exposure to abstinence models, and definitions unfavorable to continued use of each of these substances.

The second research project, the Iowa study, was a 5-year longitudinal examination of smoking among junior and senior high school students in Muscatine, Iowa (Akers R. L., 2006). Spear and Akers (1988) provided the initial test of social learning theory on the first wave (1988)

of the Iowa study. The results of the cross-sectional analysis revealed nearly identical results among the youth in the Iowa study as was previously found in the Boys Town study. Additional evidence provided by Akers (1998) illustrated the substantial influence of the adolescents' parents and peers on their behavior. When neither of the parents or friends smoked, there was a very high probability that the adolescent abstained from smoking, and virtually none of these youth reported being regular smokers. In contrast, when the adolescent's parents and peers smoked, more than 3 out of every 4 of these youth reported having smoked, and nearly half reported being regular smokers.

Although Akers and his associates have continued to test social learning theory to various degrees using dependent variables such as adolescent alcohol and drug use (Hwang, 2003), cross-national homicide rates (Akers R. L., 2006), and even terrorism (Akers R. L., 2004), the findings from the classic studies just reviewed clearly identify the strength of the empirical status of social learning theory.

Like social learning theory, Shaw and McKay's social disorganization theory asserts that a culture that lacks social organization is a major cause of criminality (Bartollas, 1990). Therefore, SLT and SDT were the best fit for the theorical framework for this study. SLT has been very successful when tested by previous scholar's research, specifically research aimed toward young people. Both theories, SLT and SDT, complement each other as the foundation of this study especially while trying to examine the root issues when it comes to exposure factors that young people face while growing up in the inner city of Chicago.

Furthermore, social disorganization theory was chosen because Shaw and McKay created this theory in Chicago which has a strong and long history within the inner-city Chicago area, specifically, The Chicago Area Project (CAP). The Chicago Area Project has a distinguished history and demonstrable track record of over 86 years of work in delinquency prevention and service in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods. In the early 1930s, Shaw initiated the Chicago Area Project in three of the city's highest crime areas to test delinquency prevention techniques. Russell Square in the South Chicago area was one of the three communities' areas and was a perfect neighborhood for the experiment. It was very poor, highly congested and filled with immigrant steel workers, many of whom worked night shifts while their families clung to old rural traditions and tried to cope with life in a highly industrialized urban setting. Fifteen youth gangs were the scourge of the community, although they never posed the violent threat that we associate with gangs today.

According to information found on the Chicago Area Project (CAP), Shaw's approach was to rally the parents to establish the Russell Square Community Committee. Shaw's objective was to lessen the attraction of delinquency for gang youth. Besides approaching youth – and encouraging families to take a leadership role in the community committees – Shaw also embarked on an even more controversial path. He began involving some of the "unsavory" elements of the community in neighborhood plans and the decision-making process. Recognizing that the "bad elements" of a community often wielded power and could not be simply avoided, Shaw solicited their support and utilized their power and strength to meet the community's

needs. He even went so far as to use ex-convicts in the delinquency prevention program (www.chicagoareaproject.org, 2022).

Shaw believed that by reaching out to schools and following up with parolees as they re-entered community life, truancy and, ultimately, juvenile delinquency could be curtailed, and the community could control its own destiny. CAP also began launching programs in Chicago's African American communities. In 1941, Shaw employed Golden B. Darby, an African American leader on the south side, to organize communities in that area. Then, the dynamic Sadie Waterford Jones was added to the staff along with several other local community workers. During the 1940s, CAP became a leader around integration. CAP was asked to spearhead the Boy Scouts of America integration efforts (www.chicagoareaproject.org, 2022).

According to CAP, throughout 1997 and 1998, CAP and other youth advocates lobbied for procedural modifications to prevent the Illinois Juvenile Justice Reform Act from criminalizing young people. The Act became law on January 1, 1999. Advocacy efforts were moderately successful. Since the adoption of the Juvenile Reform Act, CAP has worked in partnership with the Juvenile Court of Cook County and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office to reinvigorate and reassess a program of intervention that the Court and CAP had pioneered over fifty years ago. In the 1990s, through a renewed version of this program called the Juvenile Justice Diversion (JJD), CAP and the Court have established a systematic approach to the referral and involvement of youth who would otherwise receive no treatment and who therefore had a high potential for repeating as offenders, in a more serious manner.

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

The first Special Project in JJDP was the Juvenile Justice Diversion Project (JJDP),

launched as a pilot in 1997 and since proven to be an effective alternative to prosecution. This is

evident by the increasing number of communities opting to participate in the program, as well as

the on-going research that demonstrates that JJDP is highly effective in reducing recidivism

among program participants. In 2021, Chicago Area Project assists community committees in 30

communities in Chicago and the Metropolitan Area. CAP continues to work with the Juvenile

Court of Cook County to find alternatives to incarceration and punitive sentencing for youth

involved in minor or non-violent offenses (www.chicagoareaproject.org, 2022).

The Juvenile Justice Diversion project is a cost-effective alternative to prosecution and

formal Juvenile Court action for minors referred by the State Attorney's Juvenile Bureau. After

an interview, assessment and enrollment, youth participants are assigned to youth-serving

programs operated by CAP affiliates in their neighborhoods. Affiliate Staff provide positive

mentoring on-site, with case management reinforcing life skills development leading to positive

choices relative to school, job training or employment. Additionally, JJDP provides court-

impacted youth with opportunities to learn the principles of restorative justice and encourages

them to repair the harm caused by their delinquent behavior. Outcome data reveal that

the recidivism rate for youth participating in Chicago Area Project's JJD program is only six

percent [6%] — which means 94% of their participants stay out of trouble and out of the juvenile

justice system. This community-based solution offers far better outcomes when compared with

the overall recidivism rate of 91% in Illinois as reported by the Illinois Criminal Justice

Information Authority.

In conclusion, no theory can account for all variations in criminal behavior. Only through the process of continuing to subject the theory/theories and their macrolevel versions to rigorous and sound empirical tests can it be determined how much the theory/theories can account for on its own and in comparison, to other theories. One aim of this study is to test social disorganization theory and social learning theory on exposure factors and their effect on juvenile recidivism among male black juvenile delinquents from the perspectives of juvenile justice professionals and educators with the hopes of bridging the gap among each of these professions to create more reliable and useful tools to prevent juvenile recidivism among Chicago Black youth.

Recidivism

Recidivism: Measuring the Problem and Costs

Recidivism, or the tendency of individuals to reoffend after being released from incarceration, is a complex issue that affects many individuals, particularly male black juveniles in Chicago. There are a few factors that contribute to recidivism among this population, including poverty, lack of access to education and job opportunities, gang activity, and exposure to violence. One of the key challenges in addressing recidivism among male black juveniles in Chicago is the fact that many of these individuals come from disadvantaged backgrounds, with limited access to resources and support systems that can help them avoid reoffending. Many of these young men may have grown up in neighborhoods with high levels of poverty and violence and may have been exposed to gangs and criminal activity from a young age.

Measuring the problem of recidivism among male black juveniles in Chicago can be challenging, but there are several indicators that can be used to understand the scope and impact of this issue. One key metric is the rate of recidivism, or the percentage of individuals who are released from incarceration and then reoffend within a certain period. This can be measured using data from law enforcement agencies and correctional institutions, as well as through surveys and other research studies. Another way to measure the problem of recidivism among male black juveniles in Chicago is to look at the cost of incarceration and other criminal justice interventions. Incarceration is a costly process, and the cost of housing and providing services for incarcerated individuals can be significant. Additionally, the cost of policing, court proceedings, and other criminal justice interventions can add up over time.

In terms of the cost of recidivism, studies have shown that the impact of reoffending can be significant, both in terms of financial costs and social consequences. When individuals are released from incarceration and then reoffend, they may be subject to additional criminal justice interventions, such as probation or parole, which can be costly to administer. According to data from the use of a cost-effective assessment helped the state save money and reduce crime rates by implementing evidence-based programs. The programs also are less expensive than housing a juvenile in a detention center. According to NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures) the annual cost of housing one juvenile in a detention center was $70,827 in 2005 (NCSL, n.d.). The Redeploy Illinois initiative gives counties financial support to provide comprehensive services to delinquent youth in their home communities who might otherwise be sent to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) (NCSL, n.d.). In the first two years of

34

implementation, the Redeploy Illinois pilot sites, on average, reduced their commitments to IDJJ by 44 percent. As of January 2010, Redeploy Illinois has nine programs serving juveniles in 20 counties. (NCSL, n.d.).

Additionally, the social consequences of recidivism can be severe, as individuals who reoffend may struggle to find employment, housing, and other opportunities in the future. Overall, measuring the problem and cost of recidivism among male black juveniles in Chicago is an important step in addressing this issue. By understanding the scope and impact of the problem, policymakers, community leaders, and other stakeholders can develop effective strategies to reduce recidivism and support positive outcomes for these young men.

There is a significant body of literature on the problem and cost of recidivism among black male juveniles in Chicago. Some key studies and articles include: "Recidivism Among Juvenile Offenders in Chicago" by the University of Chicago Crime Lab: This report examines the rates of recidivism among juvenile offenders in Chicago, focusing on the factors that contribute to reoffending and the impact of recidivism on individuals, families, and communities. The report also provides recommendations for reducing recidivism and improving outcomes for young offenders. According to the report by the Crime Lab, nearly half (46%) of juvenile offenders in Chicago were rearrested within a year of their release from custody (Heller, et al., 2017). The report also found that certain factors, such as age and race, were associated with a higher risk of recidivism. Young people who were older at the time of their first arrest and those who were Black, or Hispanic were more likely to reoffend. The Crime Lab's research suggests that efforts to prevent recidivism among juvenile offenders in Chicago should focus on providing

support and resources to young people both during and after their involvement with the juvenile

justice system. This might include things like education and job training programs, mental health

services, and community-based programs that help young people build positive relationships and

develop skills to avoid future involvement with the criminal justice system.

"The Costs of Incarceration and the Economic Impact of Recidivism" by the Justice

Policy Institute: This report analyzes the costs of incarceration in Illinois, including the cost of

housing and providing services for incarcerated individuals, as well as the cost of policing, court

proceedings, and other criminal justice interventions. According to the report, the cost of

incarcerating a person in the US can vary widely depending on the state, but on average, it costs

more than $31,000 per year to incarcerate a person (Institute, 2014). This means that

incarcerating large numbers of people can have a significant impact on state and local budgets.

The report also looks at the economic impact of recidivism, which refers to the tendency of

people who have been released from prison to reoffend and return to prison. The report argues

that recidivism is costly not only because it leads to more incarcerations but also because it

reduces the economic potential of individuals and communities (Institute, 2014).

The report also examines the economic impact of recidivism and the benefits of investing

in alternatives to incarceration. "Juvenile Justice in Chicago: A System in Crisis" by the Children

and Family Justice Center: This report provides an overview of the juvenile justice system in

Chicago, including the challenges facing male black juveniles who are caught up in the system.

The report examines the impact of poverty, violence, and lack of opportunity on young

offenders, and provides recommendations for improving the system (Juvenile Justice in Chicago:

A System in Crisis, 2015). "Race, Poverty, and Punishment: The Impact of Criminal Sanctions

on Racial, Ethnic, and Socioeconomic Inequality" by the Sentencing Project: This report

explores the relationship between race, poverty, and criminal justice policies, including the

impact of incarceration and recidivism on communities of color (Alexander, 2010). The report

highlights the need for policies that address the root causes of poverty and inequality, rather than

relying solely on punishment and incarceration.

Overall, these studies and articles highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of the

problem and cost of recidivism among male black juveniles in Chicago. By examining the social,

economic, and systemic factors that contribute to this issue, researchers and policymakers can

develop more effective strategies for addressing recidivism and improving outcomes for young

offenders.

A higher proportion of Black youth were rearrested, recommitted to IDJJ, and committed

to IDOC compared to White and Latinx youth. According to the Illinois Department of Juvenile

Justice, in 2020, there were a total of 11,719 juvenile arrests in Cook County, which includes the

city of Chicago. Of those arrests, 9,535 were for non-violent offenses, and 2,184 were for violent

offenses. In terms of juvenile detention center re-commitment rates, the Illinois Department of

Juvenile Justice reported that as of August 2021, the recidivism rate for juveniles released from

Illinois Youth Centers (IYC) was 54%. However, this statistic is for the entire state of Illinois

and does not specifically break down re-commitment rates for Chicago. It's worth noting that

juvenile arrest and re-commitment rates can fluctuate over time and are influenced by various factors such as changes in laws, policies, and policing practices. It's important to regularly monitor and analyze these rates to inform efforts to prevent delinquent behavior and improve outcomes for youth involved in the justice system.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was a federal law that was enacted in 2001 with the goal of improving the academic performance of all students in the United States, particularly those who were at risk of falling behind. While the law did not specifically target black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago, it is possible that the implementation of NCLB had some impact on this population. Schools that did not meet the academic standards set forth by NCLB were subject to a range of sanctions, including loss of funding and possible closure (Pasternack & Martinez, 2010). It is important to note that the impact of NCLB on black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago may have been limited by a range of factors, including the quality of the schools available to these students, the level of parental involvement, and the broader social and economic conditions in the city. Additionally, NCLB has been criticized for its emphasis on high stakes testing and for its failure to adequately address issues of inequality and segregation in the education system. Overall, while the impact of NCLB on male black juvenile delinquents in Chicago may have been mixed, addressing the issue of juvenile delinquency among this population will require a multifaceted approach that includes both educational and social interventions.

There have also been studies examining the relationship between Chicago school closures and delinquency, but the findings are mixed. One study published in the American Educational Research Journal found that school closures in Chicago were associated with higher rates of juvenile arrests in the affected neighborhoods. The study suggested that school closures may have disrupted social networks and support systems, leading to increased delinquent behavior. Another study published in the Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk found no significant relationship between school closures and juvenile delinquency in Chicago. However, the study did find that students who were displaced by school closures were more likely to experience academic setbacks and disengagement from school. It is important to note that school closures can have complex and varied effects on communities, and more research is needed to fully understand the relationship between school closures and delinquency. It is also important to consider the reasons for the closures and the potential impact on students and families.

Lastly, there have been longstanding issues with the over-representation of Black male juvenile delinquents in the Chicago public school system. Several factors contribute to this problem, including systemic racism, poverty, lack of resources, and inadequate access to quality education. Studies have shown that Black students in Chicago public schools are more likely to be suspended or expelled than their white counterparts, which can lead to increased involvement in the juvenile justice system. Additionally, many Black students attend under-resourced schools that lack the necessary support and resources to help them succeed academically and socially. However, much work remains to be done to address the systemic issues that contribute to the

over-representation of Black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago public schools. It will require a sustained effort by policymakers, educators, community leaders, and other stakeholders to create a more equitable and just system that provides all students with the support and resources they need to succeed.

Environment, Family, Education, Mental Illness/PTSD, Substance Abuse, and Social Bonds

For this study, the exposure factors that were investigated were environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds. Each factor will be discussed in detail in the sections that follow. Exposure factors are personal traits, characteristics of the environment, or conditions in the family, school, or community that are linked to youths' likelihood of engaging in delinquency and other problem behaviors (Murray, 2010). The presence of risk factors and the early exposure to them has been shown to increase the likelihood that youths will engage in early delinquent behavior during adolescence and continue to offend throughout the life course (Reingle, 2012). For example, youths who witness violent crimes in their neighborhoods or experience abuse/neglect in their homes at a young age have an increased chance of engaging in violent acts later in life (Reingle, 2012).

Furthermore, while exposure to more than one type of risk factor may increase cumulative risk, it can also separate high-risk from at-risk youths. At-risk youths can include any child who is exposed to a risk factor, whereas high-risk youths are children who are exposed to

multiple risk factors, particularly when this exposure occurs at a young age (Odgers, 2008). For example, school adjustment problems associated with a stressful life event, such as the death of a parent, may worsen when another stressful event or circumstance, such as witnessing a violent crime in the neighborhood, happens at the same time (Draper, 2011).

When the exposure factor pertains to the juvenile's own individuality, it could be biological, or a psychological issue, or behavioral problems. When the exposure factor pertains to family, it could be the functionality, the bonds with parents/guardians, abuse, or violence in the home. When the exposure factor pertains to peers, it could be the lack of attachment to society. When it pertains to the exposure factor of school, it could be the academic performance of the child, the peer pressure that is associated with the juvenile's classmates, and the feeling of not being accepted within the school's activities. When the exposure factor pertains to the community, it could be the bad influences by other persons in the neighborhood, if the child is a victim of poverty, or if the child has no positive outlet, he/she may turn to bad habits to lash out (OJJDP, 2017).

Black male juveniles in Chicago may learn about crime through a variety of sources, including their social networks, media and entertainment, and exposure to violence and trauma in their communities. Social networks can play a significant role in shaping attitudes and behaviors related to crime (Lurie, 2016). Research has shown that delinquent behavior can spread through social networks, with individuals being more likely to engage in delinquent behavior if their friends and peers are also involved in such activities. Black male juveniles may also be exposed

to criminal activity through family members or other influential adults in their lives who engage

in criminal behavior. Media and entertainment can also shape attitudes and beliefs related to

crime. Exposure to media that glorifies or romanticizes criminal behavior can influence attitudes

towards delinquent behavior and contribute to the normalization of criminal activity.

Exposure to violence and trauma in their communities can also play a role in the

development of delinquent behavior. Black male juveniles in Chicago may be exposed to

community violence, including gun violence, and experience trauma related to these experiences.

This trauma can have lasting effects on mental health and behavior, increasing the risk of

involvement in criminal activity. Efforts have been made in Chicago to address these issues and

promote positive role models and support systems for young people. Programs and interventions

that focus on education, employment, and community engagement can help to provide

alternative opportunities and promote positive behaviors. By addressing the underlying issues

that contribute to delinquent behavior and providing support and resources to address these

issues, stakeholders can help to create a more equitable and just system for all young people in

the city (Pearson, 2019).

Environment

It comes as no surprise as summer in Chicago heats up with rising temperatures each year

so does the increased shootings. New data analysis reveals many Chicago's youngest children

live in communities with high homicide rates, increasing the likelihood of an adverse impact on

their early development due to environmental trauma, according to Chicago-based Erikson

Institute (Morris, 2019). Erikson's analysis of the homicide data that is available through the City of Chicago Data Portal, shows more than half – nearly 60% -- of all children under the age of five in Chicago live in communities that experienced more than three homicides, raising concerns about their mental health. One out of every five teens' ages 15 to 17 living in Chicago's South and West Sides has witnessed a fatal shooting, according to data collected by the Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention at the University of Chicago (Ali, 2019). From September 2011 until 2018, nearly 1,700 children under the age of 17 were shot in Chicago, and 174 were killed, according to *The Chicago Tribune* (Ali, 2019).

The environment can have a significant impact on the behavior and outcomes of black male juveniles in Chicago, particularly in relation to delinquency. Research has consistently shown that exposure to negative environmental factors, such as poverty, violence, and lack of educational opportunities, is associated with higher levels of delinquency among black male juveniles. For example, a study published in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence found that exposure to community violence, including witnessing or experiencing violence in the home or neighborhood, was a significant predictor of violent behavior among black male juveniles in Chicago. The study also found that exposure to violence had a cumulative effect, with higher levels of exposure associated with more severe and frequent delinquent behavior.

Similarly, a study published in the Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency found that exposure to neighborhood disorder, such as vandalism, graffiti, and litter, was significantly associated with higher levels of delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago. The study

also found that psychosocial factors, such as self-esteem and parental monitoring, were important

protective factors against delinquency. These findings highlight the importance of addressing

environmental factors in efforts to reduce delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago.

By improving the physical environment of neighborhoods and providing support and resources

to address psychosocial factors, policymakers and stakeholders can help to improve outcomes for

these individuals and reduce the impact of delinquency on communities.

Addressing the impact of environmental factors on male black delinquents will require a

comprehensive approach that includes both individual-level and systemic-level interventions.

Individual-level interventions may include programs that focus on building resilience, providing

support, and developing positive coping strategies. Systemic-level interventions may include

efforts to address issues such as poverty, limited access to resources, and racial discrimination,

and may involve policy changes and community engagement efforts. It is important to approach

this issue with a focus on equity and justice, recognizing the systemic factors that contribute to

environmental disadvantage and working to create a more just and equitable society for all. One

recent study that examined the relationship between environmental factors and delinquency

among black male juveniles in Chicago is "Neighborhood Disorder, Psychosocial Factors, and

Youth Violence: A Latent Profile Analysis" by Alana Gunn and Christopher Browning,

published in the Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency in 2021.

The study used data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods

(PHDCN) to examine the relationship between neighborhood disorder, psychosocial factors

(such as self-esteem, parental monitoring, and peer relationships), and youth violence among a sample of black male juveniles in Chicago (Earls & Sampson, 2004). The study found that exposure to neighborhood disorder, such as graffiti, litter, and vandalism, was significantly associated with higher levels of delinquency among black male juveniles. Additionally, the study found that psychosocial factors, such as self-esteem and parental monitoring, were also significant predictors of delinquency. The study highlights the importance of addressing both environmental and psychosocial factors in efforts to reduce delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago. By improving the physical environment of neighborhoods and providing support and resources to address psychosocial factors, policymakers and stakeholders can help to improve outcomes for these individuals and reduce the impact of delinquency on communities.

Drawing to Shaw and McKay's (1942/1969) social disorganization theory it is important to ask the questions: Why is there more crime in certain areas then in others? What community-level characteristics influence the rate of crime or deviance in any given area? Shaw and McKay looked to other social factors that characterized these areas. They found that poor neighborhoods were characterized by population turnover and racial/ethnic heterogeneity. Bursik (1988) argues that "in its purest formulation, social disorganization refers to the inability of local communities to realize the common values of their residents or solve commonly experienced problems" (p. 521). Social disorganization and social learning theories would suggest that the bottom line is if the family model is lacking, the juvenile enters society at a disadvantage.

Family Criminal History

Many researchers have explored common exposure factors such as underdeveloped communities, deviant peers, substance abuse, and gangs, which are all real issues, but a child's life begins at home with their parents and family. From early on, the immediate family is the child's "world", where he/she learns not only how to react to the rules of the "house", but also the rules of society. It is within the family unit where the juvenile observes consequences, develops role models and uses the "compass" the family has developed to steer him/her as they step outside into the outside environment.

Family criminal history can have a significant impact on the behavior and outcomes of black male juveniles in Chicago, particularly in relation to delinquency. Research has consistently shown that having family members with a history of criminal behavior is a strong predictor of delinquency among black male juveniles. For example, a study published in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence found that having a family member who had been incarcerated was significantly associated with higher levels of delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago. The study also found that exposure to community violence was a mediator between having a family member who had been incarcerated and delinquent behavior, suggesting that exposure to violence may partially explain the relationship between family criminal history and delinquency.

Similarly, a study published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence found that having a family member with a history of criminal behavior was associated with higher levels of

delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago. The study also found that parental support and monitoring were important protective factors against delinquency, highlighting the importance of family-based interventions in efforts to reduce delinquency among black male juveniles. These findings highlight the need for interventions that address the impact of family criminal history on black male juveniles in Chicago. By providing support and resources to families with a history of criminal behavior, policymakers and stakeholders can help to break the cycle of delinquency and reduce the impact of family criminal history on the behavior and outcomes of black male juveniles.

One recent study that examined the relationship between family criminal history and delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago is "Intergenerational Transmission of Criminal Behavior among Black Adolescent Males in Chicago" by Reuben Miller, Anthony Vega, and Margaret Chin, published in the Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency in 2021. The study used data from the Northwestern Juvenile Project to examine the intergenerational transmission of criminal behavior among a sample of black adolescent males in Chicago. The study found that having a parent with a history of criminal behavior was a significant predictor of delinquency among black adolescent males, even after controlling for other risk factors. The study also found that exposure to violence and harsh parenting were important mediators of the relationship between family criminal history and delinquency. The study highlights the need for interventions that address both the individual and systemic factors that contribute to intergenerational transmission of criminal behavior among black adolescent males in Chicago.

Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of addressing the impact of family criminal history on the behavior and outcomes of black male juveniles in Chicago. By providing targeted interventions and resources to families with a history of criminal behavior, policymakers and stakeholders can help to break the cycle of delinquency and improve outcomes for these individuals and their communities.

Substance Abuse

The link between juvenile criminal offending and adolescent substance use is strong and well established (Chassin, 2008). The use of illegal substances has been linked with continued contact with the juvenile justice system and less desistance from criminal offending (Chassin, 2008). Thus, juvenile offenders are more likely to re-offend if they continue to use illegal substances. One-third of juveniles reported being intoxicated at the time of their offending (McGregor, Gately, Kremer, & & Kessell, 2010).

The indulgence in drugs and alcohol can lead to juvenile recidivism, but the child born with the mental and emotional crippling from being born to addicted parents, and/or living with such family members can also impact the juvenile's entrance into the criminal culture. In a longitudinal study, (Stoolmiller & Blechman, 2005) examined the relationship between adolescent self-disclosure, parental report of illicit substance use, and recidivism and they found that recidivism rates doubled based on a positive parental report of adolescent drug use. It is only logical that substance abuse would have an enormous impact on juvenile recidivism. The need to

self-medicate is a form of "self-nurturing". This need requires funding - a problem for the juvenile. It plunges him into an underground society which needs to perpetuate itself.

According to a study conducted by Northwestern Medicine, more than 90 percent of males and nearly 80 percent of females who went through Cook County's juvenile detention center were diagnosed with drug or alcohol abuse and dependency at some point in their lives from childhood through their 20s and 30s. The study, published in *The American Journal of Public Health*, looked at 1,829 youths detained at Cook County's Juvenile Temporary Detention Center between 1995 and 1998 and followed up with them at least nine times over 12 years. According to the findings, by the time the group members reached their late 20s and, for the older participants, their early 30s, more than 9 in 10 males and more than 3 in 4 females were diagnosed with a "substance use disorder". This means that they abused and were dependent on substances ranging from alcohol and marijuana to cocaine and opiates (Vivanco, 2016).

Substance abuse and juvenile delinquency are two interconnected problems that often have a significant impact on the lives of young people, particularly in urban areas like Chicago. When it comes to black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago, substance abuse can exacerbate the challenges they face and increase their likelihood of getting involved in criminal activity. Substance abuse can lead to a wide range of negative consequences for young people, including physical and mental health problems, academic difficulties, and social and legal problems. It can also contribute to risky behavior, such as theft, drug dealing, and violent crime, which can lead to juvenile delinquency.

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

In Chicago, black male juvenile delinquents are disproportionately affected by substance abuse and its consequences. According to data from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, black males accounted for 82% of all juvenile arrests for drug offenses in Chicago in 2019. Additionally, substance abuse is often cited as a factor in the commission of violent crimes by juvenile offenders in the city. The consequences of substance abuse and juvenile delinquency can be severe and long-lasting. Young people who engage in these behaviors may face legal consequences, as well as negative effects on their mental and physical health, educational opportunities, and future job prospects. It is important for communities and policymakers to address these issues through prevention and intervention programs, as well as through efforts to improve access to education, employment, and other resources that can help young people avoid substance abuse and criminal activity.

One recent study that examined the relationship between substance abuse and delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago is "Substance use trajectories and violent offending among African American male adolescents in Chicago" by Adiaha A. Spinks-Franklin and colleagues, published in the Journal of Criminal Justice in 2021. The study used data from the Chicago Youth Development Study to examine the relationship between substance use trajectories and violent offending among a sample of African American male adolescents in Chicago. The study found that substance use trajectories were significantly associated with violent offending among African American male adolescents, with those who engaged in persistent substance use over time being at the greatest risk for violent offending.

The study also found that exposure to violence and low levels of parental monitoring were important mediators of the relationship between substance use and violent offending. The study highlights the need for interventions that address both substance abuse and the underlying environmental and social factors that contribute to delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago. Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of addressing substance abuse among black male juveniles in Chicago as part of a comprehensive approach to reducing delinquency and improving outcomes for these individuals and their communities. By providing targeted interventions and resources to address substance abuse and its underlying risk factors, policymakers and stakeholders can help to improve outcomes for black male juveniles in Chicago.

School Experience

In more than half of the states in the U.S., the poorest school districts do not receive funding to address their students' increased needs. According to research by The Education Trust, school districts with the highest rates of poverty receive about $1,000 less per student in state and local funding than those with the lowest rates of poverty. For example, in Illinois the poorest districts received 22 percent less in state and local funding than the lowest-poverty districts. According to a report conducted by Joshua Dwyer, Director of Education Reform, more than 21,000 students in Chicago Public Schools, or CPS, are being left behind. They are attending schools that fail to prepare them for life. Most students attending the lowest 10 percent of elementary schools and high schools in Chicago don't have basic competence in reading, science, and math. They're significantly behind their peers in almost every respect. Students at

Chicago's lowest-performing high schools drop out at nearly 12 times the rate of average Illinois students – 36 percent compared to 3 percent, respectively (Dwyer, 2013).

The school experience can have a significant impact on the lives of young people, particularly when it comes to black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago. Research has shown that a positive school experience can help prevent juvenile delinquency, while negative school experiences can contribute to the problem. A positive school experience can provide young people with a sense of belonging, structure, and purpose. It can also offer opportunities for academic and personal growth, as well as access to supportive adults who can help them navigate the challenges they face. By contrast, a negative school experience can contribute to feelings of alienation, disengagement, and frustration, which can increase the likelihood of involvement in delinquent behavior.

In Chicago, black male juvenile delinquents often face significant barriers to academic success and positive school experiences. For example, they may attend underfunded and overcrowded schools, experience racial discrimination and bias, or lack access to high-quality teachers and resources. These factors can contribute to feelings of hopelessness and disengagement, which can increase the likelihood of involvement in criminal activity. Efforts to improve the school experience for black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago can play an important role in preventing delinquent behavior. This can include efforts to address racial discrimination and bias, provide access to high-quality teachers and resources, and create supportive environments that promote positive social and emotional development. Additionally,

interventions that address the underlying causes of negative school experiences, such as poverty, lack of access to healthcare, and exposure to trauma, can also help reduce the risk of juvenile delinquency.

There have been several studies on the relationship between school experience and black male juvenile delinquency in Chicago, which highlight the important role that schools can play in preventing delinquent behavior. One study, published in the Journal of School Violence in 2016, examined the impact of school climate on the likelihood of involvement in violent behavior among black male high school students in Chicago. The study found that students who reported a more positive school climate, including supportive relationships with teachers and a sense of safety and order in the school environment, were less likely to report involvement in violent behavior.

Another study, published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence in 2019, explored the relationship between academic engagement and involvement in delinquent behavior among black male adolescents in Chicago. The study found that students who reported higher levels of academic engagement, including interest in school and participation in extracurricular activities, were less likely to report involvement in delinquent behavior. A third study, published in the Journal of Research on Adolescence in 2020, examined the role of school discipline policies in shaping the academic and behavioral outcomes of black male students in Chicago. The study found that students who were subject to more punitive and exclusionary discipline policies, such as suspension and expulsion, were more likely to experience negative academic and behavioral outcomes, including lower academic achievement and increased involvement in delinquent

behavior. Overall, these studies suggest that efforts to improve the school experience for black male students in Chicago, including through the promotion of positive school climates, academic engagement, and supportive discipline policies, can play an important role in preventing juvenile delinquency.

The relationship between school choice and black male juvenile delinquency is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been the subject of much research and debate. On the one hand, some argue that school choice can provide black male students with access to better educational opportunities, which in turn can reduce the likelihood of engaging in delinquent behavior. For example, proponents of school choice argue that giving families the ability to choose the school that best meets their child's needs can improve academic outcomes, increase parental involvement, and create a more supportive learning environment for students. By providing black male students with better educational opportunities, they may be less likely to engage in delinquent behavior due to increased engagement and a greater sense of purpose.

However, on the other hand, some argue that school choice may exacerbate the problem of black male juvenile delinquency. Critics of school choice argue that it can lead to increased segregation and inequality, as families who are already more privileged and better equipped to navigate the education system may be more likely to take advantage of school choice options. This can result in a concentration of disadvantaged students in underfunded, low-performing schools, which can contribute to feelings of hopelessness and disengagement that may increase the likelihood of delinquent behavior. Furthermore, some research has suggested that school

choice programs may have little to no impact on reducing delinquency rates among black male

students. For example, a study published in the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management

found that attending a private school through a school voucher program had no significant

impact on reducing the likelihood of juvenile delinquency among black male students.

In summary, the relationship between school choice and black male juvenile delinquency

is a complex issue that requires further research and consideration. While school choice may

provide some benefits in terms of improved educational opportunities, it is important to ensure

that these programs are designed in a way that does not exacerbate existing inequalities and that

they are effectively addressing the underlying issues that contribute to juvenile delinquency

among black male students. Chicago is a city that has implemented various school choice

policies, such as charter schools and magnet schools, and has a significant population of black

male students who are at risk of juvenile delinquency. The relationship between school choice

and black male juvenile delinquency in Chicago has been the subject of research and debate.

One study, published in the Journal of School Choice, found that attending a charter

school in Chicago had a positive effect on reducing the likelihood of juvenile delinquency among

black male students. The study analyzed data from the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and found

that black male students who attended charter schools were significantly less likely to be arrested

for a violent crime than their peers who attended traditional public schools (Kamienski, 2011).

However, other research has suggested that the impact of school choice on reducing juvenile

delinquency may be more limited in Chicago. A study published in the Journal of Urban Affairs

found that attending a magnet school in Chicago had no significant impact on reducing the

likelihood of juvenile delinquency among black male students. The study analyzed data from the

CPS and found that magnet schools did not appear to be any more effective than traditional

public schools in reducing delinquency rates (Farmer, Poulos, & Baber, 2020).

It is important to note that the impact of school choice on reducing juvenile delinquency

among black male students in Chicago may be influenced by a variety of factors, including the

quality of the schools, the level of parental involvement, and the socioeconomic status of the

students. Therefore, it is essential to continue studying and evaluating the effectiveness of school

choice policies in addressing the issue of juvenile delinquency among black male students in

Chicago and other urban areas.

Mental Illness/Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Within the past decade, reliance on the juvenile justice system to meet the needs of

juvenile offenders with mental health concerns has increased. The effects of mental health and

PTSD on black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago can be significant and may contribute to

the cycle of delinquent behavior. Trauma exposure and mental health symptoms, including

PTSD, can impact a young person's ability to regulate their emotions, cope with stress, and

engage in healthy social relationships, which can in turn increase their likelihood of involvement

in delinquent behavior. Research has shown that traumatic events and exposure to violence are

common among black male juveniles in Chicago, and that these experiences can have lasting

impacts on mental health and behavior. For example, a study published in the Journal of Youth

and Adolescence found that trauma exposure was associated with higher levels of mental health symptoms and a higher likelihood of involvement in delinquent behavior among black male adolescents in Chicago (Espinosa, Sorensen., & Lopez, 2013).

PTSD has been linked to a higher likelihood of involvement in violent behavior among juvenile delinquents in Chicago, as well as other negative outcomes such as substance abuse, school failure, and other forms of mental health problems. A study published in the Journal of Traumatic Stress found that PTSD was common among young males in a juvenile detention center in Chicago, and that it was associated with a higher likelihood of involvement in violent behavior (Costello, Erkanli, Fairbank., & Angold, 2002). Efforts to address the mental health needs of black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago, including through screening, assessment, and evidence-based interventions, such as trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy and other forms of therapy and counseling, can be an important step in preventing delinquent behavior and promoting positive outcomes. By providing support for mental health and well-being, communities and policymakers can help break the cycle of delinquent behavior and promote healthy development among young people.

Erikson's *Risk and Reach* report, released earlier this year, shows that exposure to violence is a risk factor that is prevalent throughout the state, with 436 violent crimes occurring on average for every 100,000 population (Lifson, Gordon, & Pitman, 2019). In Cook County however, the rate was 665 violent crimes per 100,000 population, underscoring the extreme level of violence exposure facing very young children in the Chicago area. Data revealed that

approximately 30% or 54,529 Chicago children under 5 lived in a community that experienced

over 10 homicides, and 7% or 12,248 young children lived in a community that experienced over

30 homicides. The number of children exposed to gun violence and homicide in Chicago is

staggering, not to mention the impact gun violence and homicide has on young people when

those victims of violence was a family member, friend, classmate, etc. (Lifson, Gordon, &

Pitman, 2019). The year 2021 ended as one of the most violent on record for Chicago with more

fatal shootings than any year in the last quarter century. The Chicago Police Department reported

797 homicides in the city in 2021, the most in Chicago since 1996 and more than any other city

in the country (Derevyanny, 2021). Both New York and Los Angeles, which have larger

populations than Chicago, records at least 300 less homicides in 2021 than the Chicago.

> According to the cook county medical examiner, Blacks were the victims of 80% of the
>
> homicides handled by the office. More than 1,000 homicides here were gun-related, the
>
> cook county medical office said. Males accounted for 88% of homicide deaths,' the
>
> office reported in a statement. 'Eighty-six homicide deaths were under 18; 12 were under
>
> the age of 10. The Chicago police figure includes all manner of homicides, but the
>
> overwhelming majority of slayings in the city — more than 90% — were a result of gun
>
> violence, statistics show. All told, there were at least 4,300 gunshot victims, including
>
> those who suffered both fatal and nonfatal injuries, according to CPD data. The number is
>
> a significant increase from 2018, when 2,800 people were shot" (Derevyanny, 2021, p.
>
> 2).

There has been research conducted on the relationship between mental health, PTSD, and black male juvenile delinquents in Chicago, which highlights the need for early intervention and mental health support for young people who may be at risk of involvement in delinquent behavior. One study, published in the Journal of Traumatic Stress in 2013, examined the prevalence of PTSD and trauma exposure among young males in a juvenile detention center in Chicago (Kerig, Bennett, Chaplo, Modrowski, & McGee, 2013). The study found that most young males in the detention center had experienced traumatic events, and that PTSD was common among this population. The study also found that PTSD was associated with a higher likelihood of involvement in violent behavior (DaViera & Roy, 2013).

Another study, published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence in 2018, explored the relationship between trauma exposure, mental health symptoms, and involvement in delinquent behavior among black male adolescents in Chicago. The study found that exposure to trauma was associated with higher levels of mental health symptoms, such as depression and anxiety, which in turn were associated with a higher likelihood of involvement in delinquent behavior. These studies suggest that early intervention and mental health support can play an important role in preventing juvenile delinquency among black male adolescents in Chicago. This may include screening for trauma exposure and mental health symptoms, as well as providing access to evidence-based interventions, such as trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy and other forms of therapy and counseling (Ports, 2018)

Efforts to improve access to mental health care and support for young people in Chicago

can also help address the underlying causes of delinquent behavior, such as poverty, exposure to violence, and other forms of trauma. By addressing these factors and providing support for mental health and well-being, communities and policymakers can help prevent the cycle of juvenile delinquency and promote positive outcomes for young people.

The Northwestern Juvenile Project (NJP) is the first large-scale, prospective longitudinal study of mental health needs and outcomes of juvenile detainees. NJP includes a diverse sample of 1,829 youth who were arrested and detained between 1995 and 1998 in Cook County, IL, the metropolitan area that includes Chicago and its surrounding suburbs. At baseline, the participants were between 10 and 18 years old. NJP continuously tracks and reinterviews participants. Following participants over time allows for the study of patterns and sequences of disorders, the impact of these disorders on functioning, and the important risk and protective factors in this population. Researchers interview participants where they are living (either in their communities or in correctional facilities). In addition to conducting face-to-face inter views with participants, NJP also obtains records from 16 correctional and service agencies to cross-validate self-reported data on criminal justice involvement and to confirm the use of mental health and substance use services. The sample is racially and ethnically diverse; it is composed of 1,005 African Americans (54.9 percent), 524 Hispanics (28.7 percent), 296 non-Hispanic whites (16.2 percent), and 4 from other racial/ethnic groups (0.2 percent) (Teplin L. A., Abram, Washburn, Welty, & Jennifer A. Hershfield, 2013).

Exposure to trauma is common among juvenile detainees; nearly all the NJP participants

(93 percent) experienced one or more traumas in their lifetime at baseline. Significantly more males than females reported having experienced a traumatic event (Abram et al., 2004). More than 1 in 10 detainees met diagnostic criteria for PTSD during the year prior to the baseline interview. Of those participants who met these criteria, more than half reported witnessing violence as the precipitating trauma. Among participants with PTSD, 93 percent also met criteria for at least one comorbid psychiatric disorder (Abram, Washburn, Teplin, & Emanuel, 2007).

Among detainees who had major psychiatric disorders and associated functional impairments, records showed that only 15 percent had been treated in the detention center before release and that even fewer (8 percent) had been treated in the community during the 6 months following their interview in detention (Teplin L. , Abram, McClelland, & Washburn, 2005). The likelihood that disorders would be detected or treated was greater among youth who had a current major psychiatric disorder, a history of receiving treatment, or who reported suicidality at intake, whereas the likelihood was lower among racial/ethnic minorities, males, older detainees, and detainees transferred to adult court for legal processing (Teplin L. , Abram, McClelland, & Washburn, 2005). Based on the total number of deaths of 15- to 24-year-old participants that occurred an average of 7.1 years after baseline, standardized mortality rates among juvenile delinquents were more than four times greater than rates in the general population. Mortality among females was nearly eight times greater than in the general population. For both males and females, all deaths resulted from external causes; 96 percent of the deaths were the result of homicide or legal intervention (e.g., the study participant was killed by police). Gunshot wounds

61

were the primary means of death (93 percent of the homicides) (Teplin L. , Abram, McClelland, & Washburn, 2005).

Due to the lack of research, inadequate models of care, insufficient policy development, ineffective experience and training of staff, and inadequate practice, juvenile correction personnel are quite hindered in being able to provide adequate services to youth offenders with mental health concerns. There are generally four public systems that may respond when adolescents have problems affecting their welfare. These four systems concentrate in education, child protection, juvenile justice, and mental health (Grisso, 2008). Each of these systems has its own avenue or path for which an individual can gain entrance into the system—that is when the adolescent's need fits the capabilities and objectives of the system. Recently, communities have begun to acknowledge that this model of separate service delivery does not consistently address the nature of adolescents' needs (Grisso, 2008). Problems arise in effective treatment of adolescent offenders because many need services of more than one, if not all four of the public systems of care at once. According to Grisso (2008), this is generally since youths' problems have interrelated causes and maintaining factors (Grisso, 2008). I am interested in similar issues—namely failure of child serving / child protective systems to effectively collaborate in ensuring positive outcomes for youth. Too often teachers, police, court officers, probation, mental health providers, etc. work in isolation, which can at times hinder the communication between each entity.

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

Social Bonds

There has been significant research on the effect of social bonds and recidivism among black male juveniles in Chicago. Social bonds refer to the various social relationships, connections, and networks that individuals establish and maintain in society. Social bonds are important because they serve as a source of support, guidance, and motivation for individuals, particularly those who are facing challenging circumstances such as criminal justice involvement (Wu, Lake, & Cao, 2015). Several studies have found that the quality and strength of social bonds have a significant impact on recidivism among black male juvenile offenders in Chicago. One study by Barber (2017) and colleagues found that positive social bonds with parents, peers, and educators were associated with a lower likelihood of reoffending among black male juvenile offenders in Chicago. Another study by Papachristos (2015) and colleagues found that social networks, particularly the presence of individuals who provided emotional and tangible support, could buffer against the effects of neighborhood disadvantage, and reduce the likelihood of recidivism among black male juvenile offenders in Chicago.

Furthermore, a study by Martinez (2016) and colleagues found that school bonds, such as academic engagement and positive relationships with teachers and peers, were associated with a lower likelihood of recidivism among black male juvenile offenders in Chicago. Overall, these studies suggest that social bonds play a critical role in the lives of black male juveniles in Chicago and can serve as protective factors against recidivism. By strengthening and supporting social bonds, policymakers, and practitioners can help reduce recidivism rates among black male juveniles in Chicago and improve their overall outcomes. Social learning theory is a behavioral

63

theory that suggests that individuals learn by observing and imitating the behavior of others around them. This theory highlights the important role of social bonds and socialization in shaping an individual's behavior. In the context of black male juveniles in Chicago, social learning theory can help to explain why these young men may be more prone to engaging in criminal behavior.

One key element of social learning theory is the idea of differential association, which suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in criminal behavior if they are exposed to criminal behavior and attitudes. For black male juveniles in Chicago, this could mean that they are more likely to engage in criminal behavior if they are surrounded by others who engage in criminal activity or hold a permissive attitude toward it. Social learning theory also emphasizes the importance of social bonds in shaping an individual's behavior. According to this theory, individuals who have strong social ties to family, friends, and community are less likely to engage in criminal behavior. Conversely, those who lack such ties are more susceptible to engaging in criminal activity.

For black male juveniles in Chicago, social bonds may be particularly important in helping to mitigate the risk of criminal behavior. Research has shown that many black male juveniles in Chicago come from low-income, high-crime neighborhoods where negative influences and environments are pervasive. In such settings, social bonds may be critical in providing a sense of belonging, support, and positive role models. Overall, social learning theory offers a useful framework for understanding the challenges facing black male juveniles in Chicago. By highlighting the importance of social bonds and differential association, this theory

provides insights into the complex factors that contribute to criminal behavior and points to potential solutions for addressing these issues.

Summary

In Chapter 2, I reviewed literature related to juvenile delinquency and exposure factors that contributed to juvenile recidivism. There are several methodological approaches that have been used to study juvenile recidivism; however, qualitative methods seem to be more appropriate and useful when attempting to gain a better understanding of the participants. The current study will provide a more in-depth understanding and hopefully fill the gap on the extent to which exposure factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds affect juvenile recidivism among male black juveniles from the juvenile justice professionals' perspectives and educators, especially in the Chicago Cook County area. In Chapter 3, the research design and methodology of the study will be discussed. Included in the chapter is a discussion of the role of the researcher, a description of how participants were recruited, ethical protection of participants, and data collection and methodology of the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In this chapter, the research design and approach, setting and sample, instrumentation and materials, and data collection and analysis procedures are all discussed. Also presented are the measures for ensuring validity and trustworthiness, and ethical considerations that help finalize the qualitative research design. The purpose of this qualitative research was to conduct a more in-depth investigation into the extent of how the six exposure factors of environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to recidivism in male black juveniles from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators. The results of the study may improve protocols for intervention strategies to counteract the exposure factors and provide a better understanding of how these exposure factors influence recidivism in male black juveniles. The goal of this study is to find methods and strategies recommended by juvenile professionals and educators that may reduce recidivism among juvenile delinquents and may reduce the number of young adults entering the criminal justice system.

Research Questions

The essential questions that govern this research are:

1. To what degree do exposures factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, among Black males?

2. What are some effective methods that can be utilized to rectify these exposure factors from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators, particularly methods effective for Black males?

3. How do juvenile justice professional and educators describe the gap between each other's roles when encountering juvenile delinquents, specifically male black juveniles?

Overview of Research Design

Researchers select designs based on considerations such as the audience's familiarity with one approach or another, the researcher's training, and experiences with forms of qualitative designs, and the researcher's partiality toward one approach or the other (Creswell, Hanson, Clark, & & Morales, 2007). Qualitative research intends to help the researcher to better understand (a) the meanings and perspectives of the people that are being studied, (b) how these perspectives are shaped by social and cultural contexts, and (c) the specific processes that are involved in maintaining or altering these phenomena (Maxwell, 2013). In qualitative research, the participants' characteristics are described, and the researcher can collect, analyze, and interpret data by observing what the participants say or do (Creswell J. W., Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (3rd ed.)., 2012).

The goal of qualitative inquiry is to reveal world phenomena in terms of the meaning participants attribute to them (Denzin, 2000). Qualitative designs are also used because the researcher wants to understand the context or setting in which the participants have a problem or an issue (Creswell J. W., Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five

approaches (3rd ed.)., 2012). Merriam (1998) has defined qualitative research as "an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible". Quantitative research is a form of inquiry that searches for causes, effects, and outcomes, helps the researcher discover factors that influence results, and predicts a possible outcome (Creswell J. W., 2018). While quantitative research design is concerned with the investigation of causes and effects of an outcome (Creswell J. W., 2018), that was not the aim of this study.

Phenomenological research is suited for exploring complex and ambiguous phenomena that are difficult to quantify or measure, such as emotions or perceptions. It also enables the researcher to examine subjective experiences and viewpoints and provides insights into what drives human behavior. Therefore, I choose a phenomenological design for this research to examine phenomena and experiences from a qualitative perspective and provide a deeper understanding of the experiences of each participant. An interpretive phenomenological design was used to obtain an in-depth understanding of the effect of exposure factors on juvenile recidivism. In this approach, the observer is one with the experience and is involved in interpreting meanings. As compared to descriptive phenomenology, interpretive phenomenology is more complex as it takes time and interaction with the environment into consideration (Brown, 2020). Several qualitative research designs including case study were considered but did not seem adequate to address the essence of juvenile justice professionals' and educators' experiences of working with juvenile delinquents and their perceptions on how certain exposure factors relate to recidivism.

I designed the study to focus on experienced juvenile justice professionals and educators as participants in this research because I anticipated that they would have a greater span of experience in communicating past and current issues among juvenile justice systems and, potentially, provide a greater insight into learning to communicate through the teaching of students, educators, and juvenile justice professionals. I selected participants who are current juvenile justice professionals within the Cook County area and educators. In-depth interviews with juvenile justice professionals and educators provided valuable insights into the challenges that male black juveniles in Chicago face.

The study consisted of 10 minority participants. Participants in research should reflect the diversity of our culture and conditions, considering race, ethnicity, gender, age, etc. The lack of diversity among research participants has serious ethical and research consequences. The representation of successful minorities in Chicago research is crucial for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in academia and beyond. When minorities are underrepresented in research, their experiences, perspectives, and needs may be overlooked, leading to a lack of understanding of the unique challenges they face. By including successful minorities in research, their voices can be amplified, and their experiences and perspectives can inform research, policy, and practice. This can help to challenge negative stereotypes and promote a more nuanced understanding of the issues affecting minorities in Chicago. Furthermore, the representation of successful minorities in research can serve as a source of inspiration and role models for younger generations, demonstrating that success is possible despite systemic barriers and negative

stereotypes. This can help to promote a more diverse and inclusive academic community and increase representation in leadership positions and decision-making roles.

In addition, the inclusion of successful minorities in research can help to build trust and strengthen relationships between researchers and communities. When minority communities see themselves represented in research, they are more likely to engage with and participate in research activities, leading to more meaningful and impactful research outcomes. Overall, the representation of successful minorities in Chicago research is essential for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in academia and society. It can inform research, policy, and practice, inspire younger generations, increase representation in leadership roles, and build trust and relationships with communities.

Therefore, six of the participants were male, four were female. Participants' number of years working in each profession ranged from 6 to 26 years, demonstrating a wide level of experience and varying stages of development of reasoning and teaching ability. The advantages of this range of experience were the richness in the depth of data obtained and the multiple perspectives illuminating the phenomena. In addition, participants were at varied stages in their career and life ambitions, with differing life experiences, motivations, and goals. This diversity lends richness to the data and is a valued aspect of interpretive research.

Semi-structured interviews with each participant were conducted. This method invited the opportunity for me to probe for details in depth from each of my respondents. These

interviews can help identify the root causes of the problem and suggest effective solutions that can be implemented to address the issue. Some of the ways in which these interviews can help are as follows: talking to professionals who have experience working in the juvenile justice system can help identify the systemic issues that contribute to the overrepresentation of black males in the system. These interviews can help identify issues such as inadequate social services, lack of access to quality education and healthcare, and limited employment opportunities. Interviews with educators who work with black male juveniles can provide insights into the specific needs of this group. These interviews can help identify the interventions that would be most effective in addressing the needs of these youths, such as targeted educational programs or mentorship initiatives. In-depth interviews can help build relationships between juvenile justice professionals, educators, and members of the affected community. By engaging in conversations about the issues that face black male juveniles, policymakers can come together to develop collaborative solutions that draw on the strengths of each partner. Overall, in-depth interviews with juvenile justice professionals and educators can provide rich data that can be used to inform solutions that have a greater likelihood of success in addressing the needs of black male juveniles in Chicago.

The goal of this research was to generate information about juvenile justice professionals' and educators' experiences; therefore, a quantitative research approach was not an appropriate research design. The study was motivated by concerns and questions arising from my experiences in law enforcement within the city of Chicago and witnessing the constant cycle of

juvenile recidivism as well as the lack of ideal communication between juvenile justice professionals and educators.

Rationale & Significance

Recidivism rates among black male juvenile offenders in Chicago are alarmingly high, with many returning to the juvenile justice system within a short period. The study of exposure factors can help identify the underlying causes of this problem and develop effective prevention and intervention strategies. Understanding the exposure factors that make black male juveniles more susceptible to recidivism can help policymakers, juvenile justice practitioners, and social service providers to design targeted interventions that address these issues. Additionally, it can also help to reduce the racial disparities that exist within the juvenile justice system and promote a more equitable system. Ultimately, exploring the exposure factors black male juvenile recidivists face is crucial, as it has the potential to improve both the individual lives of these young men and the broader communities in which they live.

This study was significant in that it can assist each of the Illinois Juvenile Justice Subsystems, particularly law enforcement's, discussion on how their communities can be better prepared to assist with juvenile recidivism. Equipped with the themes resulting from this study, each subsystem can work to ultimately advocate for the needs that are inevitably attached to the youth that will return to their communities. Changing the course of conversation from the negative contributions that our youth are making in society to one day focus on the more positive and successful turnaround of our youth and can one day provide some hope to those who fear that youthful offenders cannot change.

The hope is that this study will contribute to conversations amongst law enforcement, public school educators, and other subsystems to bridge the gap within the Illinois justice system to adequately minimize the re-incarceration of Illinois Juveniles. Another aim of this study is to advance the knowledge by capturing the essence of exposure factors and the effect on juvenile recidivism among male black juvenile delinquents living in the inner city of Chicago who attend public school and who are often lost in the shuffle when it comes to equity education and school choice.

The Role of the Researcher in Data Collection

During this research, as the principal data collector, I was both a researcher and a member of the same profession as some of the participants. Being, thus, an insider gave me several advantages. It helps me to facilitate trust and confidence in the researcher participant relationship and allowed me to establish rapport with the participants early in the data gathering process, providing access into their world and thoughts. Specific jargon may be a code that is hard for non-members to understand (Fontana & & Frey, 2000). I was already fluent in the work language the participants spoke, which provided a greater access to their world without the need to constantly ask for clarification. However, this may be a disadvantage if researchers ascribe meanings to certain words or jargon, behaviors, and decisions, with which participants differ (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995). Being aware of this disadvantage, I attempted to maintain what Van Manen (1997) referred to as hermeneutic alertness, which occurs in situations where researchers step back to reflect on the meanings of situations rather

than accepting their pre-conceptions and interpretations at face value (Van Manen, 1997). Thus, reflexivity was viewed as an important dimension in designing and implementing this research.

Methodology

Population

An adequate number of participants from a population were needed to address the research questions. Therefore, the population consisted of juvenile justice professionals such as juvenile correctional officers, juvenile judge, juvenile detectives, Chicago police officers, youth mentors, and educators. Participants were recruited from within the Chicago, IL, Cook County area. All participants have experience with and are currently work with juvenile delinquents.

Sample

Qualitative research methods rely on subjective collection of data. This approach requires in-depth research involving groups of people for conversations or observation (Creswell J. W., 2018). The aim is to record their views, feelings and opinions before a researcher decides what conclusions to draw from them. When researchers want to study a phenomenon that can be easily translated into numbers, they opt for quantitative research. The meaning of qualitative research is that it can be used to understand the world beyond numbers. Ideas, thoughts, feelings, and perceptions can all be tackled through qualitative research methodology (Creswell J. W., 2018) .

Qualitative studies tend to have a small sample size due to the in-depth nature of engagement with each participant, this can have an impact if you want a representative sample. Qualitative studies use more accurate information collection methods than quantitative

studies. The sample size needed for a qualitative study depends on how quickly data saturation is reached. For this study the sample recruited was 10 juvenile justice professionals and educators. The Circuit Court of Cook County of the State of Illinois is the largest of the 24 judicial circuits in Illinois and one of the largest unified court systems in the world. It has about 400 judges who serve the 5.2 million residents of Cook County within the City of Chicago and its 126 surrounding suburbs. More than 1 million cases are filed each year (Circuit Court of Cook County of the State of Illinois, n.d.).

The Circuit Court of Cook County was created by a 1964 amendment to the Illinois Constitution which reorganized the courts in Illinois. The amendment effectively merged the often confusing and overlapping jurisdictions of Cook County's previous 161 courts into one uniform and cohesive court of general jurisdiction (Circuit Court of Cook County of the State of Illinois, n.d.). Chicago Public Schools (CPS) serves approximately 403,000 students in more than 676 schools. It is the nation's third-largest school system. According to the Chicago Public School (CPS) website, the mission of CPS is to ensure that every child is on track to graduate prepared for success in college, work, and life.

Before I recruited the participants, I obtained permission from DePaul Institutional Research Board (IRB) to conduct my study. The professional working relationship between the participants and myself started with the recruitment phase of the study, with the goal of developing rapport. The process of developing rapport consists of apprehensions, exploration, cooperation, participation (DiCicco-Bloom, 2006). I provided the approval letter from the

DePaul University IRB to all participants prior to the interview. I choose settings that were conveniently available for the participants, such as their offices. The participants were restricted to the Cook County area if Chicago, IL.

Sampling Strategy

I used purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling focuses on information rich cases that illuminate the questions under study (Patton, 2002). The sample for this study consisted of juvenile justice professionals and educators. Appointments for each participant were scheduled. The targeted number of research participants was10. Each participant was asked open-ended questions that provides a better understanding of the effect of the exposure factors under investigation on juvenile recidivism and to identify strategies that may be implemented to counteract these exposure factors and reduce juvenile recidivism as well as what strategies should be implemented to bridge the gap between each subsystem within the juvenile justice system and educators. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select the specific types and number of participants based on the purpose of study and available resources (Patton, 2002). Informed consent was obtained to each participant and provided an oral explanation to potential participants about the purpose of the research, procedures, and anticipated outcomes of the study. This explanation of the study procedures enabled potential participants to make informed decisions about whether to participate in the study.

Instrumentation

Face-to-face interviews with each participant were conducted for this study and each were asked open-ended questions. Depending on the comfortability of each participant zoom interviews were an option for each participant due to COVID safety protocols. A digital auto recording device to record the responses was used. There was also a backup digital audio recording device and additional batteries available for use in case of malfunction. The interview questions were developed to aggregate the knowledge and experiences of the participants across multiple disciplines.

Data Collection

Data was collected from interviews with the juvenile justice professionals and educators who participated in this study. The interviews were a mix of face-to-face and zoom and lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. The benefits of face-to-face interviews are the negotiated relationship between the researcher and the study respondents in setting the tone, speed, and voice of the interview. However, these characteristics can also be a drawback (Opdenakker, 2006). Certain drawbacks are interviews can deliver biased responses and interviews are more time consuming to recruit and conduct, which is why participants are vetted carefully before the recruitment and interview process.

Data Analysis

Data analysis should begin with the analysis of specific statements and themes and a search for all possible meanings. No themes, categories, concepts, or theories will emerge without the researcher who must make it so (deCasterle, 2011). The respondents provided their

perceptions of the effect of specific exposure factors on juvenile offenders' lives. I approached

the analysis of the transcripts of the interviews with an open mind. The goal was to gather rich

data from the interviews. Rich data are detailed, focused, and full. Rich data will reveal the

participants' views, feelings, intentions, and actions. (Charmaz, 2006, p. 14). Data collected from

the interview questions will be sorted as outlined by Janesick (2004) and categorized as

"descriptive, follow-up, experience/examples, clarification, structural/paradigmatic, and

comparison/contrasting" (p. 72). Van Manen (1990) provided three processes: isolating thematic

statements that include determining the meaning of text (p. 93), focusing on phrases or sentences

that stand out using a "line by line approach" (p. 93), and finally, "a close examination of the text

sentence by sentence" (p. 93). I will read each transcript line by line. Each transcription should

form an understanding of the context of each interview and provided rich description. The data

analysis that will be adapted in this research is systematic. The hermeneutic phenomenology

principles as established by Colaizzi (1978) and van Manen (1997) and adapted and

implemented by Ajjawi and Higgs (2007) will be adapted in this research. The eight stages

include immersion, understanding, abstraction, synthesis, and theme development, illumination,

and illustration of the phenomena, integration, and critiques, identifying the fundamental

structure of the phenomenon, and returning to the participants for validation.

Next, I used a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), NVivo, to

increase the coding process, data management, and data analysis. CAQDAS is capable of the

collection, storage, sorting, and retrieval of data (Wickham, 2005). NVivo software proposes a

code of schemes, code overlapping, chunking of data, data frameworks, hierarchical illustrations,

and conclusions gathering generated theoretical assumptions from grounded data (International, n.d.)The software also features the capabilities to collect and organize field notes, memoing, and 58 researcher reflections (International, n.d.). CAQDAS provides the manageability of qualitative data by removing paper documentation and increases the practices of information management and analysis (Wickham, 2005). NVivo provides a concrete and competent way one can analyze data, link data, memo, display, and design patterns and themes. I used the descriptive coding strategy to code and analyze collected data.

Coding is one of the most critical functions, which include separating data into sections and then sorting words into categorized themes. Coding schemes result from categorized themes that allow the establishment of links and relationships, which form patterns that direct CAQDAS software (Chi-Jung, 2008). First, I took notes during the interviews. Then I combined each individual participant interview file into a single file for each interview question. Next, I began an analysis by coding the data. I broke the data down into similar phrases and key words. I labeled these phrases and key words and recorded them in a Word document. I notated the exact words used by participants during data analysis. I used numbered coding labels. The corresponding coding categories was added to the end of each of the participants' answers. I identified categories that were common to all participants. I entered the data from the notes into NVivo. The phrases obtained from the interviews formed the themes.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Qualitative research is important because it measures things that numbers might not beable to define; qualitative methods sometimes identify trends before they show up in the quantitative data. Data trustworthiness has four key components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

One component of this research is conducting in-depth interviews. All study participants were individuals who work in the Chicago; Cook County Juvenile Justice System that serve or provide treatment to juvenile delinquents and educators. Triangulation asks the same research questions of different study participants and collects data from different sources through different methods to answer the same questions. Member checks were also conducted which occur when researchers ask participants to review the data collected by interviewers and the researchers' interpretations of that data. After the transcripts were completed, a copy was provided to each participant who agreed to complete the member checking. Participants generally appreciate the member check process because it gives them a chance to verify their statements and fill in any gaps from earlier interviews. Trust is an important aspect of the member check process.

Transferability

Transferability generalizes study findings and attempts to apply them to other situations and contexts. Researchers cannot prove definitively that outcomes based on the interpretation of the data are transferable, but they can establish that it is likely. Transferability refers to the extent

80

to which the findings can be transferred to other setting or groups (Elo, 2014). To ensure

transferability, a clear description was provided of the context, culture, selections, and

characteristics of the participants. The researcher is responsible for providing detailed

descriptions for the reader to make informed decisions about the transferability of the findings to

their specific context (Elo, 2014).

Dependability

In qualitative research, dependability is often compared to the concept of reliability in

quantitative research and refers to the stability of the data over time and under different

conditions (Elo, 2014). Many qualitative researchers believe that if credibility has been

demonstrated, it is not necessary to also demonstrate dependability and separately. To ensure

replication of research, there was an explanation that describes the selection of participants and

participants' main characteristics in detail so that the transferability of the results to other

contexts could be assessed.

Confirmability

It is important for other researchers to be able to replicate the results to show that those

results are a product of independent research methods and not of conscious or unconscious bias.

Confirmability refers to objectivity and implies that the data accurately represent the information

that the participants provided, and the researcher did not invent interpretations of the data (Elo,

2014). To ensure confirmability, crosschecking of audiotaped interviews will be conducted, for

example, to determine the accuracy of the interviews I will review each audiotaped interview

several times. The use of audio recordings and verbatim transcription of the interviews will be used as a measure of reliability.

Ethical Procedures

I adhered to and followed the ethical principles of the DePaul University IRB policies and procedures in my study. I submitted an IRB application for approval (IRB-2022-597) Identifying the study's purpose, procedures, and actions taken for the ethical protection of respondents. I used the guidelines from the American Psychological Association Manual (APA, 2010) on conducting ethical studies. I followed the APA and IRB principles for informed consent and for confirmation of the details of the study during the recruitment inquiry. I explained the aim of the study, process, data collection and analysis, risks, and benefits in the participants' consent form and required participants' signatures, which signified their agreement to participate. I included the DePaul IRB approval number and measures for participant confidentiality.

The participants were required to sign the consent form electronically before the interview or in person at the beginning of the interview. Participants could withdraw their involvement in the study at any time without penalty. Participant anonymity was reassured with the use of number codes. A fireproof and combination lock file housed the audiotaped interview recording, interview transcripts, and data flash drives. After the completion of the study and IRB approval, I removed data from the computer, placed on data flash drives, and stored in the locked file cabinet for the minimum 5-year IRB requirement. Ethical challenges of protecting participants' privacy while respecting the shared experiences of others have been the forefront of

every qualitative social researcher. Qualitative social researchers are overall, very sensitive to this ethical tightness. As a qualitative researcher, it is my responsibility to affirm and uphold participants' confidentiality and privacy records. Confidentiality should always be central to the relationship between qualitative researchers, their counterparts, and participants. I compared challenges of protecting privacy, minimizing harm, and respecting the shared experiences of others to the challenges of protecting juveniles' records.

Summary

In this qualitative phenomenological study, the risks associated with juvenile recidivism form the prospective of juvenile justice professionals and educators were explored. In this chapter, I discussed the research design, method, data collection, and analysis procedures. The role of the researcher-interviewer was clarified, and details were provided of the primary task of protecting the study participants' rights and confidentially. In Chapter 4, the results of the analysis of the face-to-face and or zoom interview data will be presented. In Chapter 5, will consist of a summary of the research findings and discussed the conclusions and implications of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the phenomenon of the effect of exposure factors on juvenile recidivism from the perspective of professionals and educators who work with juveniles and to uncover what can be done to counteract the issues. In this research, I examined whether there were improvements in prevention and implementation of intervention. I also examined prevention strategies that could be used as tools to counteract these factors and reduce recidivism among juvenile delinquents.

In Chapter 4, I provide the findings acquired from the investigation of a sample of ten juvenile professionals and educators from within the Chicago Cook County region of the state of Illinois. The essential research questions that governed this study were:

1. To what degree do exposures factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism?

2. What are some effective methods that can be utilized to rectify these exposure factors from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators?

3. How do juvenile justice professional and educators describe the gap between each other's roles when encountering juvenile delinquents specifically male black juveniles?

Upon receiving approval from the DePaul IRB (IRB-2022-597), I used the qualitative research method to concentrate on the perceptions of juvenile justice professionals and

educators who comprehend the factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate. In this study, I intended to examine the perceptions of juvenile justice professionals and educators about their experiences working with juvenile delinquents, their opinions on how certain exposure factors influence recidivism amongst juvenile delinquents and what can be done to counteract these factors. Chapter 4 includes the following sections: description of the setting in which I obtained the participants, pertinent demographics of the ten participants, data collection methods, data analysis, which also includes specific coding categories and emerging themes, and evidence of trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The chapter concludes with a detailed result of the study and a summary of its findings.

Research Setting

All study participants were individuals working in private and public organizations that encounters, serves, or provide treatment to juvenile delinquents. Participants were required to be working with juvenile delinquents and have experience and knowledge about juvenile delinquents and juvenile recidivism. This study was conducted using face-to-face and zoom interviews. Once approval was received from DePaul University IRB, I contacted 10 participants from within the Chicago Police Department, Cook County Juvenile System, and Educators. Once participants who were interested in participating contacted me, the informed consent was provided to them. Upon receiving their response with "I consent," the interviews were scheduled. I conducted face-to-face and zoom interviews. I reminded all participants of the information that was previously provided to them. I asked each participant the same set of 16 questions. All interviews were recorded using a Digital Voice Recorder App for in-person interviews and zoom

recorded for zoom interviews. After each interview, participants were reminded that a copy of the written interview would be provided to them once transcribed at their request for member checking.

Demographics

Ten participants were included in the study. To recruit potential participants, I used purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is appropriate for qualitative studies, as it focuses on information-rich cases that illuminate the questions under study (Patton, 2002). I selected each participant based on job title (juvenile judge, juvenile detective, youth counselor, and juvenile correctional officer, youth educators, etc.) and degree of experience and knowledge working with juvenile delinquents and juvenile recidivists. I also choose multiple successful Black Men in their professional field. Representation of successful male black men as research participants in Chicago is important for several reasons. Firstly, it helps to challenge negative stereotypes and biases about black men that are often perpetuated in mainstream media and research. By highlighting the achievements and experiences of successful black men, we can help to counteract these negative portrayals and promote a more positive and nuanced understanding of black masculinity. Secondly, including successful black men in research can help to uncover the unique challenges and barriers that they face in society, including issues related to racial discrimination, socioeconomic inequalities, and access to opportunities. This information can then be used to inform policies and programs that can help to address these issues and support the pursuit of success and well-being for all black men.

Finally, the representation of successful black men in research can provide positive role models and inspiration for younger generations of black men. By showcasing the achievements and successes of black men from their own communities, we can help to promote a sense of pride, resilience, and possibility for future generations, and empower them to pursue their own goals and dreams. To maintain confidentiality and identity of the participants, I used pseudonyms (P1, P2, etc.) to identify each participant.

Table 1

Individual Participant Demographics

Job Title	Years Working with Juvenile Delinquents	Gender	Ethnicity
P1 Commander	17	Female	Black
P2 Detective/Educator	20	Male	Black
P3 Judge	13	Male	Black
P4 Probation Counselor/Police Officer	10	Female	Black
P5 Educator	25	Female	Black
P6 Juvenile Correctional Officer	6	Female	Hispanic
P7 Juvenile Correctional Officer	11	Male	Hispanic
P8 Police Officer/Youth Mentor	15	Male	Black
P9 Educator/Youth Mentor	11	Male	Black
P10 Juvenile Detective	18	Male	Black

Data Collection

Participant recruitment occurred over 3 weeks from September 17, 2022, to October 1, 2022. I collected data for this study over 4 weeks using zoom and face-to- face interviews and my research journal. All participants worked with and or taught juvenile delinquents and juvenile recidivists with the goal to reduce juvenile recidivism. I asked all participants the same set of interview questions (Appendix D) and in the same order. The interview questions were different from the foundational questions, which enabled the participants to share as much information as they desired. A formatted interview protocol (Appendix C) guided the interview process. I conducted six interviews at the participants' offices, one via zoom, three were scheduled at a local coffee shop.

The interviews lasted between 35 to 45 minutes. I recorded each interview using an audio recorder. During the interviews, I paid close attention to each participant's disposition. I used an audio transcription app to transcribe the audio and thoroughly went over the transcriptions and corrected any mistakes to ensure the transcripts were verbatim. I saved all transcribed interviews into a Microsoft Word document. I performed member checking to ensure accuracy of each participants' response. I identified the participants using pseudonym such as P1, P2, and so on. I coded the data based on patterns, themes, and categories. I merged all files and secured them on my personal computer. In compliance with DePaul's IRB policy, I will secure the files until 5 years after the data collection, at which time I will shred any notes or paper transcription. All audio recordings will also remain on my audio device and will be deleted after the completion of the study.

The Participants

Ten juvenile justice professionals and educators from the Chicago Cook County area of the state of Illinois agreed to share their experiences and knowledge working with juvenile delinquents and their perspectives on the effects of exposure factors on juvenile recidivism. Although each participant has his or her own individual perspectives on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, they all shared a common desire in the need for a more reformed juvenile justice system and school system. To provide new insight into the phenomenology and add to the body of literature on the effect of certain exposure factors on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, I provided background information on each participant and their individual perspectives. To maintain confidentiality, I replaced the participants' names with pseudonyms (i.e., P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) and withheld their location of employment. I removed hesitation or pause-in-speech words such as "um," "anyways," "you know," and "uh" from the participants' responses in this section for better flow of ideas.

P1, District Commander. P1, a proud member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority and a renowned Black female Chicago Police Commander. With over 22 years of experience in the Chicago Police department, P1 has dedicated her career to serving and protecting the citizens of Chicago. As a trailblazer for women and people of color in law enforcement, P1 has demonstrated impeccable leadership, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to community policing. Her dedication to community outreach and engagement has contributed to building trust between the police and community members, effectively reducing crime rates in

Chicago. In her role as a commander, P1 oversees numerous communities policing initiatives, working tirelessly to build partnerships with community organizations, schools, and youth programs to reduce gang violence, promote education, and increase access to job training opportunities. P1's, unwavering commitment to serving the community makes her an inspiring leader and an exceptional role model for young women and men who aspire to follow in her footsteps. P1 offers her insights on the issue of black male juvenile recidivism in the city. As a leader in the department and a member of the black community, she brings a unique perspective to the conversation. Her experience on the streets, her interactions with community members, and her understanding of the criminal justice system give her a well-rounded understanding of the challenges facing young black men in Chicago. P1 suggest mentoring programs can provide positive role models and support systems for young people, helping to promote positive behaviors and provide guidance and support. After-school activities, such as sports, arts, and community service programs, can provide alternative opportunities for young people and help to keep them engaged and focused on positive behaviors.

P1 has worked with in the special victim's unit, tactical units, and has held several leading positions within the Chicago Police Department. P1 stated that from her perspective, juveniles learn criminal behavior from their peers and their families. P1 also stated that family criminal history has a large impact on juvenile delinquency. P1 explained that of all the juvenile cases that she handles, over half if not more have a parent, parents, or family members who are involved in the criminal justice system. P1 further explained that while working her juvenile cases most juvenile delinquents advanced their criminal knowledge from other juvenile

delinquents and that they would study and learn the system and would have knowledge of what their punishment would be for certain crimes that they committed.

Regarding mental health and its effect on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, P1 explained that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and anger management issues play a role in juvenile recidivism. P1 explained the trauma that a lot of young people witness every day in Chicago many times goes ignored and untreated. With the rise in shootings and violent crimes P1 explained that she has dealt with countless juvenile delinquents who have lost several friends and family members to gun violence in Chicago in some cases, these same juveniles have been the eyewitness to seeing their friends and family members gunned down. P1 further explained that there has always been a negative stereotype among the black community when talking about mental health issues and that in her experience juvenile delinquent's mental health issues go untreated because most families live by the old saying, "what happens in this house stays in this house". On the other hand, if there are identified mental health issues, there are a lack of resources around the city to assist those with mental health issues. P1, also mentioned that within her district she works in direct partnership with each elementary and high school to better assist and refer juveniles in need to counseling. P1 explained that in her experience, often the juveniles do not receive the necessary services because the families are not receptive and fail to follow through. P1 stated that the parents' or legal guardians' failure is due to lack of financial resources or the negative stereotype that therapy/counseling has within the black community.

P1 specified that substance abuse has a significant impact on juvenile delinquency and

juvenile recidivism: I'd say over half if not more of the juvenile arrest that we see come through

our district are tied to substance abuse, whether it's that someone is stealing to support their

habit, or they are under the influence of something when they were committing the crime. P1

further explained that in most cases the juveniles are consuming what they call "party pills", but

once these same "party pills" are sent to the Illinois State Lab they come back combined with

several types of illegal narcotics that most young people are not aware that they are consuming,

such as, meth, fentanyl, heroin, and so forth. Each of these narcotics are highly addictive. P1

emphasized that when meeting with school leaders and educators in her district a major issue that

educators are facing is that juvenile delinquents are not motivated to put forth the effort that is

needed toward their academics: "My school resource team has seen a rise in tardiness and

absenteeism, and an even higher rate of disciplinary referrals and suspensions due to social

media conflicts. You see a lot of the accountability placed on law enforcement to arrest these

young people because the schools are afraid of lawsuits and public scrutiny.

P1 explained, that not only is her professional career is dedicated to serving her city, but

she is also a member of the Divine 9, Sigma Gamma Rho sorority. P1 further explained that as a

dedicated member and leader of her sorority she lives by the principles of sisterhood,

scholarship, and service and her main thrust is community impact and helping young people

build social bonds. P1 emphasized that most of the juveniles with whom she has come across

have no social bonds "I think that's probably one of the big issues is that a lot of them don't have

social bonds to anyone or anything."   "I think their peers are probably the closest thing to a

social bond that they have." P1 stated for this reason, peer influence has a huge impact on

juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. P1 emphasized, "I have knowledge that many juvenile delinquents teach and learn each other's methods of crime." P1 observed, "based off what I have seen in my district and throughout my law enforcement career It seems like most of the time if they have been arrested younger, it's often indicative of a long road ahead for everyone and I feel like the city would benefit from having a universal database where each department and system can better serve each juvenile."

P1 stated that family background and criminal history and the early onset of criminal activity can predict juvenile recidivism, P1 one explained it as juvenile delinquents seeing it as "getting into the family business" if all the juvenile sees while growing up is criminal activity and fast money within the household, they are more likely to follow in those footsteps. When asked what program of strategies are in place for juvenile who are likely to reoffend, P1 replied;

> There are a multitude of programs that our community policing unit provides and work hand and hand with the schools within our district to educate parents and students on the various programs. I have personally called and met with parents to discuss solutions and programs to help guide their child on a different path to prevent rearrest in the future.

P1 stated "to counteract these exposure factors, more intensive substance abuse and mental health counseling need to be implemented across all systems, especially within the schools." P1 observed: First, one must have the participants be willing to do it and participate and getting a parent that is willing to participate in counseling and go through parenting classes and learn better ways of handling their children and directing their children takes work mainly because

historically there has been a lack of trust between law enforcement/criminal justice system and black people.

P1 emphasized that we need more prevention programs, more therapy, earlier mental health intervention. P1 stated:

> I think a fair amount of delinquent behavior, particularly, violent behavior, school disruptions, fighting, are a result of undiagnosed and/or untreated mental health. For instance, "when I worked in the SVU unit, we found that a noticeable number of girls who were fighters, disruptive at school or who ran away, had been abused at some time when they were very young and a fair amount of the boys as well, so early sexual abuse leads to posttraumatic stress disorder, which leads to bad behavior. If it were addressed as a behavior mental health issue, earlier, diagnosed and addressed earlier in the child's life, I think you would have better results." P1 further stated that as a leader among the Chicago Police Department bridging the gap between law enforcement and the black community is among her highest priorities.

Overall P1, as a Black female Chicago police commander, beliefs about exposure factors of Black male juvenile recidivists in Chicago were shaped by her experience with the criminal justice system and the challenges facing marginalized communities. P1 firmly believed that the socio-economic disadvantages, lack of access to quality education, and exposure to violence are primary exposure factors that push Black male juveniles towards criminal activity. P1 suggest that "we" must invest in programs that provide access to education, job training, and mental

health services, and create public safety measures that focus on building trust and relationships

between law enforcement and the community. P1 firmly believes that to bridge the gap between

the Juvenile Justice Systems and educators is investing in a system of shared data between each

entity that encounters juveniles.

P2, Detective/Educator/Regional Social Action Director Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity/Co-founder Blue and White Foundation. P2, who is also a Black male educator, and a proud

member of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity. P2 is also a founder of a youth foundation based in

Chicago, dedicated to helping young people stay on the right track and reach their full potential.

P2's passion for education and community service has led him to work tirelessly with youth from

disadvantaged backgrounds, providing mentorship, guidance, and resources that enable them to

break cycles of poverty and transform their lives for the better. With his extensive experience in

working with young people, P2 was well-equipped to offer practical and effective strategies for

reducing recidivism rates and creating a brighter future for our youth. P2 has seen firsthand the

impact of recidivism on their lives and the community. P2 offered insights into the issue of black

male juvenile recidivism and shared his thoughts on how we can break the cycle.

P2 reported that juveniles learn about crime primarily through their engagement with

their counterparts (other kids or family members). P2 further explained, he has seen juveniles

influenced by their family members who are engaged in gangs and other criminal activities, but

has also seen it go two ways, such as, juveniles being intrigued by the criminal lifestyle and

follow that path and P2 has also seen them get a taste of that lifestyle and choose a different path

because they see the impact that life has on their family.

P2 noted that kids may have undiagnosed mental health issues or are using drugs, either self-medicating or just using drugs. Use of illegal drugs in combination with mental health issues influences juvenile recidivism. P2 explained that often within the household Juveniles are witnessing domestic issues and violence that they are viewing and seeing on a day-to-day basis and all of that is trauma. P2 further explained:

Often this trauma goes unrecognized and untreated because we view children as being so resilient, but it is not natural for a child to be exposed to such trauma especially daily and with there will be repercussions because of the exposure. P2 reported that in his role as a youth mentor that his foundation has adopted a couple of schools in the Englewood Community, which is a high crime area within Chicago.

P2 stated that some of the young Black males that they mentor on the weekends must travel across different gang territories and issues present themselves where they must be given a ride home to avoid harm. As an example, P2 emphasized a case where he was mentoring a young male who has dealt with a great deal of trauma and loss. This young male lost his brother and father to gang and gun violence and was impacted a great deal by those incidents and what he talked about most was not having the opportunity to really express that and talk about it with anyone including not being able to talk to his mother or any other family member. The young male further expressed to P2 that life must go on, bills must be paid, and there is no time to address the trauma and pain to anyone until P2 and his foundation began mentoring him and each week was this young males' time to express and debrief from all the trials and tribulations of his week.

97

P2 stated that substance abuse among juveniles has been a major concern especially with the young black males that has comes through his mentorship program, "we were seeing the marijuana use was through the roof starting at the early age of 10 years old, saying "I had my morning weed" as if it is their morning breakfast. P2 further explained, that starting from the age of 10 years old and as these young boys get into high school the narcotics choice gets stronger and they start experimenting with pills. P2 noted that his mentorship program collaborates with Cook County Juvenile Parole Officers and the parole officers come in to speak to the young boys about what he sees when testing juveniles who are arrested and brought to the juvenile detention center.

P2 Stated that according to the parole officers many of these juvenile's test results are coming back positive for cocaine, heroin, etc. and when they relay this information to the juveniles that immediately deny ever using cocaine and heroin, not knowing that these substances are in the pills that the juveniles are experimenting with. As a result of juveniles' young immature age and combined their narcotics use places the juveniles in a state of mind that results in many juveniles committing crimes. P2 spoke about the burden that many juveniles face daily living in a high crime area. P2 shared a story about speaking with a 14-year-old while working the high-profile murder of Tyshawn Lee who was gunned down in an alley on the south side of Chicago. P2 shared that this 14-year-old was burdened with the fear of one day getting the phone call that her 14-year-old boyfriend was injured or shot and killed while outside playing ball. The 14-year-old also shared how it was her responsibility to make sure that her boyfriend did his homework and ate every day. P2 noted with the burden of all that the 14-year-old shared,

what is the expectancy of her on an academic level, on an emotional level, and being successful going forward.

P2 stated that social bonds with families and communities are most important in reducing recidivism. P2 stated: "I think they don't have enough social bonds." P2 related that based of his past research, social bonds and mentorship is critical and works best if started early on around the 4th grade to guide these young boys on a positive path. P2 noted:

> We talk about it takes a village to raise a child and it really does take the community because we are communal people, so for a lot of young black boys the lack of social bonds is a huge factor when it comes to recidivism. It's a lack of support for the kid.

P2 explained peer influence contributes to juvenile recidivism. P2 stated if a child does not have a strong family or social bond that is pulling them out of the criminal justice system and encouraging them to stay in school, then they are going to turn towards their peers.

P2 spoke about the importance of school choice for young people in the inner city and with P2 related that he is a big proponent of Chicago public school system and what it should be ideally. P2 noted, "I believe that there should be proper funding to make every school "selective enrollment like". We must get to a place where everyone learns differently. The cookie cutter way of teaching within our youth is no longer successful."

P2 explained, to counteract these factors, it starts at home, strengthening the family bonds, especially for male black juveniles developing a stronger bond with a positive male role

model. Also, creating space and opportunities for more positive the social bonds within the community. P2 further emphasized, "I think really strengthening community and social bonds to support the educators who then become together to support the parents when the young person, is in their home is key."

Overall, P2 strongly expressed his belief in the power of education and mentorship as tools to combat the issue of juvenile recidivism among black males. Through P2's work with his youth foundation in Chicago, P2 seen firsthand the impact that positive role models can have on young people who may be at risk of entering the criminal justice system. P2 suggest that it is essential that we continue to address the root causes of juvenile recidivism, including poverty, lack of access to education and opportunities, and systemic racism. P2 shared that there is a need to invest in programs that provide young people with support and guidance, as well as resources and skills to succeed in their future endeavors. Lastly, when discussing bridging the gap between Juvenile justice system and educators P2 expressed that we need to address the bias and discrimination that black males face within the criminal justice system and that too often, black males are unfairly criminalized and treated harshly by the justice system, which only perpetuates the cycle of recidivism.

P3, Juvenile Judge. P3, a successful Black male circuit judge of the Juvenile Justice Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Chicago, Illinois. P3 is widely respected for his fairness, compassion, and dedication to justice. He has been serving the Cook County Juvenile Court for more than two decades and has earned numerous accolades for his outstanding work in the legal profession. Before becoming a judge, P3 worked as an Assistant State's Attorney,

100

Senior Legal Advisor and Chief of Intergovernmental Affairs, and member of the Illinois

Prisoner Review Board, gaining a wealth of experience and expertise in various aspects of the

law. He brings this diverse background to his role as a judge, where he is known for his ability to

listen to all sides of a case and make fair, unbiased decisions. P3 commitment to serving his

community goes beyond the courtroom. He has been involved in numerous community

organizations, including mentoring programs for at-risk youth and initiatives to promote

diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. P3 is a black male and understands firsthand the

challenges that many of the young black men in his courtroom face. P3 has seen a concerning

trend of black male juvenile recidivism, where young men repeatedly enter the juvenile justice

system. He has been an advocate for addressing the root causes of this issue and finding

solutions that help these young men break the cycle of incarceration. P3 shares his insights on

the challenges that black male juveniles face and strategies that can help them succeed.

     P3 reported:

     In my experience, it difficult to talk in generality. I always handle every situation

     specifically but sometimes you see patterns and what I have seen is that juveniles learn

     crimes from either their family or their peers and or the media, music, video games,

     social media, so their overall environment that the young people are growing up in. P3

     stated that juveniles learn about accountability from home first, "it starts at home". P3

     furthered stated that the family structure and having rules and consequences for their

     actions is the foundation and it continues from there.

P3 emphasized that it is the juvenile's family that sets the culture and expectations that the juvenile is follows and looks up to. P3 stated the family criminal history has a significant effect on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. P3 explained:

> I had a kid in my court room today and his family spoke and explained to me that this is not what their family is about, this is not culture that we set for our child, and these are things that I like to hear, but again the family can tell me anything, so I keep that in mind.

P3 further explained so I had young people come before me where their delinquency histories began at an early age and so to a certain extent some of them came in with that as their beginning learning environment. P3 referenced a case where a male black who had recently turned 18 was sentenced to 40 years in prison in a different county for armed carjacking and P3 explained that there are different levels to the justice system and there are situations where discretion can be used and, in this case, it seemed like the judge who sentenced this case was focusing more on deterrence. P3 stated, "I try to treat everyone as an individual and I wouldn't want to sentence a person with the thought that someone else is going to see this sentence and not commit the offense."

P3 reported a major influence of juvenile recidivism that he frequently sees involves male black juveniles with mental health and substance abuse issues such as early childhood trauma, direct physical trauma, emotional abuse, incarceration of a parent, or immediate family member. P3 believed substance abuse has a major impact on juvenile recidivism. P3 stated, if the presenting offense is a drug charge, P3 looks to see if the Juvenile and the Juvenile's family has

had access to pretrial services to assist the juvenile with any substance abuse issues. P3 shared

that he when he receives the drug test results for juveniles and that it is very common to see

marijuana use, P3 specified, "and I look at the level as well and I flag them, and I point it out to

the parents. Sometimes the parents are aware and sometimes they are not."

P3 believes that the parent-child bond is most important in reducing recidivism and in

many cases where that may not be feasible a bond with a mentor, teacher, or coach is just as

important in reducing recidivism:

> The problem I see frequently is the lack of social bonds for young black males growing
>
> up in certain environments such as the parent-child bond is nonexistent or minimal, and
>
> the only bond that these young people are building are with gangs.

P3 believed that peer influence has a major effect on juvenile recidivism especially when

gang affiliation is involved. P3 believes when juveniles are arrested and released, they are going

back into the same toxic environment which typically leads to recidivism. According to P3:

> I think that the kids that were deepest in, generally started early so I take time in my
>
> court room to listen to the young men because I thinks it is important to see where their
>
> minds are it's not just their environment, and I share with them how some people have
>
> gone through though situations, and they still come out successful.

P3 expressed how the mind is powerful and if the young people change their mindsets,

they too can be successful. P3 believed that to counteract the exposure factors, you must change

the juvenile's environment, the peers they hang with, and we need more parent involvement, prevention programs, and earlier mental health intervention. Overall, P3 stated

> From the system perspective's the system can only do so much and that it ultimately comes down to the family. The system is not a solution the system has to use in support of the family; they are the frontline. As a judge I need the family to be a partner when addressing juvenile cases.

Overall, P3 expressed that it is an unfortunate reality that black male juveniles have a higher recidivism rate than juveniles of other races. P3 shared that this is undoubtedly due to a combination of systemic disadvantages and personal circumstances that disproportionately affect young black men. P3 furthered concluded with "it is our responsibility as judges and members of the justice system to recognize these factors and work towards creating a more equitable and supportive environment for these youth." P3 suggested that one approach that he believes has shown promise is the use of restorative justice practices. For context, these practices prioritize rehabilitation and repairing harm over punishment and incarceration and can be especially effective for young offenders. P3 strongly believes based off his experiences by giving these juveniles a chance to take responsibility for their actions and make amends, can reduce the likelihood of them reoffending, but also help them build positive relationships and skills that can benefit them in the future.

P4, *Juvenile Probation Counselor/Police Officer*. P4, a black woman from the city of Chicago. P4 has been serving on the Chicago Police Department for 10 years and has worked

closely with the juvenile justice system, witnessing first-hand the challenges faced by young

black men in and out of the system. P4 has also works as a juvenile counselor for the past 7

years, offering guidance and support to black male juveniles in their journey towards

rehabilitation and preventing recidivism. P4 has shared her perspectives on the causes and

possible solutions for the high rates of recidivism among black male juveniles in Chicago.

P4 believes juveniles learn crime mostly from their environment:

> Many of them have personal experiences in their neighborhoods and family members.
> They see and hear more than adults give them credit for and they are paying attention. I
> think a lack of direction leaves that path open to curiosity and experimentation with peers
> /adults. Of course, there is television, music, and other media outlets as well and without
> regulation, guidance, young people are extremely vulnerable to outside influence.

P4 expounded that family criminal history and family mental health is a major cause of

juvenile delinquency and recidivism. P4 stated:

> Honestly, I learned that it's the household and beyond. Sometimes, parents aren't in the
> household but still play a major role. I've seen young boys strive to get the approval of
> absentee fathers by being involved in criminal activity because they've seen the father
> and half siblings involved in the same lifestyle and appear to have the father's approval.
> I've seen mothers in the home but as absent as one who isn't.

P4 further stated:

Criminal history itself does not play a role on its own, because people can change or prevent exposure. But criminal history, neglecting the children, poor environments, leaving children in the care or to be exposed to harmful situations is what contributes to them heading down the path of repeating criminal behavior.

P4 believes that mental illness can be an issue but not in the way you'd expect. P4 stated, "It's overused at times to diagnose children or ignored/downplayed in adult family members. Jokes can create negative self-image and they will seek approval elsewhere." P4 explained that mental health resources are referred to juveniles who enter the juvenile justice system but based off her experience has seen limited involvement from the parents or guardians. P4 explained that substance abuse does have a significant effect on juvenile recidivism mainly because "when juveniles are under the influence of illegal substance, they don't care and are going to violate." P4 further explained that the school experience for juvenile delinquents with whom she has worked varied depending on the juvenile's environment or living situation. P4 stated:

They weren't always there. There were many different home situations. There were parents/grandparents that did their best to ensure school was a priority, but their reach can only go so far. Some kids would go to school but leave.

P4 further stated:

I had a couple of young men that were traveling far to attend alternative schools but had to go into areas that were unsafe because of who different gang affiliations. They tried to

106

finish school but would give up because of the dangers of traveling between different

gang territories.

P4 emphasized more about the PTSD/Trauma exposure factor that the juveniles had to cope

with, which often went untreated. P4 stated:

There were some juveniles that I worked with that just didn't care about school. There

were so many traumatic experiences going on that trumped school. In their minds. I had

two smart young men, and one of them appeared to be on a great path. He was a star

athlete and great student; people always had great things to say about him. School was a

place he thrived, his issue was the group of friends he chose to run with, and he was

killed.

P4 explained:

There were also times I would do home visits because the juvenile wasn't in school, and

the parent would be at home and very aware of the absence. They just didn't make an

issue of it." To counteract these issues "I think school being important must start early

and be encouraged. If they make it to a certain point without that foundation or see that

there isn't much value to it because of family/friends, they do not care.

P4 stated that peer influence is considerably related to recidivism among juveniles

because they often hang in groups and learn from each other's negative behavior. P4

emphasized that positive social bonds do make a difference in redirecting the juvenile's negative

behavior. P4 stated, "without healthy interactions and creation of security, these kids are lost and left to figure everything out. They can easily turn to the wrong people and learn negative behaviors that come along with positive reinforcement." P4 emphasized:

> Those social interactions and relationships help to develop their character and learn what is right and wrong. How to function with others and in various situations. Self-esteem, confidence, reinforcement of positive behaviors is a result of those bonds and interactions.

P4 stated, there is no solution that foresees with 100% inevitability if a juvenile will reoffend; however, different scales are used based on the offense. P4 further explained:

> Basic needs not met, love, healthy relationships must be a part of a child's life to make the attempt to start youth in the right direction. And when parents or caregivers are unable to provide or decide not to (passing children off to grandparents or whoever), we leave the door open for all types of influence.

To counteract these risk factors, P4 emphasized that the entire juvenile justice needs to be revamped. P4 noted: "We need to be able to have school sponsored intervention with the family at the early signs of misbehavior before they're arrested. We need mental health programs in the schools." P4 stated:

> The justice system can potentially create policy that holds neglectful/absent parents responsible for their children's actions. It sounds harsh, but if the parents aren't parenting

and their child is out committing crime, I bet they'd be more willing to get involved if

their freedom was at stake.

Overall, P4 believes that the issue of black male juvenile recidivism is complex and

multifaceted. P4 expressed that there are a multitude of factors that contribute to recidivism,

including poverty, lack of resources, and inadequate support systems. P4 suggest the system

should take a more rehabilitative approach to juvenile justice. Instead of simply punishing youth

for their mistakes, the focus should be on providing them with the resources they need to

succeed, including education, job training, and mental health support.

P5, Educator. P5 is an educator has taught youth for over 25 years. P5, an accomplished

educator hailing from the city of Chicago. P5 has been a prominent figure in the education sector

for many years and has worked tirelessly to support students in marginalized communities. In

addition to her work as an educator, she has also been a strong advocate for the black community

and has worked to address issues related to racism, inequality, and social injustice. Given her

expertise in the field of education, P5 has shared valuable insights regarding the topics of

juvenile recidivism and the challenges facing young black males in the justice system. Through

her work in Chicago, she has witnessed firsthand the impact that the justice system can have on

the lives of young people, particularly those from minority backgrounds.

P5 expressed her beliefs that juveniles learn about crime from their environments,

families, and peers. P5 stated:

Young people currently do not have to actively seek information regarding crime and its

implications. They are bombarded on social media, television news reports, the "grapevine", as well as (no doubt) their own personal experiences. I am sure that most young people have had their lives touched in some way by crime and its results.

In reference to the effect of family criminal and family mental health history, P5 stated that these factors have a critical effect on juvenile recidivism. P5 stated:

In my experience as an educator, family criminal history and mental health problems have a profound influence on young people. More to the point, the familial response to a family member's involvement in criminal behaviors and/or mental health problems can either provide the rest of the family with a sense of safety and security or exacerbate the problem by not addressing head on a threat to the family.

About substance abuse and its effect on juvenile recidivism, P5 stated, "Substance abuse has a vast impact on juveniles commit delinquent acts and juvenile recidivism." Relative to the school experience for juvenile delinquents, P5 stated:

Ideally, school, where a child will spend most of his young life, should be, outside the home, the safest place for an individual. Unfortunately, the inequities inherent in our school system does not always provide that "safe space.

There are private institutions and schools that cater to a more academically advanced student population wherein the funding and parental/faculty involvement attempt to ensure that the environment is free of negative distractions. However, the "troubled" youth is generally not privy to such institutions. Unfortunately, he/she will generally attend the "neighborhood school",

110

usually underfunded, with a minimal staff, lacking in counselors, social workers, extracurricular activities, as well as parental involvement."

P5 believes that the most important social bond to reduce juvenile recidivism is parents, not necessarily biological parents, but adult role models. P5 stated:

Every human being has the primal tendency to strive to feel safe. Children, especially, instinctively know when something is "not right" or hurtful. Even preschoolers, who have a poor mastery of language, will "act out" the "wrong" event happening in the home. They will repeat conversations they do not understand, hit, use a toy as a weapon, point a finger like a gun, demonstrate a sexual act, etc. Children, whether 18 months or 18 years old WANT to express what is making them fearful and feeling unsafe. They will seek out, either overtly or through their own behaviors someone who will "see" them. They want to bond with that person, whether it's the 2-year-old who wants to be within "touching distance" of a kind daycare worker or the 16-year-old who sullenly gives a concerned teacher bits of information "out of the blue". It takes a dedicated, empathetic, attentive individual, be it a parent, teacher, coach, mentor, law enforcement officer, family member or even a neighbor to provide the young person with a "safe, soft place to land.

For this reason, peer influence has an enormous impact on increasing recidivism among juveniles.

When asked, what counteractive method can be used to reduce juvenile recidivism? P5 responded:

> How does one "balance the scale"? How does one "fix" the young person who is destined to succumb to the negative influences and become part of the criminal justice system? It goes back to that primal instinct, - the search for safety, the need to be "seen", to be "heard". It must begin with preschool for every child, - early intervention, attention, the ability spots the beginning of abhorrent behavior.

P5 further stated:

> Law enforcement needs a separate branch specifically for domestic intervention with social workers who fan out into the community, providing counseling and services for families, holding weekly meetings within the school buildings, introducing the neighborhood police officers. Educate parents as to how to become community activists. Take them to visit other communities and school systems. Introduce the community to judges who will explain the law and the penalties within the criminal justice system, and, above all else LISTEN and SEE the people of those communities. There is an old "teacher" saying: "Catch them being good". It is a process, but it starts by seeing and admitting the truth. High risk youth come from high-risk communities. Communities consist of individual people who just seek to survive and feel safe and seen.

Overall, throughout the interview P5 expressed as a female black educator from Chicago her deep concerns about the high rates of recidivism among black male juveniles. P5 believes

that there is a need to invest in programs and services that address underlying causes of recidivism. P5 spoke about increased funding for schools and job training programs in low-income neighborhoods, as well as expanded access to mental health services for at-risk youth. P5 suggest that while working toward bridging the gap between the juvenile justice system and educators there is a need to first address the systemic issues that contribute to the criminalization of black youth. This means challenging the biases and prejudices that exist within the criminal justice system and advocating for policies that treat black youth fairly and justly.

P6, Juvenile Correctional Officer. P6, is a first-generation Mexican American woman who has worked as a juvenile correctional officer for Cook County in Chicago for the past 6 years. In her line of work, she has encountered dozens of black male juvenile recidivists, young offenders who have been in and out of the system multiple times. P6 shared her insights on the challenges and solutions for addressing the issue of juvenile recidivism in the black male community. P6 speaks about her experiences working at the correctional facility and the underlying factors contributing to this troubling trend.

P6 stated that while working with juvenile delinquents who are mostly fighting cases for serious violent crimes and that she has seen multiple male black juveniles who were frequent recidivists. P5 further explained that after having frequent conversations and or just overhearing juveniles' conversations with other inmates, crime becomes a rite of passage for some of them; P6 explained, "the juveniles learn crime from the home, neighborhood, and other likeminded peers."

P6 stated, "family criminal and family mental health has a huge effect; we see it more often than people realize." P6 explained that daily it is her duty to observe and record mental and physical health and behavioral concerns of juvenile offenders and report it to supervisors. P6 explained that there are several ways that they try to assist juvenile delinquents who are dealing with PTSD/Mental health issues such as working with therapeutic teams to facilitate group discussions and counseling sessions and teaching juvenile offenders' basic life skills, problem-solving skills, rehabilitative skills, and behavioral management. P6 stated that she has seen some positive results with their methods but often many juvenile delinquents are not receptive to change, or especially male black juveniles express that it is considered "weak" so show emotions which leads them to just shut down.

P6 explained as for protocol and procedures all juvenile delinquents are assessed upon entering the center and treatment is referred for those who are in need, rather it is for mental health issues or substance abuse. P6 expressed that due to substance abuse, such as juveniles experimenting and becoming addicted to illegal narcotics and alcohol has a high impact on recidivism. P6 further stated, this is because, "not only are do they not realize that the illegal "party pills" that they are consuming contains a cocktail of highly addictive drugs, such as, heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, etc. but they continue to hang around their peer groups that encourage the same behavior."

P6 described that the school experience for juvenile delinquents, mostly males, are that they struggle to stay focused and lack the desire to attend. P6 believed that positive social bonds

are crucial to reduce recidivism. P6 explained: that most juveniles that she has spoken to often

say they get into trouble because they were bored, especially during COVID lockdown when the

young people were not able to attend in person classes. Therefore, P6 believes that structured

activities that come along with building social bonds to manage their free time is severely needed

to reduce recidivism. P6 stated that the social bonds troubled juveniles are building are with

troubled peers and these bonds are more problematic than they understand until it is too late, and

they end up in jail or murdered. P6 expressed that a lot of the male black juveniles do not even

expect to live past the age of 25. Most live in a war zone full of gun violence and drugs. In

reference to peer pressure and its influence on juvenile recidivism, P6 said,

> I think peer pressure comes more from popularity and making a name for their "Gang",
>
> especially with social media and the rise in popularity of Chicago Rappers. P6 further
>
> explained that most of these young people are living the life most rappers rap about, such
>
> as rising the murder rate, killing for respect and drug territory. P6 explained, to identify
>
> or predict whether a juvenile is likely to re-offend, there needs to be more communication
>
> access systems and schools to better address juveniles' delinquent issues such as more
>
> programs within the schools, Juveniles Justice programs, more after school programs and
>
> after school centers for them to use up their free time.

P6 believed family and community ties is the first start to counteract juvenile recidivism. P6

expressed: to counteract these exposure factors, family and community partnerships must be

stronger, the schools need more afterschool activities and programs and more youth employment placement.

Overall, P6 believe that the issue of black male juvenile recidivists is a difficult issue that requires a multilayered approach. P6 expressed that there are several issues that contribute to the high rate of juvenile recidivism especially among black male juveniles such as a lack of community resources, economic disparities, access to education, and a history of trauma. P6 suggest the need to invest in community resources that can support these youth and provide them with the tools they need to succeed, such as increasing access to after school activities and investing in mental health and trauma-informed care.

P7, Juvenile Correctional Officer. P7 has been a Cook County Juvenile Correctional Officer for 11 years. P7 has a wealth of experience working with young offenders at the Cook County juvenile detention center, and his diverse background gives him a unique perspective on the challenges facing minority youths within the justice system. As someone who has witnessed firsthand the struggles and potential of these individuals, P7 offered a valuable perspective on the topic of black male juvenile recidivists.

P7 believed family criminal history and family mental health history have a considerable impact on juvenile recidivism. P7 explained:

From my experience with the juvenile justice system and working directly with juveniles inside the juvenile detention center, often I have come to witness many juveniles' kind of follow suits within the system because those who are supposed to be positive role models

such as older siblings, parents, and friends are also involved in the criminal justice

system. Family criminal history, from my perspective has a high impact on recidivism

among juvenile delinquents.

P7 further explained:

If the families are involved in criminal behaviors and have extensive criminal records

they have lower earning potential, which contributes to major obstacles to securing

employment and receiving public assistance which can cause juveniles to go out and

commit crimes in order to help with bills and food for their household.

P7 further explained that he has had many conversations with juveniles who take on the burden

of helping their mother with bills and putting food on the table and many talk about the only way

they see how to do that is by selling narcotics or robbing people. When asked about what

procedures and protocols are in place to assist juveniles who enters the Juvenile Detention Center

with a mental health disorder, P7 explained: "Juveniles who enter the Department of Juvenile

Justice Detention Center with mental health disorders are referred to the appropriate service

provider for treatment, probation officers then ensure that the youth is complying with

treatment."

In reference to the effect of substance abuse on juvenile recidivism, P7 expressed,

substance abuse has a major impact on juvenile recidivism, for example, a juvenile with

substance abuse issues will commit crimes while under the influence that they do not understand

the impact that committing that crime will have on the victims lives and theirs. P7 further

117

explained from his experience he was heard so many juveniles express that because they were under the influence of alcohol or an illegal narcotic that they do not remember committing the crime. P7 expressed that school experience for juvenile delinquents has a major impact on recidivism. P7 explained that often juvenile delinquent's first arrest is while they were on school grounds.

P7 further often expressed educators and officials' procedures require them to involve law enforcement which in turn discourages juveniles from returning to school. P7 stated that once juveniles are in custody, they attend the educational facility that is a part of the detention center and once they are released, they are mandated to attend school as part of their release terms. P7 expressed that a major complaint that he hears from juvenile delinquents is that the ones who do attend school feel as if they are always targeted by the school resources officers. When asked to describe the importance of social bonds for male black juvenile delinquents. P7 noted: "often I see many male black juveniles who enter the center come from single mother households." P7 expressed that often while interacting with juveniles they often express having to take on the male held of household role because there is no father or positive male role model in the household, which can lead the juvenile down a path of bad choices.

P7 believes that positive male black role models are important for young male black juveniles to help guide and mentor them. Positive relationships with mentors, coaches, and peers are social bonds that need to be active among juveniles to reduce recidivism. P7 further stated, "unfortunately, the juveniles don't have the family support." Regarding the impact of peer

pressure on juvenile recidivism, P7 believes that peer influence has a major effect on juvenile recidivism. P7 noted:

> I think Chicago has a major gang problem and most of these gang leaders recruit young people to join their gang and coach them on the life of crime. This leads to hanging with the wrong crowd and committing crimes.

P7 also explained that another issue that leads to juvenile recidivism is that once juveniles are released, they go back into the same toxic environment and around the same peers. P7 noted, to counteract the exposure factors, is having more positive role models for the juveniles, more mental health/PTSD resources, more positive family interaction, and more substance abuse awareness programs.

Overall, P7 concluded based off his experience and observation that most juvenile recidivist practically black male juvenile recidivists root cause of their behavior is often linked to their environmental influences. P7 shared that many of juveniles come from impoverished neighborhoods with high crime rates, inadequate schools, and broken families. Which ultimately prevent them from having access to the resources and support systems necessary to break out of their cycle of illegal activity. P7 concluded that incarceration does not address the underlying issues that led to juveniles' criminal behavior in the first and that he suggests a more holistic approach that includes education, mental health support, and community outreach is needed to break the cycle of recidivism.

P8, Police Officer/Youth Mentor. P8 is a Chicago police officer for 15 years and youth

mentor. P8 is a veteran Chicago police officer who has made it his mission to serve as a mentor

and role model for young black males in his community. Growing up in a tough neighborhood

himself, he understands the challenges that many of these young men face and has dedicated his

life to helping them break the cycle of violence and crime. Through his work as a police officer

and community activist, P8 has seen firsthand the devastating impact that recidivism can have on

black male youth. P8 has been involved in several initiatives aimed at addressing these issues.

He has worked with local schools and community organizations to provide mentoring and

educational opportunities for at-risk youth and has been a vocal advocate for policies that

promote equity and justice in the criminal justice system. Given P8's experience and expertise,

P8 was a valuable source of insights and ideas for exploring the issue of black male juvenile

recidivism in greater depth.

P8 believes juveniles learn crime from the gangs and drug dealers within their

neighborhood, family members who are involved in the criminal justice system, music, video

games, and social media. P8 explained that many of the juveniles that he has had to arrest, the

juveniles have a parent or close family member in jail, so they are familiar with what the

criminal justice system is. P8 explained, "from my experience, I believe family criminal history

and family mental health have a significant impact on juvenile recidivism." P8 stated:

> I have witnessed firsthand generations of male black family members that I arrested the
>
> father and now the son. I have also witnessed mothers, with professional mental health
>
> diagnosis encourage their juvenile's negative/criminal behavior because that is what they

120

believed in their mind the child was "supposed" to do. It is my belief that if there is a

family criminal history and/or family mental health concern/issue/diagnosis, the juvenile

is more likely to recommit criminal activity versus a juvenile who does not have family

criminal or mental health history.

P8 believed substance abuse has a very high impact on juvenile recidivism, P8 stated: "It

is only logical that substance abuse would have an enormous impact on juvenile recidivism. The

need to self-medicate is a form of "self-nurturing". This need requires funding, - a problem for

the juvenile. It plunges him into an underground society which needs to perpetuate itself. The

juvenile who must exist here is not only victim, but a useful instrument to keep this society

viable." In reference to school experience of the juvenile delinquents, P8 emphasized that school

experiences for juvenile delinquents are extremely difficult. P8 explained that often he has been

called to a school for disruptions caused by "angry" young black males and that is where he has

seen educators link anger and aggression with male blacks. P8 further explained that "you must

look deeper, a lot of these young males have learning disabilities and are often embarrassed

about it, so they express their feelings out in anger or disruption."

P8 believes to counteract these issues it will require a lot more involvement and resources

across the board. When asked about the importance of social bonds that the juvenile delinquents

have or don't have, P8 stated, based on my experience as a mentor to many young black males,

many who do not have positive male role models in their lives, having a positive role model.

specifically a role model that looks like them, is crucial to their delevelopment into strong black

men who make better choices in life.

P8 explained that positive adult and peer social bonds are important in reducing juvenile

recidivism. When a juvenile has a positive adult figure in their life, someone that holds them

accountable for their behaviors and actions, the likelihood of a juvenile re-offending is reduced.

P8 believes that the social bonds that are negatively impacting the juvenile are peers who are

gang members and drug dealers, or kids who they meet and bond within the juvenile detention

center. P8 stated:

> I see a lot of young black boys searching to belong and for family support, so they are
>
> more likely to be recruited by older gang members and that emotional bond is a whole lot
>
> stronger than the parental authority.

To counteract these exposure factors, P8 stated:

> It starts at home first. Parents are a child's first teachers and home life set the tone for the
>
> child and the decisions that they make. Secondly, education: educate the juveniles about
>
> risks and problems so they can avoid it., And third, accountability: holding a young child
>
> accountable starting at a young age teaches them that there will always be consequences
>
> for their actions. P8 further stated, the juveniles, specifically young black boys who grow
>
> up in a household without a positive male role model, need to feel seen, heard, important,
>
> appreciated and loved.

Overall, P8 shared that except for violent felony offenses we cannot simply rely on

punishment and incarceration to solve the problem. P8 suggest the need to address the root

causes of recidivism, such as poverty, peer influence, lack of access to employment

opportunities, and systemic racism. P8 further suggested that the focus should be geared toward mentorship, education, job training, and mental health services. P8 concluded that in order to bridge the gap between each profession that encounters juveniles is simply working together without the focus on who's right or wrong. P8 stated, "it is up to all of us to work towards a society that values and uplifts black male youth. We must provide them with the tools and opportunities they need to succeed and break the cycle of recidivism."

P9, Educator/Youth Mentor. P9 has been an educator for 11 years, 3 years as a youth mentor. P9, an experienced and passionate Chicago educator and youth mentor. P9 is a black male advocate for juvenile justice reform and has worked tirelessly to address the high rate of recidivism among black male youth in Chicago. P9's passion for serving his community has led him to work tirelessly in the education sector, mentoring and guiding young black boys to become successful men despite the odds stacked against them. P9's work has been critical in breaking the cycle of recidivism that plagues many of these marginalized youth from his hometown of Chicago. P9 shared his thoughts and experiences with black male juvenile recidivists, and how his belief as an educator and mentor of ways to combat this epidemic in his community.

> P9 reported that juveniles learn crimes from their environments. P9 further explained:
> From my experience, and data that I have reviewed, a juvenile's zipcode (neighborhood)
> is a strong indicator of whether or not the juvenile will recommit crimes. Juveniles that
> live in areas with low socio-economic indicators often lack the necessary resources to aid

them in making positive and productive life choices in comparison to juveniles in areas of

affluence.

P9 believed one specific mental health issue that influences recidivism among juveniles

especially male black in Chicago is PTSD. P9 further explained he has had dozens of students

who have witnessed a family member or friend shot or murdered and or domestic abuse within

the household, which is trauma that goes untreated. P9 expressed:

Violence in Chicago has been out of control for decades and it is the reality that many of

your children face daily, and they go through life never given help to make sense and

process the trauma they have witnessed and or experienced firsthand. Many of the schools

lack the resources to treat every child that shows symptoms of PTSD and the families do

not have the resources to pay for therapy or often do not understand the issue to begin with.

In reference to substance abuse, P9 believed substance abuse has a major impact on juvenile

recidivism. P9 highlighted:

If you go back to the mental health issue, the negative environment issue, the lack of

support within the school system issue, these are all issues that leads young black males to

self-medicate with alcohol, cannabis, pills, etc. to escape their reality. In additional to the

issues they face, substance abuse is also glorified in rap music and TV.

P9, stated, "So based off the totality of the circumstances, substance abuse is probably one of the

leading causes of juvenile recidivism, especially for young male blacks in Chicago." When asked

what social bond in importation to reduce recidivism? P9 stated that the most important social

bond to reduce juvenile recidivism is the positive parent-child bond.

In addition, P9 explained, "I believe our parents/guardians are our greatest influence in our

lives and for a young black boy a positive father figure is crucial." P9 further explained:

As a mentor to many young black boys who have fallen victim to the criminal justice

system, I have seen many of these boys lose the light in their eyes. Because so many

juvenile delinquents are navigating life without a positive role model, they often build

social bonds with likeminded people who are also juvenile delinquents, which contributes

to the high recidivism rate.

P9 states that school programs that are in place for juveniles who are likely to reoffend are

counseling and mentoring programs, however, these resources are limited. When asked what can

be done to counteract these exposure factors, P9 informed:

It should always start at home and secondly within the school system, because if

issues are missed at home, teachers are the first to notice the behaviors and patterns

and we need to be much more aggressive in trying to alter negative behaviors that

lead to juvenile recidivism.

Overall, P9 shared that this problem is rooted in several longstanding issues, including

poverty, inadequate education, poor mental health, and lack of access to adequate employment

opportunities. During my interview P9 expressed that many of these young men face daunting

challenges that make it difficult to leave behind criminal behavior, such as economic instability,

lack of familial support, and social stigmatization. P9 shared that from personal experiences he

has seen many young people experience positive changes in their lives through education,

support programs, and mentorship. P9 concluded that by focusing on empowering young black

men with the skills and resources to succeed, we can break the cycle of recidivism and promote a

more just and equitable society for all.

P10, Juvenile Detective. P10, a dedicated and experienced black male detective of the

Chicago Police Department's Juvenile Division. With over 18 years of experience in dealing with

juvenile cases, he has helped to solve countless serious crimes and has also been a mentor to

many young people in the city. P10 expertise lies in his ability to understand the problems youth

face in Chicago, particularly black male juvenile recidivists. P10 has seen firsthand how many

young men end up in the juvenile justice system, and he believes that this is a symptom of deeper

problems in the city. P10 is a respected and dedicated law enforcement professional who has

made it his mission to help young black men in Chicago succeed. P10's insights and expertise

were valuable in understanding the challenges facing these young people and finding ways to

support them in their journey towards a better future.

P10 stated that juveniles learn crime through their neighborhood and school peers. P10

explained that many of his juvenile cases consist of multiple juveniles arrested together after

committing the same crime. P10 also stated that family criminal history influences juvenile

delinquency. P10 explained that of all the juvenile cases that he handles, over half if not more the

grandparents are the guardian, because one or more have a parent or parents who are incarcerated

or addicted to drugs and are not involved in the juvenile's life at that time.

Regarding mental health and its effect on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism,

P10 explained that disorders such as Post Traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and anger

management issues play a role in juvenile recidivism. P10 further explained:

If there are identified mental health issues, which for many of his cases the guardians will

inform me of such issues, the juveniles are referred to mental health professionals for

evaluations or signed into a health facility to be monitored for 72 hours.

P10, however, explained that in his experience, many of his cases that require mental health

services the juveniles do not receive the necessary services because the parents or legal guardians

are not proactive and or refuse to follow through.

P10 believes that substance abuse has a major impact on juvenile delinquency and juvenile

recidivism: "I'd say more than half of the cases that I am assigned are linked to substance

abuse." P10 further explained that juveniles are experimenting with highly addictive and potent

narcotics, and they are under the influence of something when they are committing the crime.

P10 emphasized that many of the juveniles with whom he works have no positive social bonds.

As I expressed earlier, many of my cases are arrest of multiple juveniles who were together while committing a crime. They have created their own social bonds with likeminded individuals." P10 further explained, "I think their peers is probably the closest thing to a social bond that they have because many of my cases the juvenile does not have a supportive home life and seek that family dynamic from outside the household.

P10 stated for this reason, peer influence has a huge impact on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. P1 emphasized, "I don't know that there's anything that has a higher effect on it."

P10 stated:

To counteracts these exposure factors, more commination and partnership between communities, schools, and law enforcement to create more intensive substance abuse and mental health counseling to assist young people who are affected by these issues as well as creating afterschool programs to keep them busy on their down time.

P10 continued:

There is a complete ignoring of the early warning signs at home and at school. Once juveniles are in my hand we must wait for multiple offenses before we start trying to bring in intensive services. There needs to be accountability from the first offenses so that it teaches that there are consequences for your actions.

Overall, P10 stated "as a male black Chicago juvenile detective, I cannot emphasize enough the urgent need to address the issue of black male juvenile recidivism." P10 expressed that it is evident that systemic and social factors contribute to the high rate of recidivism amongst black male juveniles, including peer influence, lack of family support, poverty, lack of access to education and resources, and exposure to violence and trauma. P10 concluded that it is essential to implement alternative sentencing options such as community service, restorative justice programs, and mentoring to help these juveniles address the root causes of their behavior and make positive changes in their lives.

Data Analysis

Results

During the data analysis I looked for emergent themes and examined for congruence with social learning / social disorganization theories. As Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) explained, data analysis involved the following steps: 1) Preparing and organizing for data analysis by reviewing and identifying larger ideas and themes; 2) Re-reading and coding data by identifying common themes, categories, and patterns; 3) Reporting findings by formulating findings statements, providing participant quotations, and summarizing key findings, and 4) Interpreting findings by dissecting and synthesizing the results (p. 236). The researcher reviewed the interviews to identify larger themes before coding, reporting, and analyzing the findings of this study in narrative form. The researcher considered the nuances associated with effects of certain exposure factors that contributes to Juvenile Recidivism specifically Male Black juveniles from the prospective of juvenile justice professional and educators and wanted to create a detailed

analysis of the factors that impacted the participants of the study. Respect for the integrity of the data required the configuration of a latitude of codes to help account for and reflect the details of the participants' experiences and perceptions.

The result of the researcher's motivation to analyze the perceptions and experiences represented in the interview data are characterized by primary themes. I asked the participants a total of fifteen (15) questions about their perceptions on juvenile delinquents and recidivist. The participants were identified as P1, P2, P3, and so on. The results are presented considering the emergent themes and their relationships to the research questions. Table two provided the emerging themes from the research questions.

The goal of the data analysis process in phenomenological research is to make sense of the experiences of the participants in the study and to identify the essence of the experiences. Before data collection, the researcher will practice Epoché (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). In data analysis, Epoche refers to a philosophical concept where an analyst suspends their preconceived notions and biases about data before analyzing it. This approach allows the analyst to observe data objectively and explore multiple interpretations without making any assumptions about its meaning. To practice Epoche in data analysis, the following steps can be followed: Acknowledging my personal biases was the first step in practicing Epoche. Understanding that my personal beliefs and assumptions can influence one's interpretation of data. I set aside all preconceived notions about the data and approached it with an open mind. I analyzed the data objectively, without making any assumptions about its meaning. I explored multiple interpretations and considered all possible outcomes. After

analyzing the data objectively, I reflected on the interpretations and considered how my personal biases may have influenced the analysis. Practicing Epoche in data analysis can help analysts be more objective in their interpretations. It allows for a more comprehensive and holistic view of the data, leading to more accurate and insightful conclusions.

Table 2

Emerging Themes from Research Question

Themes	Research Questions
Family Criminal History Substance Abuse Lack of Positive Male Role Models Environment Peers Coping	RQ1: To what degree do exposures factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, among Black males?
Training Counseling Early Intervention Addressing Trauma Re-entry Programs	RQ2: What are some effective methods that can be utilized to rectify these exposure factors from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators, particularly methods effective for Black males?
School Experience Collaboration Resources Social Bonds Data Sharing Communication	RQ3: How do juvenile justice professional and educators describe the gap between each other's roles when encountering juvenile delinquents, specifically male black juveniles?

RQ1: To what degree do exposures factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, among Black males? Six significant themes, Family Criminal History, Substance Abuse, Lack of Positive Male Role Models. Environment. Peers, and Coping were revealed, indicating the significant effect each of these theme's influence have on juvenile recidivism. Questions 4, 5, 8, and 12 from the interview protocol (Appendix D) were in response to the research question.

Family Criminal History: I asked the study participants to share their perceptions on how family criminal history impacts juvenile recidivism. Eight out of ten participants (80%) expressed that family criminal history account for a significant contribution to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. The participants' responses to interview question were:

P1: P1 stated that family criminal history has a large impact on juvenile delinquency.

> P1 explained that of all the juvenile cases that she handles, over half if not more have a parent, parents, or family members who are involved in the criminal justice system. P1 further explained that while working her juvenile cases most juvenile delinquents advanced their criminal knowledge from other juvenile delinquents and that they would study and learn the system and would have knowledge of what their punishment would be for certain crimes that they committed.

P3: P3 stated the family criminal history has a significant effect on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. P3 explained:

> I had a kid in my court room today and his family spoke and explained to me that this is not what their family is about, this is not culture that we set for our child, and these are things that I like to hear, but again the family can tell me anything, so I keep that in mind.

P4: P4 stated:

> Honestly, I learned that it's the household and beyond. Sometimes, parents aren't in the household but still play a major role. I've seen young boys strive to get the approval of absentee fathers by being involved in criminal activity because they've seen the father and half siblings involved in the same lifestyle and appear to have the father's approval. I've seen mothers in the home but as absent as one who isn't.

P5: P5 stated:

> In my experience as an educator, family criminal history and mental health problems have a profound influence on young people. More to the point, the familial response to a family member's involvement in criminal behaviors and/or mental health problems can either provide the rest of the family with a sense of safety and security or exacerbate the problem by not addressing head on a threat to the family.

P7: P7 explained:

> From my experience with the juvenile justice system and working directly with juveniles inside the juvenile detention center, often I have come to witness many juveniles' kind of follow suits within the system because those who are supposed to be positive role models such as older siblings, parents, and friends are also involved in the criminal justice system. Family criminal history, from my perspective has a high impact on recidivism among juvenile delinquents.

P8: P8 stated:

> I have witnessed firsthand generations of male black family members that I arrested the father and now the son. I have also witnessed mothers, with professional mental health diagnosis encourage their juvenile's negative/criminal behavior because that is what they believed in their mind the child was "supposed" to do. It is my belief that if there is a family criminal history and/or family mental health concern/issue/diagnosis, the juvenile is more likely to recommit criminal activity versus a juvenile who does not have family criminal or mental health history.

P10: P10 also stated that family criminal history influences juvenile delinquency. P10 explained that of all the juvenile cases that he handles, over half if not more the grandparents are the guardian, because one or more have a parent or parents who are incarcerated or addicted to drugs and are not involved in the juvenile's life at that time.

Substance Abuse: I asked the study participants to share their perceptions on how substance abuse impacts juvenile recidivism. Ten out of ten participants (100%) expressed that substance abuse account for a significant contribution to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. The participants' responses to interview question were:

P1: P1 specified that substance abuse has a significant impact on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism: I'd say over half if not more of the juvenile arrest that we see come through our district are tied to substance abuse, whether it's that someone is stealing to support their habit, or they are under the influence of something when they were committing the crime.

P2: P2 believes that substance abuse among juveniles has been a major concern especially with the young black males that has comes through his mentorship program.

> We were seeing the marijuana use was through the roof starting at the early age of 10 years old, saying "I had my morning weed" as if it is their morning breakfast. P2 further explained, that starting from the age of 10 years old and as these young boys get into high school the narcotics choice gets stronger and they start experimenting with pills.

P3: P3 shared that he when he receives the drug test results for juveniles and that it is very common to see marijuana use, P3 specified, "and I look at the level as well and I flag them, and I point it out to the parents. Sometimes the parents are aware and sometimes they are not."

P4: P4 explained that substance abuse does have a significant effect on juvenile recidivism mainly because "when juveniles are under the influence of illegal substance, they don't care and are going to violate."

P5: P5 stated, "Substance abuse has a vast impact on juveniles commit delinquent acts and juvenile recidivism."

P6: P6 expressed that due to substance abuse, such as juveniles experimenting and becoming addicted to illegal narcotics and alcohol has a high impact on recidivism. P6 further stated,

> This is because, "not only are do they not realize that the illegal "party pills" that they are consuming contains a cocktail of highly addictive drugs, such as, heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, etc. but they continue to hang around their peer groups that encourage the same behavior.

P7: P7 expressed, substance abuse has a major impact on juvenile recidivism, for example, a juvenile with substance abuse issues will commit crimes while under the influence that they do not understand the impact that committing that crime will have on the victims lives and theirs

P8: P8 believed substance abuse has a very high impact on juvenile recidivism, P8 stated: "It is only logical that substance abuse would have an enormous impact on juvenile recidivism. The need to self-medicate is a form of "self-nurturing".

P9: In reference to substance abuse, P9 believed substance abuse has a major impact on juvenile recidivism. P9 highlighted:

> If you go back to the mental health issue, the negative environment issue, the lack of support within the school system issue, these are all issues that leads young black males to self-medicate with alcohol, cannabis, pills, etc. to escape their reality. In additional to the issues they face, substance abuse is also glorified in rap music and TV.

P10: P10 believes that substance abuse has a major impact on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism: "I'd say more than half of the cases that I am assigned are linked to substance abuse." P10 further explained that juveniles are experimenting with highly addictive and potent narcotics, and they are under the influence of something when they are committing the crime.

Lack of Positive Male Role Models: I asked the study participants to share their perceptions on how several exposure factors impacts juvenile recidivism. Five out of ten participants (50%) expressed that the lack of a positive male role model account for a significant contribution to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. The participants' responses to interview question were:

P1: P1 suggest mentoring programs can provide positive role models and support systems for young people, helping to promote positive behaviors and provide guidance and support.

P2: Through P2's work with his youth foundation in Chicago, P2 seen firsthand the impact that positive role models can have on young people who may be at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

P5: P5 believes that the most important social bond to reduce juvenile recidivism is parents, not necessarily biological parents, but adult role models.

P7: P7 believes that positive male black role models are important for young male black juveniles to help guide and mentor them. Positive relationships with mentors, coaches, and peers are social bonds that need to be active among juveniles to reduce recidivism.

P8: P8 explained that positive adult and peer social bonds are important in reducing juvenile recidivism. When a juvenile has a positive adult figure in their life, someone that holds them accountable for their behaviors and actions, the likelihood of a juvenile re-offending is reduced.

Environment and Peers: I asked the study participants to share their perceptions on how juveniles become involved in delinquent behaviors. Seven out of ten participants (70%) expressed that peer influence and the juvenile's environment account for a significant contribution to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. The participants' responses to interview question were:

P1: P1 stated for this reason, peer influence has a huge impact on juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism. P1 emphasized, "I have knowledge that many juvenile delinquents teach and learn each other's methods of crime."

P2: P2 explained peer influence contributes to juvenile recidivism. P2 stated if a child does not have a strong family or social bond that is pulling them out of the criminal justice system and encouraging them to stay in school, then they are going to turn towards their peers.

P3: P3 believed that peer influence has a major effect on juvenile recidivism especially when gang affiliation is involved. P3 believes when juveniles are arrested and released, they are going back into the same toxic environment which typically leads to recidivism.

P4: P4 stated that peer influence is considerably related to recidivism among juveniles because they often hang in groups and learn from each other's negative behavior.

P7: P7 believes that peer influence has a major effect on juvenile recidivism. P7 noted:

> I think Chicago has a major gang problem and most of these gang leaders recruit young people to join their gang and coach them on the life of crime. This leads to hanging with the wrong crowd and committing crimes.

P9: P9 reported that juveniles learn crimes from their environments. P9 further explained:

> From my experience, and data that I have reviewed, a juvenile's zipcode (neighborhood) is a strong indicator of whether or not the juvenile will recommit

140

crimes. Juveniles that live in areas with low socio-economic indicators often lack

the necessary resources to aid them in making positive and productive life choices

in comparison to juveniles in areas of affluence.

P10: P10 stated for this reason, peer influence has a huge impact on juvenile delinquency

and juvenile recidivism. P10 emphasized, "I don't know that there's anything that has a higher

effect on it."

RQ2: What are some effective methods that can be utilized to rectify these exposure factors

from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators, particularly methods

effective for Black males? Five significant themes, Training, Counseling, Early Intervention,

Addressing Trauma, and Re-entry Programs were revealed, indicating the significant effect each

of these theme's influence have on juvenile recidivism. Questions 6, 7, and 13 from the interview

protocol (Appendix D) were in response to the research question. Five themes emerged that

demonstrated the most important effective methods in reducing recidivism among juvenile

delinquents. Five of the Ten participants (50%) strongly expressed their thoughts.

P1: P1 suggest that "we" must invest in programs that provide access to education, job

training, and mental health services, and create public safety measures that focus on building

trust and relationships between law enforcement and the community.

P1: P1 emphasized that we need more prevention programs, more therapy, earlier mental

health intervention.

P4: P4 suggest the system should take a more rehabilitative approach to juvenile justice. Instead of simply punishing youth for their mistakes, the focus should be on providing them with the resources they need to succeed, including education, job training, and mental health support.

P5: P5 spoke about increased funding for schools and job training programs in low-income neighborhoods, as well as expanded access to mental health services for at-risk youth.

P5:". It must begin with preschool for every child, - early intervention, attention, the ability spots the beginning of abhorrent behavior.

P8: P8 further suggested that the focus should be geared toward mentorship, education, job training, and mental health services

P9: P9 expressed:

> Violence in Chicago has been out of control for decades and it is the reality that
> many of your children face daily, and they go through life never given help to
> make sense and process the trauma they have witnessed and or experienced
> firsthand. Many of the schools lack the resources to treat every child that shows
> symptoms of PTSD and the families do not have the resources to pay for therapy
> or often do not understand the issue to begin with

RQ3: How do juvenile justice professional and educators describe the gap between each other's roles when encountering juvenile delinquents, specifically male black juveniles? Six significant themes, School Experience, Collaboration, Resources, Social Bonds, Data Sharing, and

Communication were revealed, indicating the significant effect each of these theme's influence have on juvenile recidivism. Questions 11, 12 and 13 from the interview protocol (Appendix D) were in response to the research question. Six themes emerged that demonstrated the most important effective methods in reducing recidivism among juvenile delinquents. Several of the participants strongly expressed their thoughts.

P1: P1 emphasized that most of the juveniles with whom she has come across have no social bonds "I think that's probably one of the big issues is that a lot of them don't have social bonds to anyone or anything."

P2 noted:

> We talk about it takes a village to raise a child and it really does take the community because we are communal people, so for a lot of young black boys the lack of social bonds is a huge factor when it comes to recidivism. It's a lack of support for the kid.

P3: The problem I see frequently is the lack of social bonds for young black males growing up in certain environments such as the parent-child bond is nonexistent or minimal, and the only bond that these young people are building are with gangs.

P4: P4 emphasized:

> Those social interactions and relationships help to develop their character and learn what is right and wrong. How to function with others and in various

situations. Self-esteem, confidence, reinforcement of positive behaviors is a result

of those bonds and interactions.

P4: P4 further explained that the school experience for juvenile delinquents with whom she has

worked varied depending on the juvenile's environment or living situation. P4 stated:

They weren't always there. There were many different home situations. There were

parents/grandparents that did their best to ensure school was a priority, but their reach can

only go so far. Some kids would go to school but leave.

P5: Relative to the school experience for juvenile delinquents, P5 stated:

Ideally, school, where a child will spend most of his young life, should be, outside the

home, the safest place for an individual. Unfortunately, the inequities inherent in our

school system does not always provide that "safe space.

P6: P6 believed that positive social bonds are crucial to reduce recidivism. P6 explained: that

most juveniles that she has spoken to often say they get into trouble because they were bored,

especially during COVID lockdown when the young people were not able to attend in person

classes. Therefore, P6 believes that structured activities that come along with building social

bonds to manage their free time is severely needed to reduce recidivism.

P6: P6 described that the school experience for juvenile delinquents, mostly males, are that they

struggle to stay focused and lack the desire to attend.

P7: P7 expressed that school experience for juvenile delinquents has a major impact on recidivism. P7 explained that often juvenile delinquent's first arrest is while they were on school grounds.

P8: In reference to school experience of the juvenile delinquents, P8 emphasized that school experiences for juvenile delinquents are extremely difficult. P8 explained that often he has been called to a school for disruptions caused by "angry" young black males and that is where he has seen educators link anger and aggression with male blacks. P8 further explained that "you must look deeper, a lot of these young males have learning disabilities and are often embarrassed about it, so they express their feelings out in anger or disruption."

P10: P10 further explained, "I think their peers is probably the closest thing to a social bond that they have because many of my cases the juvenile does not have a supportive home life and seek that family dynamic from outside the household.

The explanation of the responses from the participants correlated with the findings of the literature review conducted in this study. For instance, Bandura and Ribes-Inesla (1976) found that social learning theory has a prominent place in the study of criminal behavior. They argued that one's environmental experience influences the social learning of violence in children. Bandura and Ribes-Inesla noted that peers could be responsible for a juvenile's delinquent behavior. If juveniles have not received proper guidance from their parents, then the influence from their peers can lead to delinquent behaviors (Bandura & Ribes-Inesla, 1976).

For this study, I used Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological reduction method. The researcher should relinquish biases and look at the topic with a fresh eye (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological reduction is a method of analyzing data from a phenomenological perspective, which involves bracketing one's preconceptions and assumptions about the phenomenon being studied to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of those involved. In the case of analyzing data about male black juvenile recidivism, phenomenological reduction involved setting aside any assumptions or stereotypes about black male juveniles who are involved in the criminal justice system and focusing instead on the individual experiences and perspectives of those who work with and encounter black male juveniles daily. Once the data was collected, I engaged in a process of phenomenological reduction, setting aside any preconceptions or biases, and focusing instead on the experiences of the participants. This allowed me to analyze the data through a lens of empathy and compassion, seeking to understand the perspectives of those who have been through the criminal justice system and exploring the factors that led them to become involved in the system in the first place.

Through this process of phenomenological reduction, I gained a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of professionals who work with or encounter black male juveniles who are or have been involved in the criminal justice system, including the challenges they face in navigating an often hostile and discriminatory system, the impact of systemic racism and poverty on their lives, and the factors that contribute to their involvement in criminal activity. By approaching the data with an open mind and a willingness to listen to the voices of those

involved, I gained a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of the complex issues

surrounding male black juvenile recidivism. The segments will be clustered into themes. This

process was conducted using NVivo qualitative data analysis software, which allows researchers

to organize the data according to their data analysis plan and store those data together at nodes,

or buckets of information, for easy visualization.

Bracketing

So that the research could be conducted without researcher bias, I acknowledged my

lived experiences as a Chicago Police Officer who has had several years of experience involving

juveniles specifically male black juveniles. Before collecting data for this research study, the

bracketing method required that I employ a reflexive journal to write down and bracket my own

thoughts and experiences with the phenomenon (see Appendix E). Using my iPad journaling

feature, I journaled and typed details I recalled from my own professional experiences and

perceptions. This is how I bracketed my experiences and perceptions with the phenomenon so

that I could objectively listen to the participants' experiences and perceptions, as viewing this

phenomenon exclusively through the lens of my own experiences would only allow a subjective

approach. The process of bracketing, or epoché, allowed me to observe this phenomenon anew in

accordance with Moustakas' (1994) suggestions.

The bracketing process also allowed me to collect data with the purpose of exploring only

through the lived experiences of the participants. Although my experiences cannot be fully

removed the bracketing method provided a chance for me to reflect on my own experience and

perception with the phenomenon prior to data collection. It further provided an opportunity for

additional information and perspectives from this study's participants while removing my own

experiences with the phenomenon. Journaling my own experience with the phenomenon prior to

data collection helped me to reflect and set aside my own reality as a Chicago Police Officer who

encounters juvenile delinquents. Following the epoché process, the researcher was able to listen,

observe, and interact with participants through the data collection process (Moustakas, 1994).

Horizontalizing

All participant interviews were transcribed using the transcription feature in Zoom and

Word. I began the process of horizontalization. The horizon is the experience a person is having

in the present (Moustakas, 1994). In data analysis, horizontalization refers to the process of

breaking down data into different categories or variables to analyze its effects on an entire

population. For example, while analyzing the effects of race on the criminal justice system, I

would need to look at the data horizontally. By dividing the data into categories, I can get a

better understanding of how certain factors affect the population.

When it comes to black male juveniles, horizontalization helped me to identify how

different variables affect this specific group. For example, I could look at how socioeconomic

status, education levels, and family background affect the number of black male juveniles who

are involved in the criminal justice system. Overall, horizontalization helps understand the

nuances of a population by breaking down the data into different variables. In doing so, we can

better comprehend how different factors affect a specific group, such as male black juveniles.

Clustering the Horizons into Themes

According to Saldaña (2016), those significant statements are the passages of relevant text that addresses the research questions, which are then reconstructed based on similarity of interview passages across all participants through later stages of data analysis. Everything else in the interview is removed except for the significant statements. In the clustering stage of analysis, these significant statements are clustered into themes based on meaning (Creswell J. W., 2018). A theme is a pattern that exists among participants in the interview text (Van Manen, 1997). The clustering process offered a description of the phenomenon by revealing corresponding themes among research participants.

Organizing the Horizons and Themes into Textural Description

After horizontalizing and clustering, those significant statements and themes were used to write a description of the experience, using participants' own words (Creswell J. W., 2018). The results of the transcribed interviews provided a rich description of the phenomenon.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

One vital aspect of qualitative research is for outside readers of a study's results to be able to judge the trustworthiness of the results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness is built upon credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The trustworthiness of qualitative research is important to ensure that the study is rigorous enough to produce findings capable of impacting policy or practice (Anney, 2014). As a result, the methods I report below help improve the trustworthiness of the study procedures as outlined in Chapter 3, I used these four criteria, which I discussed in the sections that follow.

Credibility

Credibility of qualitative data can be assured through multiple perspectives throughout data collection to ensure data are appropriate. I attained credibility via member checking. During the initial interviews, I asked for clarification to ensure my written notes would reflect the audio recordings. After the interviews were completed, I reviewed the audio recordings and compared them with my field notes. I transcribed verbatim using the automated transcription feature on zoom as well as transcribing by hand, I then read each transcript word for word for accuracy. After conducting interviews, I also invited participants to review their interview transcript by method of their choice (email, in-person, etc.) to confirm accuracy. Member checking enabled me to identify any misunderstandings of the participants' perspectives and responses. Member checking enabled the participants to acknowledge and respond to their own words. None of the participants, however, had any changes.

Transferability

To ensure transferability, I provided clear descriptions of the background, culture, selection, and characteristics of the participants. Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) stressed that the qualitative researcher does not seek to generalize findings but is concerned with transferability; this indicates the readers themselves (not the researcher) can decide how findings from a study can be applied to their circumstance. I used a purposeful sampling of individuals from different areas of the juvenile justice system as well as educators to decrease systemic bias and increase trustworthiness. Participants for the study included juvenile justice professionals and educators who had experience working with juvenile delinquents.

Dependability

I established dependability by obtaining detailed field notes. To ensure accuracy, I reviewed the documentation. I compared the data using codes and memos during the coding process. I used the NVivo program to cross check and query codes for consistency.

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings of qualitative research reflect the reality being studied and the extent to which they can be reproduced or verified by others. Establishing evidence of confirmability is crucial in qualitative research because it demonstrates that the data being analyzed are credible and trustworthy. There were several approaches that I took to establish confirmability when analyzing my interview transcripts: member checking: this involved sharing the transcripts with the participants to verify that their experiences and perspectives have been accurately captured. This approached helped to ensure that the data analysis reflected the participants' reality. Also, triangulation: this involved using multiple sources of data to confirm the findings. For example, I analyzed data from interviews, observation, and documents to triangulate the findings. Lastly reflexivity: this involved reflecting on and acknowledging my biases, assumptions, and perspectives that may have influenced the analysis of the data. This approach helped to enhance the transparency and rigor of the research. By using these methods, I established the confirmability of my findings, which can enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research.

Summary

In this chapter, I investigated the perceptions of effect of exposure factors that contribute

to recidivism among black male juveniles of ten juvenile justice professionals and educators,

which included one Juvenile judge, one Chicago Police Commander, One Chicago Police

Detective and Educator, One Juvenile Probation Counselor/Police Officer, Two Juvenile

Correctional Officers, One Police Officer/Youth Mentor, One Educator/Youth Mentor, and One

Juvenile Detective. I conducted in-depth, open-ended interviews to obtain information on their

experiences and perceptions working with juvenile delinquents and juvenile recidivists.

The primary research questions that guided this research were (a) To what degree do

exposures factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD,

substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to juvenile delinquency and

juvenile recidivism, among Black males? (b) What are some effective methods that can be

utilized to rectify these exposure factors from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals

and educators, particularly methods effective for Black males? (c) How do juvenile justice

professional and educators describe the gap between each other's roles when encountering

juvenile delinquents, specifically male black juveniles? I also used several other interview

questions in this study to examine the explanations of the experiences of juvenile justice

professionals' and educators' perceptions of juvenile recidivism.

To analyze the collected data, I used NVivo software to code the data, which yielded 17

significant themes. In this chapter, I provided a detailed explanation of the setting,

demographics, data collection, and data analysis procedure. I discussed the results of the data analysis, which were based on the responses from the interviews. I illustrated evidence of trustworthiness and the study's rigor, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In Chapter 5, I discuss interpretation of the study's findings, limitations, recommendations for future research, and implications for policy and systematic change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine and understand the effect of the exposure factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate from the perceptions of juvenile justice professionals and educators. Specifically, my goal was to gain a more in depth understanding of the extent to which the exposure factors of environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to recidivism for black male juveniles. I also seek to understand what can be done to counteract these factors from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators in hope to bridge the gap between each entity that encounters juvenile recidivist. Also included in this chapter are explanations based on the results from the review of the research data. Future benefits that this study may provide the juvenile justice system and educators during prevention and intervention implementations are also included.

Interpretation of the Findings

In what follows, I interpret the results I reported in the previous chapter by drawing on social learning and social disorganization theories. The findings of interviewing juvenile justice professionals and educators about black male juvenile recidivists in Chicago suggest that there are complex underlying factors that contribute to the high rate of recidivism among black male juveniles. The interviews revealed that poverty, lack of access to quality education, community violence, family dysfunction, and racial bias are major issues that impact the lives of black male juveniles in Chicago. The study found that many of the black male juvenile recidivists come from impoverished neighborhoods with minimal resources, and they experience chronic

154

exposure to violence and trauma. This environment increases their likelihood of becoming involved in criminal activities and being exposed to the criminal justice system.

Another significant finding was the role of the education system in the lives of black male juveniles. Educators revealed that many black male juveniles experience significant academic struggles, and they lack access to quality education. This sets them up for a greater likelihood of dropping out of school and becoming involved in criminal activities. The participants also described the impact of family dynamics on the lives of black male juveniles. Many of these youths come from families with histories of incarceration, substance abuse, and other challenges that make it difficult for them to establish stable and supportive homes. Finally, the study found that racial bias is a pervasive issue in the criminal justice system, which contributes to the disproportionate representation of black male juveniles in the system. Juvenile justice professionals expressed concern about the overrepresentation of black male juveniles in the system and the need for greater focus on prevention and rehabilitation as opposed to punishment.

The findings also suggest that the social learning theory and social disorganization theory can help explain the reasons for the high rates of recidivism among this population. According to the social learning theory, behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. The interviews revealed that black male juveniles who grow up in impoverished neighborhoods with high crime rates often have limited access to positive role models, resources, and opportunities to learn and practice pro-social behaviors. Instead, they may be exposed to delinquent peers, family members, and community members who normalize criminal activities

155

and provide them with reinforcement and rewards for engaging in deviant behaviors. Additionally, some respondents noted that juvenile detention centers may inadvertently promote delinquency by exposing youth to more experienced offenders and providing limited opportunities for rehabilitation and education.

In addition, the social disorganization theory posits that crime and delinquency are more likely to occur in neighborhoods characterized by social and economic disorganization, including poverty, unemployment, residential mobility, and racial and ethnic segregation. Many interviewees pointed out that the disproportionate representation of black male juveniles in the criminal justice system is due to a combination of structural and systemic factors, such as the lack of economic opportunities, inadequate housing, underfunded schools, and over-policing of minority neighborhoods. As a result, many of these youth may engage in delinquency as a means of survival, peer bonding, or rebellion against social and economic injustices.

Overall, the findings of the interviews suggest that addressing the underlying social and economic conditions that contribute to recidivism, providing positive role models and opportunities for education and employment, and implementing more restorative and community-based approaches to juvenile justice may be more effective than punitive measures in addressing the root causes of delinquency among black male juveniles in Chicago. Furthermore, the findings of this study also suggest that addressing the issues of poverty, lack of access to quality education, community violence, family dysfunction, and racial bias are critical to addressing the high rates of recidivism among black male juveniles in Chicago.

Research Question 1

The first research question focused on the degree to which exposure factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds contribute to juvenile delinquency and juvenile recidivism, among Black males. The purpose of research question 1 was to gain an in-depth understanding of exposure factors that are most likely to predict recidivism among the subgroup of male black juveniles from the professionals who are closely working with the juveniles. The study participants were asked to describe from their experience the exposure factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism. In fact, all 10 respondents listed factors directly related to the lack of positive social bonds and peer influence is deemed one of the most influential exposure factors on juvenile recidivism.

It is evident that adolescents' brain is not fully developed like adults' brain. There is a significant amount of literature on the topic of adolescent brain development and how it differs from adult brain development. Such as "The Teen Brain: Still Under Construction" by National Institute of Mental Health. This article discusses the ongoing development of the adolescent brain and how it differs from the adult brain in terms of structure and function (Health, 2011). "Adolescent Brain Development and Its Implications for Understanding Risk and Resilience Processes" by B.J. Casey et al., published in Developmental Psychopathology. This article provides an overview of the current understanding of adolescent brain development and its implications for understanding risk and resilience processes in this population (Guyer, 2018).

"Adolescent Brain Development: Implications for Understanding Risk and Resilience Processes through Neuroimaging Research" by Amanda E. Guyer et al., published in Adolescent Brain Development: Implications for Behavior. This chapter discusses the role of neuroimaging research in understanding the development of the adolescent brain and its implications for understanding risk and resilience processes in this population.

These studies and articles all provide evidence that the adolescent brain is not fully developed like the adult brain, and that this ongoing development has important implications for mental health outcomes and risk and resilience processes in this population. And, hence, they are more prone to get influence by criminal peer behavior than adults. This interpretation is consistent with Agnew's (1991) analysis of data from the national youth survey, which found that the influence of delinquent peers on delinquent behavior depends not only on the amount of time spent with friends but also on the extent to which delinquent patterns are presented in group interaction. The more peers are involved in delinquent behavior; the more likely a youth will be to engage in similar forms of delinquent behaviors. Research consistently shows that the more involved a youth is with delinquent friends, the more likely he or she is to engage in delinquent behavior, such as, "Peer Group Contexts and the Relationship between Individual Characteristics and Delinquent Behaviors" by Christopher J. Sullivan et al., published in Criminology (Sullivan, 2006). This study examines the impact of peer group contexts on the relationship between individual characteristics and delinquent behaviors among African American male youth in Chicago. "Social Networks and Youth Violence" by Dexter R. Voisin, published in Journal of

Interpersonal Violence (Voisin, 2007). This study examines the relationship between social

networks and youth violence among African American male youth, including black male

juveniles, in Chicago. "The Impact of Delinquent Peers on the Development of Youth Antisocial

Behavior" by James C. Howell and Scott W. Henggeler, published in Youth Violence and

Juvenile Justice. This article discusses the impact of delinquent peers on the development of

youth antisocial behavior, including among black male juveniles in urban areas (Howell, 2011).

These studies highlight the negative impact that delinquent friends can have on black

male juveniles in Chicago, including their increased risk of engaging in delinquent behaviors and

violence. They also suggest the importance of addressing peer influences in prevention and

intervention efforts aimed at reducing delinquency and violence among this population.

Research Question 2

The second research question focused on what are some effective methods that can be

utilized to rectify these exposure factors from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals

and educators, particularly methods effective for Black males? To answer this question, I

explored the importance of positive influence of parental bonds along with bridging the gap with

parents and educators as they relate to juvenile recidivism. Prior to conducting this research, I

had assumed that positive bonds formed with others outside of their parents would be effective in

reducing recidivism among juveniles.

The findings provided information that supported my thoughts, however participants'

responses indicated that they believed that the bond between the parent and juvenile must be

established in a positive way first. The participants reported that social bonds formed with parents are most important in reducing recidivism among juvenile recidivists. The participants in this study believe that the key to rectifying these exposure factors is a positive parent-child bond with the support of bonding with others such as positive bonds with the community also being important. There is a significant amount of research on the importance of parent-child bonds as it relates to black male juveniles in Chicago. Some examples of studies and articles that supports this claim are: "Parenting Practices and Delinquency in Low-Income African American Youth" by Annette M. La Greca et al., published in Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology. This study examines the relationship between parenting practices and delinquency among low-income African American youth, including black male juveniles (La Greca, 2006). "The Role of Family Processes in the Risk and Resilience of Low-Income, Urban African American Adolescents" by Gene H. Brody et al., published in Child Development. This study explores the role of family processes, including parent-child relationships, in the risk and resilience of low-income, urban African American adolescents, including black male juveniles (Brody, 2006).

These studies all highlight the important role that parent-child bonds play in the development of black male juveniles in Chicago, including their risk for engaging in delinquent behaviors. They suggest that positive parenting practices, including parental involvement and strong parent-child relationships, can serve as protective factors and promote resilience among this population. Overall, the data indicated that the expert participants' beliefs about the most

important and effective strategies to reduce recidivism among juvenile recidivists is through

parent-child bond with the support of other entities when needed.

Research Question 3

Research question 3 was, "how do juvenile justice professional and educators describe

the gap between each other's roles when encountering juvenile delinquents, specifically male

black juveniles?"

Participants in this study reported several issues that can and have arisen between

juvenile justice professionals and educators when working with delinquent youth. Juvenile

justice professionals, including probation officers, judges, police officers, and correctional staff,

are responsible for enforcing the law and ensuring the safety of the community. They may view

black male recidivists as repeat offenders who need to be punished and rehabilitated to prevent

further criminal behavior. The Juvenile Justice Professionals suggest that their role is often

focused on law enforcement and maintaining public order, which may lead to a punitive

approach to juvenile justice. On the other hand, educators in the juvenile justice system, such as

teachers, counselors, and social workers, tend to focus on the needs of the individual offender

and how they can be supported to make positive changes. They may view black male recidivists

as children and adolescents who need academic and social-emotional support to succeed in life.

Their role is often centered on education, social justice, and addressing underlying issues that

contribute to a student's involvement in the juvenile justice system. The participants reported that

a key issue is lack of communication and coordination. Juvenile justice professionals and

educators are not always in regular communication with one another, which has led to a lack of coordination and consistency in the youth's treatment and education. This has led to conflicts over how to best serve the youth's needs.

The gap between these two roles may stem from different priorities and perspectives. For example, juvenile justice professionals may prioritize public safety, accountability, and punishment, while educators may prioritize rehabilitation, social-emotional development, and personalized learning. However, effective treatment of black male recidivists requires a collaborative effort between these two groups, as well as community members and families. Therefore, bridging the gap between these two roles may involve creating more opportunities for communication, training, and collaboration. This can help to ensure that juvenile offenders receive the support and resources they need to make positive changes in their lives and become productive members of society.

Also discussed among the participants was the major issue of limited resources. Both juvenile justice professionals and educators often have limited resources and funding, which can make it difficult to provide the necessary services and support for delinquent youth. Stigma and labeling were brought up by some participants in that juvenile justice professionals and educators often hold different opinions about delinquent youth, which can and has led to misunderstandings and conflicts. Additionally, the participants revealed different approaches when addressing certain issues. Juvenile justice professional typically relies more on punishment and discipline, while educators rely more on positive reinforcement and social-emotional

learning. Lastly, a major concern was confidentiality issues. Educators may be hesitant to share information about a student's behavior or performance with juvenile justice professionals, due to concerns about confidentially and privacy. Overall, effective collaboration between juvenile justice professionals and educators can be challenging and requires open communication, mutual understanding, and a shared commitment to the well-being of delinquent youth.

To counteract these exposure factors, participants report that early intervention is crucial, for example, via family counseling and applying more resources. The collected data also suggest that counseling services are usually not received due to the lack of financial resources and lack of family support due to negative stereotypes of needing counseling. The data suggest that more resources, such as increasing mentorship with positive male role models, engaging in more community partnerships, applying parenting and family counseling programs and resources on how to deal with their at-risk juveniles, intervention resources for educators and families before their children becomes involved in the juvenile justice system. Also, implementing a system/policy based on the consequences of becoming entangled in the juvenile justice system need to be taught in the schools.

Educating both parents and children on crimes and the negative impact on their future from an early stage may impact young people's involvement in the juvenile justice system. Overall, the theories were useful in drawing our attention to what works and what does not when it comes to addressing juvenile crime. For example, by pointing to the roots of delinquency, such as the exposure factors discussed throughout the study, the social disorganization theory helps

explain why incarceration and the penal justice system may not be the most effective in reducing crime. When applied to the penal justice system, social disorganization theory suggests that the focus on punishing individual offenders may not effectively reduce crime rates in communities with high levels of social disorganization. The theory suggests that addressing the root causes of crime, such as poverty and unemployment, may be more effective in reducing crime rates in these communities. Furthermore, social disorganization theory suggests that the penal justice system may contribute to social disorganization by removing individuals from their communities and disrupting social networks. This can further weaken social institutions and increase crime rates in affected communities.

Overall, social disorganization theory highlights the importance of addressing the social and economic factors that contribute to crime in communities. It suggests that the penal justice system, as currently structured, may be ineffective in reducing crime rates in communities with high levels of social disorganization. Instead, the theory suggests a focus on community-based approaches that address the root causes of crime and promote social cohesion and institutional stability. Several other studies, for instance, Pratt & Cullen (2005) have in fact demonstrated that incarceration is inversely related to crime. The theory gives several actionable policy insights such as where to direct public funding to prevent crime (certain neighborhoods, as depicted by mapping models), how to govern urban cities (delegating more authority to the neighborhood and community-level organizations), and which social values to uphold (families, as units that can prevent social disorganization).

Limitations of the Study

The goal of this study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of juvenile justice professionals and educators who are currently working with juvenile delinquents regarding the influence of exposure factors such as environment, family's criminal history, mental health disorders/PTSD, substance abuse, school experience, and social bonds. In Chapter 4, I sought to strengthen the validity of the study. One limitation was that this study did not include the perceptions of the juveniles who have experienced recidivism. Another limitation of the study was the sample size; this study was limited to only ten participants from the Cook County area of Chicago, IL. I collected the data in this study from a similar sampling group; therefore, the results may not generalize to all juvenile justice professionals and educators, as the data collected was from juvenile justice professionals and educators from only one area of the United States.

A final limitation is the lack of participation from juvenile states attorneys who work more closely with the juvenile recidivists and their families when faced against serving time for crimes they have committed. Juvenile state's attorneys represent the state in juvenile court, and they are responsible for prosecuting juvenile offenders. They have a unique perspective on the juvenile justice system, including the laws, policies, and procedures that govern it. Without their input, researchers may have an incomplete understanding of the system, which can affect the validity of their findings. Juvenile state's attorneys have access to a wealth of data that researchers may not be able to access. This includes information on juvenile offenders' prior criminal history, their interactions with the justice system, and the outcomes of previous cases.

Without this data, researchers may have a limited understanding of the factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism. Juvenile state's attorneys play a crucial role in implementing policies and procedures that can help prevent recidivism.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the results of this study, I recommend replicating future research in other cities of the state of Illinois, as the results may differ. Another recommendation for future research is examine the perceptions of the offenders who have experienced juvenile recidivism and became involved in the adult justice system about intervention and services that could have reduced their risk to re-offend. Lastly, another area for further exploration is the perception of public-school educators who work more closely with juveniles and are often the first to witness signs of trouble and have more opportunities to observe juveniles' family dynamics.

Implications for Social Change

The participants also provided their insights on strategies that could be implemented with the goal to reduce recidivism among this sub-group of juveniles. Likewise, the results of this study may assist policy makers in implementing and or modifying treatment, prevention, and intervention programs to provide services based on an individual juvenile's need, to improve protocols for intervention strategies that are geared to counteracting the exposure factors and their influence on recidivism for juveniles, specifically Black male Juveniles. The Department of Juvenile Justice and Educators could collaborate with more treatment providers and assist with the financial obligations for the juvenile delinquents and families who are not financially able to

obtain the necessary treatment. The below chart (figure 2) represents the strategies that could be

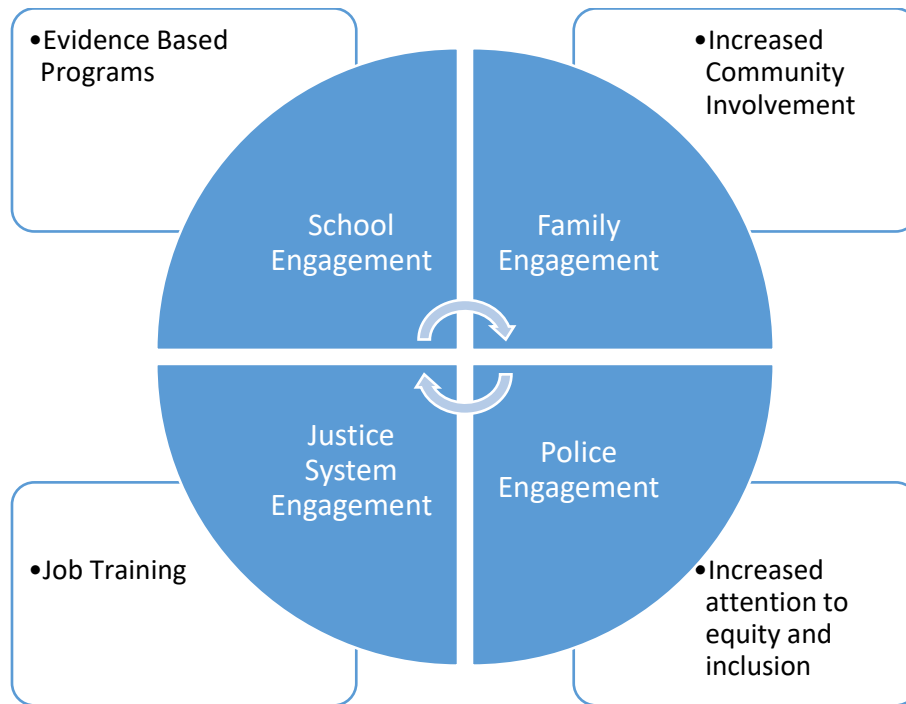implemented based of the participants expert recommendations.

Figure 2 Strategies that could be implemented based of the participants expert recommendations

From the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators, there are several

implications for social change for Black male juvenile recidivists in Chicago. These implications

are centered on improving the juvenile justice system and providing more educational

opportunities for this population. Implement evidence-based programs and policies. There is a

significant amount of research that supports evidence-based programs for reducing juvenile

recidivism. Here are some examples: Multisystemic Therapy (MST): A meta-analysis of 54

studies found that MST was effective in reducing recidivism rates among juvenile offenders,

with an average reduction of 25% in recidivism rates. (Henggeler et al., 2002). Functional

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

Family Therapy (FFT): A meta-analysis of 31 studies found that FFT was effective in reducing

recidivism rates among juvenile offenders, with an average reduction of 25% in recidivism rates.

(Baldwin et al., 2012) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): A meta-analysis of 40 studies found

that CBT was effective in reducing recidivism rates among juvenile offenders, with an average

reduction of 20% in recidivism rates. (Lipsey & Wilson, 1998) Juvenile Drug Courts: A meta-

analysis of 24 studies found that juvenile drug courts were effective in reducing recidivism rates

among juvenile offenders with substance abuse issues, with an average reduction of 17% in

recidivism rates. (Wilson et al., 2006) Restorative Justice Programs: A meta-analysis of 14

studies found that restorative justice programs were effective in reducing recidivism rates among

juvenile offenders, with an average reduction of 19% in recidivism rates. (Sherman & Strang,

2007) Overall, these studies support the use of evidence-based programs for reducing juvenile

recidivism, highlighting the importance of addressing the underlying issues that contribute to

delinquent behavior and promoting positive youth development. Also providing education and

job training opportunities. There is a significant amount of research that supports education and

job training opportunities to reduce juvenile recidivism, such as,

> Impact of Vocational Training on Recidivism Among Youth Offenders in Nigeria, by
>
> Samuel Olaoluwa Oni and Victor Adetayo Olugbenga. This study examined the impact
>
> of vocational training on reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders in Nigeria. The
>
> results showed that vocational training reduced recidivism rates by 46.7%, indicating that
>
> job training can be an effective approach for reducing recidivism and "Youth
>
> Employment Programs for Reducing Crime: A Randomized Controlled Trial," by Sara B.

168

Heller et al. This study evaluated the impact of a summer job program on reducing crime and recidivism among low-income youth in Chicago. The results showed that the program reduced violent crime arrests by 43% and increased employment rates by 20%, highlighting the potential of job training programs in reducing juvenile recidivism.

Overall, these studies provide evidence that job training programs can be effective in reducing juvenile recidivism, highlighting the importance of providing opportunities for young people to develop skills and secure stable employment. Addressing underlying issues such as the exposure factors talked about throughout this study. Addressing these issues can help reduce recidivism rates. Increasing community involvement, Addressing Racial Disparities, Family engagement and support. It is important to note that these solutions may vary depending on the context and the specific population, it is also important to evaluate and measure the impact of the implanted solution. Furthermore, the study could benefit juvenile delinquents and their families in terms of becoming more educated on the effect of these exposure factors, the importance of participating in required treatment services with the goal to becoming productive citizens. Participants in this study shared their experiences with working with juvenile delinquents and juvenile recidivists and the phenomenon of exposure factors that impact recidivism among juveniles.

The participants also reported their insights on strategies to bridge the gap between each entity within the juvenile justice system and educators that could be implemented with the goal to help reduce recidivism among this sub-group of juveniles. The participants suggest that the

169

gap between juvenile justice professionals and educators can be bridged with early intervention and prevention programs that aim to identify at-risk youth who may be struggling with behavioral, academic, or social-emotional challenges. These programs provide education and support to both students and their families to prevent school failure, truancy, and delinquency. Early intervention and prevention programs, Positive youth development programs, Restorative justice programs, Addressing trauma, Supportive and effective schools, and Reentry Programs. There is a substantial body of research that supports early intervention and prevention programs as effective strategies for reducing juvenile recidivism. Here are some key findings from recent studies such as:

> Early intervention programs can significantly reduce the likelihood of future delinquent behavior. For example, a meta-analysis of 31 studies found that early intervention programs reduced recidivism rates by an average of 30% (Piquero et al., 2016) and Prevention programs that target risk factors such as family conflict, poor academic achievement, and substance abuse can reduce the likelihood of juvenile offending. A review of 88 studies found that prevention programs were effective at reducing delinquency, with the most effective programs targeting multiple risk factors (Peterson-Badali & Skilling, 2015).

Overall, providing early intervention and prevention programs that address the underlying causes of juvenile delinquency and school disengagement can improve outcomes for youth, reduce recidivism rates, and create stronger relationships between educators and juvenile justice

 professionals. Bridging the gap between the juvenile justice professionals and educators can be achieved through several strategies that emerged from the findings. These are recommendations that each participants made based off each of their accumulated experience and years in the profession, observations, experiences, and knowledge. Collaboration and communication, Joint case management, Professional development, and Data sharing. By implementing these recommendations, juvenile justice professionals and educators can work together to bridge the gap between their respective professions and improve outcomes for at-risk youth. It is important to note that a strong collaboration and communication between the two systems can benefit the young person and help them to overcome the problems that led to the involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Also, it is important to involve youth and families in the process as they play a critical role in the success of the collaboration. In addition to the above suggestions, when it comes to bridging the gap between the juvenile justice system and educators, it is important to note that the best approach is to use a combination of these strategies, tailored to the specific needs of the juvenile, community, and population. Also, it is important to evaluate the impact of the implemented solution. The results of this study may help policy makers in implementing and or modifying treatment, prevention, and intervention programs to provide services based on an individual juvenile's need.

Conclusion

     Black male juveniles have been shown to have higher recidivism rates than their non-black peers. This can be due to a variety of factors, including systemic racial disparities in the juvenile justice system, lack of access to resources and support, and exposure to poverty and violence. Research has shown that black youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system, often receiving harsher punishment than their non-black peers for similar offenses. For example, a report by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency found that black youth were 2.5 times more likely to be arrested than white youth and were more likely to be incarcerated than any other racial or ethnic group (National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2015). A study by the Sentencing Project found that racial bias among judges and prosecutors contributed to the higher rates of incarceration for black youth (The Sentencing Project, 2019).

     They are also more likely to be placed in detention and more likely to be transferred to adult court. A study by the Campaign for Youth Justice found that black youth were more likely to be transferred to adult court and to receive harsher sentences than white youth who committed similar offenses (Campaign for Youth Justice, 2016). A study by the American Psychological Association found that implicit bias among judges and prosecutors contributed to the higher rates of detention and transfer to adult court for black youth (American Psychological Association, 2020). Addressing the underlying issues discussed in this study along with systemic racial disparities is crucial in reducing recidivism rates among black male juveniles.

To continue to counteract contributing exposure factors, researchers must continue to explore these factors to obtain additional results and to identify a tailored approach that considers the specific needs and characteristics of the young person, their family, and their community. Future research should involve participants of a larger sample and from other cities in Illinois. To gain a more in-depth understanding of the effect of exposure factors on recidivism among the subgroup of juveniles, specifically male black juveniles, I used a phenomenological approach to examine the perceptions of juvenile professionals and educators who work with juvenile recidivists. This research served its purpose by indicating that experts interviewed believe by indicating that environment, family criminality, mental health/PTSD, substance abuse, school experiences, peer influence, and social bonds have a significant effect on recidivism among juvenile recidivists.

Overall, to affect positive social change, this research has the potential to contribute to the field of juvenile justice and education in that they can jointly apply, adjust, and improve protocols for intervention strategies with the goal of counteracting the exposure factors and their effect on recidivism for juveniles, especially black male juveniles. These efforts are crucial in breaking the cycle of recidivism and creating a brighter future for male black juvenile offenders. Furthermore, addressing the issue of Black male juvenile recidivism in Chicago requires a comprehensive approach that involves multiple stakeholders and emphasizes the need for systemic change. Juvenile justice professionals and educators can play a critical role in promoting social change by working together to address the root causes of recidivism and creating more equitable systems for Black male juveniles.

References

Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2020). *Leading With Race To Reimagine Youth Justice.* Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

(2017). *2017 FY Juvenile Temporary Detention Center Performance Metrics.* Chicago: Circuit Court of Cook County.

Abram, K., Washburn, J., Teplin, L., & Emanuel, K. (2007). Posttraumatic stress disorder and psychiatric comorbidity among detained youths. *Psychiatric Services*, 58(10):1311–1316.

Aizer, A., & Doyle, J. J. (2015). Juvenile Incarceration, Human Capital and Future Crime: Evidence from Randomly-Assigned Judges. *Quarterly Journal of Economics, 130*(2), 759-803.

Akers, R. L. (1994). *Criminological theories: Introduction and evaluation.* Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.

Akers, R. L. (2004). Toward a social learning model of violence and terrorism. In H. H. M. A. Zahn, *Violence: From theory to research* (pp. pp 19-35). Cincinnati, OH: LexisNexis–Anderson.

Akers, R. L. (2006). The empirical status of social learning theory of crime and deviance: The past, present, and future.

Akers, R. L., & Jennings, W. (2009). *Social Learning Theory.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Alexander, M. (2010). Race, Poverty, and Punishment: The impact of criminal sanctions on racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic inequality. *Journal of Criminal Law*, 173-203.

Ali, S. S. (2019). *'They're like soldiers': Chicago's children are learning to save lives amid the gunfire.* Chicago: ABC News.

Armsden GC, G. M. (1987, October). The inventory of parent and peer attachment: Individual differences and their relationship to psychological well-being in adolescence. *J Youth Adolesc., 16*(5), 427-54. doi:10.1007/BF02202939. PMID: 24277469

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bandura, A. (1977b). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215.

Bandura, A., & Ribes-Inesta, E. (1976). *Analysis of delinquency and aggression.* . Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bartollas, C. (1990). *Juvenile Delinquency.* New York: Macmillan.

Bostwick, L., Boulger, J., & Powers, M. (2013). *Juvenile Recidivism: Examining re-arrest and re-incarceration of youth released from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.* Chicago: Illnois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Brody, G. H. (2006). The Role of Family Processes in the Risk and Resilience of Low-Income, Urban African American Adolescents. *Child Development*, 1170-1189.

Brown, G. (2020, July 14). *Difference Between Case Study and Phenomenology*. Retrieved from Difference Between: http://www.differencebetween.net/miscellaneous/difference-between-case-study-and-phenomenology/

Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.bjs.gov: https://www.bjs.gov/recidivism/templates/definition.cfm

Bursik, R. J. (1988). Social Disorganization: Problems and Prospects. . *Criminology* , 519-551.

Bursik, R. J. (1993). *Neighborhoods and crime: The dimensions of effective community control.* New York: Lexington Books.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Chassin, L. (2008). Juvenile justice and substance abuse. *Journal of the Future of Children*. Retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

Chicago Police Department. (2022). Retrieved from www.chicagopolice.org: https://home.chicagopolice.org/statistics-data/crime-statistics/

Chicago Public Schools . (n.d.). Retrieved from www.cps.edu: https://www.cps.edu/

Chi-Jung, L. &. (2008). Rigor and flexibility in computer-based qualitative research: Introducing the coding analysis toolkit. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 105-117.

Circuit Court of Cook County of the State of Illinois. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.cookcountycourt.org: https://www.cookcountycourt.org/ABOUT-THE-COURT/Organization-of-the-Circuit-Court

Cobbina, J. E., Huebner, B. M., & Berg, M. T. (2012). Men, Women, and Postrelease Offending:An Examination of the Nature of the Link Between Relational Ties and Recidivism. *Crime & Delinquency, 58*(3), 331-361.

Costello, Erkanli, Fairbank., & Angold. (2002). The prevalence of potentially traumatic events in childhood and adolescence. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 99-112.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (3rd ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Clark, V. L., & & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research designs: Selections and implementations. *Journal of the Counseling Psychologist*, 236-266.

Cullen, F. T. (2011). Social learning theory and the explanation of crime. Chicago, IL: Transaction Publishers.

DaViera, A. L., & Roy, A. L. (2013). Chicago Youths' Exposure to Community Violence: Contextualizing Spatial Dynamics of Violence and the Relationship With Psychological Functioning. *Journal of Traumatic Stress* .

deCasterle, B. D. (2011). Quagol: A guide for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*. doi:doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2011.09.012

Denzin, N. K. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* . Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Derevyanny, N. (2021). *Cook County Medical Examiner's Office Registers Over 1,000 Homicides in 2021.* Chicago: Cook County Government.

DiCicco-Bloom, B. &. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical Education*, 314-321.

Doyle., J. J. (February 2, 2015). *Juvenile Incarceration, Human Capital, and Future Crime: Evidence from Randomly Assigned Judges.* Quarterly Journal of Economics 130, no. 2 759–803.

Draper, A. a. (2011). Childhood Parental Bereavement: The Risk of Vulnerability to Delinquency and Factors that Compromise Resilience. *Mortality: Promoting the Interdisciplinary Study of Death and Dying* , 16(4):285–306. .

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

Drucker, E. (2013). *A Plague of Prisons: The Epidemiology of Mass Incarceration in America.* The New Press.

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylar, A. D., & & Schellinger, K. B. (2010). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta- analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 405-432. doi:doi:0.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

Dwyer, J. (2013). *Trapped in Chicago's worst schools: Education outcomes in Chicago's lowest-performing public schools.* Chicago: ILLINOIS POLICY INSTITUTE.

Earls, F. J., & Sampson, R. J. (2004). Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods: Community Context and Youth Development. *American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 13-29.

Elizabeth Seigle, N. W. (2014). *CORE PRINCIPLES FOR REDUCING RECIDIVISM AND IMPROVING OTHER OUTCOMES FOR AND IMPROVING OTHER OUTCOMES FOR.* New York: Council of State Governments Justice Center.

Elo, S. K. (2014). Qualitative content analysis: A focus on trustworthiness. *Sage Open Journal*, 1010. doi:doi:10.1177/2158244014522633

Espinosa, Sorensen., & Lopez. (2013). Youth pathways to placement: the influence of gender, mental health need and trauma on confinement in the juvenile justice system. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 1824-1836.

Estevez, E., Emler, N., & Wood, C. (2009). Violence offending: An analysis of family, school and community risk factors. Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers,.

Evans, W., Brown, R., & Killian, E. (2002). Decision-making and perceived post-detention success among incarcerated youth. *Crime and Delinquency, 48*(4), 553-567.

Farmer, S., Poulos, C. D., & Baber, A. (2020). Challenging the market logic of school choice: A spatial analysis of charter school expansion in Chicago. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 511-513.

Finkelhor, D. T. (2009). *Children's Exposure to Violence: A Comprehensive National Survey.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Fontana, A., & & Frey, J. H. (2000). The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N. K. Denzin, & &. Y. (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. pp. 645-672)). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Foundation, A. E. (2020, April 27). *LEADING WITH RACE TO REIMAGINE YOUTH JUSTICE*. Retrieved from https://www.aecf.org: https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-leadingwithracetoreimagine-2020.pdf

Gallagher, S. (2012). *What Is Phenomenology?* London: Macmillan.

Gillikin, C. ,. (2016). Trauma exposure and PTSD symptoms associate with violence in inner city civilians. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, 7.

Glaze, L. E., & Maruschak, L. M. (2010). *Parents in Prison and Their Minor.* U.S. Department of Justice. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/pptmc.pdf

Gleicher, L. (2019). *Examining the Extent of Recidivism in Illinois after Juvenile Incarceration.* Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. Retrieved from https://DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.30753.86888/1

Grigorenko, E. L. (2013). Academic achievement among juvenile detainees. . *Journal of Learning Disabilities*.

Grisso, T. (2008). Adolescent offenders with mental disorders. *Future Child*, 143-164.

Gross, R. D. (2020). *Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour.* Hodder and Stoughton.

Guyer, A. E. (2018). Adolescent Brain Development: Implications for Understanding Risk and Resilience Processes Through Neuroimaging Research. *National Library of Medicine*, 4-9.

Haney, W. (1970). The Other Side of the Wall: A Case Study of the Experience of Black Children in Chicago's Public Schools. *Journal of Negro Education*, 23-32.

Health, N. I. (2011). The Teen Brain: Still Under Construction. *National Institute of Mental Health*.

Heller, S. B., Shah, A. K., Guryan, J., Ludwig, J., Mullainathan, S., & & Pollack, H. (2017). *Recidivism Among Juvenile Offenders in Chicago.* Chicago: University of Chicago Crime Lab.

Hill, G. N. (1981-2005). Retrieved from The People's Law Dictionary.: https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/juvenile+delinquent

Hirschi, T. (1969). Causes of delinquency. *University of California*.

Horsburgh, J. &. (2018). A skill to be worked at: Using social learning theory to explore the process of learning from role models in clinical settings. *BMC Medical Education*, 18, 156.

Howell, J. C. (2011). The inpact of delinquent peers on the development of youth antisocial behavior. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing* , 3-13.

Huschek, D. &. (2015). Parental criminality and children's family-life trajectories: Findings for a mid-20th century cohort. *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies,* , 379-396.

Hwang, S. &. (2003). Substance use by Korean adolescents: A cross-cultural test of social learning, social bonding, and self-control theories. In R. L. Jensen, *Advances in criminological theory: Vol. 11. Social learning theory and the explanation of crime: A guide for the new century* (pp. pp. 39–64). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Institute, J. P. (2014). *The cost of incarceration and the economic impact of recidivism.* Retrieved from https://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/documents/cost_of_incarceration.pdf

International, Q. (n.d.). Retrieved from Retrieved from http://www.qsrinternational.com

Jackson, A. (2013). Assessing the impact of parental drug use, family structure and environmental conditions on adolescents' self-reported drug use, serious delinquency, and deviant behaviors. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory*, 1130-1124.

Jenson, J., & Howard, M. (1998). Youth Crime, Public Policy, and Practice in the Juvenile Justice System: Recent Trends and Needed Reforms. *Social Work*, 324-334.

Justice, F. A. (2006). *Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice Annual Report 2006.* Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Justice, U. S. (2011). *Department of Justice Activities under the CIvil Rights Institution Persons Act: Fiscal Year 2010.* Washington, DC: CRIPA.

Juvenile Justice in Chicago: A System in Crisis. (2015). *Children and Family Justice Center*.

Kamienski, A. (2011). Competition: Charter and Public Elementary Schools in Chicago. *Journal of School Choice*, 161-181.

Kapsis, R. E. (1976). Continuities in delinquency and riot patterns in black residential areas. *Social Problems*, 23, 567–580.

Keith, J., & Mccray, A. (2002, 11 1). Juvenile offenders with special needs: Critical issues and bleak outcomes. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 15*, 691-710. doi:10.1080/0951839022000014385

Kerig, P. K., Bennett, D. C., Chaplo, S. D., Modrowski, C. A., & McGee, A. B. (2013). Trauma prevalence and trauma symptoms among detained youth: Implications for clinical assessment and intervention. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 716-723.

Kirk, D. S. (2013). Juvenile arrest and collateral educational damage in the transition to adulthood. *Sociology of Education*, 36-62.

Kjellstrand, J. M., & Eddy, J. M. (2011). Parental incarceration during childhood, family context, and youth problem behavior across adolescence. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 50*(1), 18-36. doi:doi:10.1080/10509674.2011.536720

Kornhauser, R. R. (1978). Social Sources of Delinquency. *Chicago: University of Chicago Press*, 120.

La Greca, A. M. (2006). Parenting Practices and Delinquecy in Low-Income African American Youth. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 64-76.

La Vigne, N. G., Davies, E., & Brazzell, D. (2014). Broken Bonds: Understanding and Addressing the Needs of Children with Incarcerated Parents. *The Urban Institute*. Retrieved from http://www.urban.org/publications/411616.htm

Lee, T. (2017). A School, a Bridge and the Way Forward for Young Black Men in Chicago. *The New York Times*.

Libaw, O. (2006). *Crime Runs in the Family.* Chicago: ABC News Internet Ventures.

Lifson, M., Gordon, J., & Pitman, I. (2019). *The Illinois Risk and Reach Project.* Chicago: ERIKSON INSTITUTE.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). Naturalistic Inquiry. *Sage Publications*.

Liska, A. E. (1995). Violent-crime rates and racial composition: Convergence over time. *American Journal of Sociology*, 101, 578–610.

Loerzel, R. (2010, June 16). An Illinois History of Juvenile Court. *The Archives*.

Looman, J., & Abracen, J. (2010). Comparison of measures of risk for recidivism and sexual offenders. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 791-808.

Lowenstein, J. K. (2014). Uncounted and Unseen. *The Chicago Reporter*. Retrieved from http://www.chicagoreporter.com/uncounted-and-unseen#.U4jdjXaRK6I

Lurie, J. (2016, Nov 7). Why So Many Black Boys Are getting Into Trouble in Chicago. *Chicago Magazine*.

Maccoby, E. E. (1958). Community integration and the social control of juvenile delinquency. *Journal of Social Issues*, 14(3), 38–51.

Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication, Inc. .

McGregor, C., Gately, N., Kremer, S., & & Kessell, J. (2010). *Youth offenders risk identification: A screening tool for youth offenders in Western Australia*. Retrieved from //www.ecu.edu.au/

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Retrieved from In Merrian-Webster.com dictionary: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary

Miller, J., & Tennille, J. (2010). The impact of zero tolerance policing on black male juveniles in Chicago. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 303-318.

Minichiello, V., Aroni, R., Timewell, E., & Alexander, L. (1995). *In-depth interviewing*. Melbourne, Australia: Longman.

Morris, K. (2019). *Erikson's Risk and Reach Report.* Chicago: Erikson Institute.

Moustakas, C. (1994). Phenomenological Research Methods. *Sage*.

Murray, J. a. (2010). Risk Factors for Conduct Disorder and Delinquency: Key Findings from Longitudinal Studies. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 55(10):633.

NCSL. (n.d.). Retrieved from National Confrence of State Legislatures: https://www.ncsl.org/research

NICKEAS, P. (2019). *'Staggering' number of children exposed to violence in Chicago; new study says kid population greater in high-homicide areas.* Chicago: Chicago Tribune. Retrieved from https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-chicago-children-violence-homicide-trauma-20190715-4fp2kqtaprgjvht6cl6ihsply4-story.html

Odgers, C. L. (2008). Female and Male Antisocial Trajectories: From Childhood Origins to Adult Outcomes. *Development and Psychopathology*, 20(2): 673.

OJJDP. (2017). *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*. Retrieved from OJJDP: https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/

Opdenakker, R. (2006). Advantages and disadvantages of four interview techniques in qualitative research. *Forum Qualitative Social Research.* Retrieved from Retrieved from http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Osborne. (2014). *New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents Fact Sheet.* Retrieved from http://www.osborneny.org

Pagones, S. (2021, April 8). Kids committing more carjackings and violent crimes amid remote schooling, court slowdowns: experts. Chicago, IL, United States of America.

Pasternack, R., & Martinez, K. (2010, 07 16). Resiliency: What Is It and How Can Correctional Educational Practices Encourage Its Development? *Taylor & Francis Online*, 63-66. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.1996.9944655

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods.* Thousand Oaks: CA: SAGE.

Pearson, R. (2019, Dec 12). New Approach to Youth Violence Prevention: 'They Need to Hear That Somebody Cares About Them'. *Chicago Tribune*.

Peterson, B. E., Lee, D., Henninger, A. M., & Cubellis, &. (2016). Social Bonds, Juvenile Delinquency, and Korean Adolescents: Intra-and Inter-Individual Implications of Hirschi's Social Bonds Theory Using Panel Data. *Crime & Delinquency*, 62(10), 1337-1363.

Ports, K. A. (2018). Trauma Exposure and PTSD Symptoms in Juvenile Justice-Involved Youth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* .

Rasmussen, A. (2004). Teen Court Referral, Sentencing, and Subsequent Recidivism: Two Proportional Hazards Models and a Little Speculation. *SAGE Journals, 50*(4), 615-635. doi:10.1177/0011128703261616

Reingle, J. M.-M. (2012). "Risk and Protective Factors for Trajectories of Violent Delinquency Among a Nationally Representative Sample of Early Adolescents. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* , 10(3):261–77.

Semuels, A. (2018). *Chicago's Awful Divide.* Chicago: The Atlantic.

Shaw, C. R. (1966). *The Jack-Roller, A Delinquent Boy's Own Story.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Shaw, C. R., & McKay, H. D. (1942). Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas. *Chicago: University of Chicago Press.*

Siddique, H. (2019, Nov 14). Black Youth More Likely to be Detained in Cook COunty than Rest of State: Study. *Chicago Tribune*.

Stoddard-Dare, P., Mallett, C., & Boitel, C. (2011). Association between mental health disorders and Juveniles' detention for a personal crime. *Child Adolesc. Ment. Health*, 208-213.

Stoolmiller, M., & Blechman, E. (2005). Substance use is a robust predictor of adolescent recidivism. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 302-328. doi:doi:10.1177/00093854804274372

Sullivan, C. (2006). Peer group contexts and the relationship betweeen individual characteristics and delinquent behaviours. *Criminology Justice Quarterly*, 384-410.

Teplin, L. A., Abram, K. M., Washburn, J. J., Welty, L. J., & Jennifer A. Hershfield. (2013). *The Northwestern Juvenile Project.* Chicago: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Teplin, L., Abram, K., McClelland, G., & Washburn, J. (2005). Detecting mental disorder in juvenile de-tainees: Who receives services. *American Journal of Public Health* , 95(10):1773–1780.

Trust, P. C. (2010). *Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility* . Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved from https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pcs_assets/2010/collateralcosts1pdf.pdf

United States Depatment of Justice. (2019, July 17). Retrieved from National Institute of Justice: https://nij.ojp.gov

Van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy.* London, Ontario, Canada: Althouse Press.

Vivanco, L. (2016, March 17). Kids who end up in juvenile jail have high rates of drug dependency: Northwestern study. *The Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved from http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-cook-county-juvenile-detention-drug-abuse-study-met-0318-20160317-story.html

Voisin, D. R. (2007). Socailnetworks and youth violence. *Journal of Interpersonal violence* , 1307-1325.

Warren, D. I. (1969). Neighborhood structure and riot behavior in Detroit: Some exploratory findings. *Social Problems*, 16, 464–484.

Wickham, M. &. (2005). *Reflecting on the strategic use of CAQDA to manage and report on the qualitative research process, The Qualitative Report,.*

Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The truly disadvantaged.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wooditch, A. &. (2013). Which Criminogenic Need Changes Are Most Important in Promoting Desistance From Crime and Substance Use? *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 41*, 276. doi:10.1177/0093854813503543.

Wooditch, T., & Taxman. (2014). Which Criminogenic Need Changes Are Most Important in Promoting Desistance From Crime and Substance Use? *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 41*(3), 276–299. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854813503543

Wu, Y., Lake, R., & Cao, L. (2015). Race, social bonds, and juvenile attitudes toward the police. *Justice Quarterly*, 32(3), 445-470.

www.chicagoareaproject.org. (2022). Retrieved from CAP: https://www.chicagoareaproject.org/

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods.* Thousand Oaks. CA: SAGE .

Appendix A: Letter of Invitation for Participant

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is Alexandra Brandt, and I am a doctoral student at DePaul University. I am writing to ask if you are interested in learning more about participating in a research study on trying to learn more about the exposure factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism among male black juveniles from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators. The research that I am conducting is part of the requirements for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership. The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate and what can be done to counteract these exposure factors from the perceptions of professionals who have experience working with juvenile delinquents. Participating in this study will include an interview scheduled the month of September and will be a conversation that should last no longer than 90 minutes. It is not a requirement to respond to each question. If you agree to participate in this study, your identity will be kept confidential.There is no compensation for your participation in this research.

This research is considered minimal risk because there is little to no impact on cost, schedule, or performance. The only if any foreseeable risk is one of discomfort. The research will involve a question's involving personal reflection on emotional responses where the probability of harm or discomfort anticipated in or out of the training is not greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. If you agree to participate in this study, your identity will be kept confidential. If you are interested in learning more about participating, please contact me by

phone at 773-963-4036 or by email at ABRANDT6@depaul.edu. Please respond to this email by September 20, 2022, if you are interested in being considered for this study. Also be advised you can withdraw from the research study at any time.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Brandt

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

<u>**ADULT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**</u>

Black, Male, Juvenile: A Multi-Systems Perspective on Hope, Dehumanization, Redemption in Recidivism and Education

Principal Investigator: Alexandra Brandt, Graduate Student

Institution: DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Department, School, College- DePaul University, Department of Education

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Donna Kiel, Educational Leadership, College of Education

<u>**Key Information:**</u>

<u>*What is the purpose of this research?*</u>

I am asking you to be in a research study because we are trying to learn more about the exposure factors that contribute to juvenile recidivism among male black juveniles from the perspective of juvenile justice professionals and educators. The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate and what can be done to counteract these exposure factors from the perceptions of professionals who have experience working with juvenile delinquents. As an African American Police Officer who has worked with Juveniles, I understand that there are unique experiences that you may have had or currently having, and I am interested to learn more about those experiences. This study is being conducted by Alexandra Brandt, a graduate student at DePaul University as a requirement to obtain her doctoral degree. This research is being supervised by her faculty advisor, Dr. Donna Kiel.

We hope to include about 10 people in the research.

<u>*Why are you being asked to be in the research?*</u>

You are invited to participate in this study because you are a juvenile justice professional and or educator who are currently working with or have had experience working with young people who have been affected by the juvenile justice system. You must be age 18 or older to be in this study. This study is not approved for the enrollment of people under the age of 18.

<u>*What is involved in being in the research study?*</u>

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

If you agree to be in this study, being in the research involves taking part in semi-structured interviews, which will allow you and myself (the principal investigator) to engage in a conversation in the manner a normal conversation would, while also addressing the concerns of the research study.

- If you participate in this study, you will be asked questions during an interview concerning your professional experience and involvement within the juvenile justice system (i.e., Juvenile detective, juvenile judge, attorney, juvenile correctional officer, school resource officer, etc.) and or educational field.
- The interviews will be audio recorded to ensure the accuracy of the collected information and all interviews will be transcribed into transcripts that you will be able to review and edited if needed. This process is called member-checking. It should take you no longer than sixty minutes to review your transcript. Some topics that will be covered in the interview include your experience working with juveniles, description of your daily tasks within your job description, from your experience working with juvenile delinquents, what impact does specific exposure factors (i.e., family criminal history, family mental health, substance abuse, social bonds, school experience, etc.) have on juvenile recidivism, and what are some of the challenges facing a juvenile after incarceration.

- You will be asked demographic questions asking gender, race/ethnicity, age, number of years as a juvenile justice professional/educator.

The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed into written notes later to get an accurate record of what you said.

Are there any risks involved in participating in this study?

You may feel uncomfortable or sad about answering certain questions. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to. The risks related to this study are minimal. There is a slight chance you could feel uncomfortable or negative emotions while answering some of the questions. Measures that will be taken in efforts to alleviate the potential risks are ensuring you are comfortable. As the researcher, I will be careful not to pressure you into answering uncomfortable questions. I will remind you that you can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. There are no other known risks associated with participation in this study.

There is the possibility that others may find out what you have said, but we have put protections in place to prevent this from happening. We have created a code number for you that will be on our records, instead of using your name.

Are there any benefits to participating in this study?

You will not personally benefit from being in this study. The benefits from this study will be that information obtained during the research could lead to an in-depth understanding of the impact these certain exposure factors has on juvenile recidivism. This could lead to implementing strategies that could counteract these factors as well as bridge the gap between juvenile justice professionals and educators.

There is no compensation for your participation in this research.

How much time will this take?

The interview will take about 45 minutes to a 1 hour to complete. The entire study will take about 2-4 months to complete.

Can you decide not to participate?

Your participation is voluntary, which means you can choose not to participate. There will be no negative consequences, penalties, or loss of benefits if you decide not to participate or change your mind later and withdraw from the research after you begin participating.

Who will see my study information and how will the confidentiality of the information collected for the research be protected?

The research records will be kept and stored securely. Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study or publish a paper to share the research with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. We will not include your name or any information that will directly identify you. Some people might review or copy our records that may identify you to make sure we are following the required rules, laws, and regulations. For example, the DePaul University Institutional Review Board. If they look at our records, they will keep your information confidential.

To prevent others from accessing our records or identifying you should they gain access to our records, we have put some protections in place. These protections include using a code (a fake name, a study ID number, etc.) for you and other people in the study and keeping the records in a safe and secure place [using a password protected computer, encrypting our records, etc.).

Direct identifiers will be removed from your information and replaced with a pseudonym (a fake name) that cannot be linked back to you. This means your information has been de-identified.

189

The audio recordings will be kept until accurate written notes have been made, then they will be destroyed.

Your name, job location, or school name will not be used in this study. These will only be known to the researcher. Pseudonyms (Participate 1, Participate 2) will be assigned if you do not provide a pseudonym. The researcher will make every effort to protect your identity. Interview transcripts and any other data will be stored on a password protected electronic device which will be stored and locked in the home office of the researcher for three years after the conclusion of the study.

Any written notes and paper records will be stored in a safe in my home prior to being shredded in a cross-cut shredder and recycled three years after the conclusion of the study. Digital records will be stored on a password protected device and three years after the conclusion of the study will be erased using a data erasing software program application designed to remove data from the storage device. Any back-up data stored on USB drives will be reformatted and data wiped. Considering digital recordings include voices of research participants, any recordings will be destroyed by using a data erasure tool that securely and permanently erases data from voice recorders. All data from the study (transcriptions and audio recordings) will be safeguarded and stored in a safe at my home, to be destroyed three years after the conclusion of the study

Who should be contacted for more information about the research?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study or you want to get additional information or provide input about this research, you can contact the researcher, Alexandra Brandt, (773) 963-4036, abrandt6@depaul.edu

This research has been reviewed and approved by the DePaul Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Jessica Bloom in the Office of Research Services at 312-362-6168 or by email at jbloom8@depaul.edu.

You may also contact DePaul's Office of Research Services if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.

You can print a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent from the Subject:

I have read the above information. I have had all my questions and concerns answered. By participating in this interview, you are indicating your agreement to be in the research.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Good morning, (afternoon, evening). Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study.

The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the phenomenon of factors that cause juvenile offenders to recidivate and what can be done to counteract these exposure factors from the perceptions of professionals who have experience working with juvenile delinquents. The research that I am conducting is part of the requirements for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership. As an African American Police Officer who has worked with Juveniles, I understand that there are unique experiences that you may have had or currently having, and I am interested to learn more about those experiences. The information gathered here will be used for my doctoral dissertation. I want to point out a couple of things to you before we start: your participation is entirely voluntary, and you do not have to respond to every item or question; your responses will remain anonymous, and confidentiality will be maintained; and you can withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence. This interview will require approximately 90 minutes to complete. Thank you for consenting to participate in this study.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. How long have you worked with juvenile delinquents?
2. Describe to me what your job description entails.
3. Based on your experience with working with juvenile delinquents, how do you think juveniles learn about crime and accountability?
4. From your experience working with juvenile delinquents, what impact does family criminal history and family mental health have on juvenile recidivism? By family, I mean members who live in the same household as the juvenile such as parents, siblings, cousins, grandparents, or guardians.
5. From your experience working with juvenile delinquents, what impact does the neighborhood and community in which the juvenile lives in have on juvenile recidivism?
6. From your experience working with juveniles' delinquents, can you describe specific juvenile mental health issues that influence juvenile recidivism?
7. If a juvenile enters the department of juvenile justice with mental health disorder, what procedures and protocol are in place to assist them?
8. From your experience working with juvenile delinquents, what impact does substance abuse have on juvenile recidivism?
9. From your experience working with juveniles' delinquents, can you describe specific juvenile substance abuse issues that influence juvenile recidivism?
10. If a juvenile enters the department of juvenile justice with substance abuse issues, what procedures and protocol are in place to assist them?
11. Describe the school experiences of the juvenile delinquents that you work with.
12. Based on your experience, what social bonds do you think are most important in reducing recidivism?
13. What are some of the challenges facing a juvenile after incarceration?
14. Based on your personal experience what advice can you provide that can bridge the gap between each system to better serve juveniles?
15. gender, race/ethnicity, age.

Appendix E: Epoché

The problem addressed in this research is the high recidivism rate among male Black juveniles within the City of Chicago. The reason why male black juveniles are the focus of this study is because of personal experiences as a police officer and knowing the significance that juveniles most times do not realize that they are in a position of having one foot in the juvenile criminal system and one foot closer to the adult criminal system.

As a black female Chicago police officer, I have had my share of encounters with Chicago youth. These have included positive police interactions, (speaking to the youth at their schools about safety, walking kids home from school, mentorship, etc.) but the negative has far outweighed the positive. I have seen things that no one should see, things that I wish I could have unseen the moment I saw them, especially in terms of juveniles. For example, seeing juveniles living in squalor, parents addicted to drugs, abuse, and the worse is seeing juveniles live a life of crime becoming victims of the streets and being shot and killed. Most juveniles that I have personally spoken to do not even expect to make it to their 21st birthday.

I have been a police officer for over 9 years, and I have only worked in the high crime areas, which are the same areas of Chicago that I grew up in. I am a product of a big city that I felt disregarded my wellbeing as an inner-city youth living in a gang, drug, and low economical neighborhood. I grew up in a gang and drug infested environment. Most of my encounters with Chicago police growing up were negative. I experienced racism and abuse of power and as a young person that had an impact on my view of all police. So, becoming a Chicago Police Officer was really something I never imagined I would be as that young child. It was something that as a young child I did not think was even possible because I rarely saw minority police in

my community. I attended Chicago Public Schools from elementary to high school. I remember my 7th grade year we did not have a teacher the entire year, just several rotating substitutes. I remember the class was out of control and literally not learning anything the entire year. The school passed us all to the 8th grade even through majority of the class was on a 3rd grade reading level. Purposely, the school placed us with the toughest, no nonsense 8th grade teacher. While in her class I attempted to be a little smarty pants and correct her on my score on a test at which time she called me to the blackboard and I knew I did not know the answer and she stated, "now sit your dumbass down" and preceded to go into a rant that has forever been a core memory for me. She stated, "do you all think this system was created for you all to succeed? Because it was not. It was created for little black boys and girls to fall through the cracks. Who else is going to do the low paying jobs? They need you all to do them". I decided that day to not except the path that was created for me and to put everything I had into my education. After this incident that 8th grade teacher was so crucial to my success throughout life because I never forgot her words to us, and she never allowed us to disrespect her, and she pushed us to be better visions of ourselves. She wanted us to be more than what our environment offered us. Her guidance had a major impact on the school experience for me.

Fast forward to me becoming a Chicago Police Officer. I knew that I wanted to work in the communities that I grew up in, because I know what it's like growing up and fearing those who are meant to protect you and I wanted to change that perception for the young people in the same communities that raised me. So, going into this career I knew my "why". My "why" was to help change the lives of the youth, to find a way to connect with the youth, to give second

195

chances, but soon reality blurred my "why". The reality that not only have times changed from how I was raised, but also there were so many other factors that I was not prepared for when encountering the young people in these same communities that I grew up in, such as, drugs (pills, molly, lean, loud, etc.) which are all street terminology that the young people use for very potent illegal narcotics. And by the times have changed I mean when I was growing up in these communities there was still a sense of "it takes a village" to raise a child. There was still a sense of togetherness within the community. Nowadays, that sense of togetherness has faded, along with jobs, resources for adults and the youth, and equity education. Putting all these elements together along with the youth in these communities is a recipe for a journey within the criminal justice system.

For the past few years there has been a lot of focus on biases and implicit biases. The Chicago police department has made it a priority to provide serval training classes each year for every officer to take. I believe like this training and many others have come to the forefront because of the many high-profile murders of unarmed Black men/boys by the hands of a police officer. As a Black female police officer, like all individuals, can hold biases. Biases can influence an officer's actions and decision-making, potentially leading to discriminatory treatment of certain groups. Implicit biases, which are unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that affect an individual's understanding, actions, and decisions, are particularly prevalent among police officers. Research suggests that implicit biases can impact an officer's perception of threat and influence the use of force in interactions with people of color and other marginalized groups.

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM: EXPOSURE FACTORS

It's important to note that implicit bias is not limited to police officers and can be found in people from all walks of life.

When an officer handles a case with a juvenile delinquent such as a male black, 17 years of age, a repeat offender of crimes such as armed robbery, vehicular car jackings, battery, etc. and as a police officer the job is to capture, book, and release that juvenile to a juvenile detective. Now take the same juvenile and as a police officer, working in the same area every day, and having to encounter the same juvenile on several different occasions. (Below is from a professional encounter I've witnessed as a Chicago Police Officer)

1. First encounter with said juvenile: You arrive at the residence where he lives for a domestic call. You look around and realize that the living conditions are borderline squalor such as bugs covering the kitchen counter, floors are dirty, and the smell is unwelcoming, among many other open discomforts. Two-bedroom apartment with no father, several young siblings with not enough beds to match the number of children, little to no food. At that moment it makes sense why this young male stands outside on the corner because anywhere is better than being inside that apartment.

2. Second encounter with said juvenile: You arrive to the scene of a person shot and killed. You see said juvenile visibly angry, hurt, tears in his eyes, the look of wanting revenge because the person shot and killed is his best friend who was also a young black male teenager.

197

3. Third encounter with said juvenile: You respond to call of a male Black fitting said juvenile's description selling narcotics. You arrive and conduct a street stop with him and it is revealed that he is in possession of suspect narcotics packaged in a manner to sell and distribute. While processing said juvenile, and before you hand him over to the juvenile detective, you talk with him about why he was out on the corner selling narcotics. His response was simply to make some money to feed his younger siblings and help pay bills because his mom is addicted to drugs.

4. Fourth encounter with said juvenile: You conduct a traffic stop. Said juvenile is in the back seat of the vehicle that was pulled over. No one in the vehicle has a valid driver's license. Immediately it is clear that said juvenile is under the influence of drugs and / or alcohol. He is angry and aggressive, with a very barren look in his eyes as if nothing mattered.

5. Fifth encounter: Said juvenile is wanted for an armed robbery and was picked out in a photo array by the victim. He is found on his normal hangout spot and arrested. Shortly after released on bond.

6. Sixth encounter: You respond to a call of shots fired and person shot. Arrive on scene and said juvenile was just involved in an exchange of gun fire with an opposing gang rival and he was shot in the stomach. He survives.

7. Seventh encounter with said juvenile: You respond to a person shot. You arrive and see said juvenile again angry, distraught, tears in his eyes and the

> look of wanting revenge in his eyes. Person shot was one of the juveniles'
> gang leaders and had just been shot multiple times in the face and killed.
> Gruesome scene.

8. Eighth encounter: Said juvenile is now wanted for an armed robbery of a T-Mobile store. Juvenile is arrested for the warrant as well as being in possession of an illegal firearm. Juvenile is now serving 7 years in prison.

Now take the totality of this young Black males' life, environment, and community into perspective based off each encounter the police officer had with him. In totality, it was not just a police encounter, but also, a juvenile detective, an Illinois' state's attorney, juvenile judge, parent, and eventually a teacher once the juvenile was released and back home. Each professional was a part of this juvenile's environment at some point and time. Where was the disconnect among each professional and parent?

I address the issue of mental health and PTSD in my research as it pertains to juveniles. Through my interviews I often think about my own mental health and PTSD that has come along with this career. The challenges of now being apart of one of the most hated professions. I know my mind and my heart, and I know that nothing or no one can ever bring me to the point of dishonoring the oath that I took to serve and protect. Growing up in the inner city of Chicago and witnessing death and hardship all around all the time and not once did I ever hear or experience an adult, teacher, parent, community leader addresses the trauma these situations may have caused myself or my peers. I never knew what therapy truly was until I was an adult. I saw it on

television but in my small mind as a young person thought it was something for only white people. We were raised to just keep pushing forward and bury the trauma not realizing that burying trauma is only contributing to the deterioration of our mental health of an already underdeveloped mind. Now as a police officer I am witnessing all the same trauma that I witnessed as a child but from a different lens. Working as a police officer in a high crime area has presented a variety of challenges, such as, increased danger, stress and burnout, difficulty building trust and relationships with the community, and exposure to Trauma.

Overall, I have learned that working in high crime area is a challenging job and requires a lot of dedication, patience, and a strong support system. After the 2019 riots, covid, death, stress, fear, etc., I now see the importance of therapy and understanding that it is okay to not be okay. It is my hope that this research can help young people who grew up like me not have to carry buried trauma from their childhood into their adulthood. Maybe one day Law Enforcement can bridge that gap with the community and become a resource to help assist with the trauma that the communities we serve witness every day. I often tell my supervisors when I can how can we as a department expect trust and bridge the gap between the community and law enforcement when the department itself has no trust or stability. The morale is at an all-time low within the department. There is no trust among the police officers and supervisors/command staff. To build trust with the community we first must build trust within the department. The foundation of Law Enforcement is weak so how can we expect to build a bridge on a weak foundation. It will never work. So, when the department's leadership speaks the words or building trust with the community, they are just words. You cannot build anything on a faulty foundation.