

**From Violation to Revelation:**

**....Finding Faith in The Depths of Prison Hell**

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FROM VIOLATION TO REVELATION: FINDING FAITH IN THE DEPTHS OF PRISON  
HELL

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Darcella Anita Patterson Sessomes

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to all the little brown girls in the world who have ever wondered if they were good enough or if anyone cared.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my family, who supported me with love and patience throughout this process. To my mother Brenda Smith who has taught her children to be grounded in our faith, humble in our approach and to know we can do all things through Christ.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **FROM VIOLATION TO REVELATION: FINDING FAITH IN THE DEPTHS OF PRISON HELL**

**Darcella Anita Patterson Sessomes, LCSW**

**Ram Cnaan, Ph.D., Dissertation Chair**

As the violence in the United States grows, so does the potential for increased violence and misconduct inside its prisons. Religiosity and spirituality are two areas in which the social work profession is beginning to understand its value and in the rehabilitative and behavioral change process. This quantitative study explores two hypotheses: H1- inmates who participate in worship services and faith-based programs will have less disciplinary infractions than those who do not participate, and H2- inmates who participate in worship services and faith-based programs will have fewer times sent to administrative segregation or detention than those who do not participate. A secondary data analysis approach was achieved by examining the disciplinary infractions and the amount of times sent to administrative segregation and detention of a sample of 454 inmates. The analysis is presented in two parts: a preliminary and a primary analysis. Likelihood Ratio Chi Squares of Omnibus Test, parametric values (i.e. mean, median) were calculated. Preliminary analyses consist of T-test, ANOVA, crosstabs, Chi-square test and Spearman's correlation were utilized to test the relationship between each pair of variables. The primary analysis consists of negative binomial regression models. Findings from the both the preliminary and primary analyses indicate that although both hypotheses were not rejected, they received little support.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study**

### **Statement of the Problem**

Violence inside U.S. prisons influences the environmental and economic culture of most urban communities and creates hazardous and dangerous working conditions for correctional social workers. Inmate violence is not only a prison issue, but also a public safety issue that impacts society; therefore, all citizens are key stakeholders in the amelioration of behaviors that lead to acts of inmate misconduct. The behavioral choices made by inmates not only affect the conduct they demonstrate while in prison, but greatly influence their actions upon their release and return to the community. Depending on the skills inmates chose to develop while incarcerated, they have the ability to either diminish or further sustain antisocial behaviors.

Religiosity and spirituality are two of the most overlooked dynamics in the helping profession, especially when discussing the potential to influence inmate antisocial behavior. The connection between the two requires careful consideration, yet research literature on the intersection between the two is limited. It is purposed that reducing inmate antisocial behavior through their participation in worship services and involvement in faith-based programs can aid in the amelioration of negative behaviors as well as improve their conduct not only while in prison, but long after their return to the community. In other words, religiosity and spirituality assists in improving the well-being of the inmate, heightens the safety and security of the correctional facility and protects the communities in which the inmates will return to after their release from prison.

This study focuses on religiosity and its association with prosocial behavior. Ultimately its aim is to determine the correlation between religiosity and disciplinary incidents of inmates. Equally important, the aim will fill a gap in current literature. This study will inform social work practitioners of the impact of religiosity on inmate behavior and will answer: to what extent does the participation in worship services and faith-based activities while incarcerated affect inmate conduct measured through disciplinary infractions.

### **Purpose of the Study**

As violence and crime continue to impact communities, neighborhoods are led to a false sense of safety through the illusion that the problem is alleviated through mass incarceration. According to US Attorney General Eric Holder (2013), despite having numerous criminal statutes to enforce, the United States “will never incarcerate our way to becoming a safer nation” (para. 9). Despite numerous life sentences imposed by criminal court judges and the infrequent number of inmates who will die in prison each year, the vast majority or more than 700,000 leave federal and state prisons each year to return to their communities (Couture & Sabol, 2008; Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011; Pratt, 2009; Travis, Crayton, & Mukamal, 2009). As the prison population increases particularly with inmates classified as violent offenders, so does the propensity for increased problems such as an increase in the number of disciplinary infractions (Berg & DeLisi, 2006). Given this fact, social workers and other professionals working in the prison system face daily challenges of navigating a dangerous environment, protecting their safety, as well as the safety of others, all while providing direct care and comprehensive rehabilitative services to the inmate population.

Currently, there is little research that examines if worship services and faith-based programs aid inmates in preventing recidivism. Accordingly, there are even less scientific studies that examine the association between participation in prison-based religious services and/or faith-based programs and inmate misconduct while in custody (Johnson, Larson & Pitts, 1997; Jones, 2007; Larson, Sherill, & Lyons, 1994). The major purpose of this quantitative study is to explore the impact of inmate participation in worship services and faith-based programs on inmate disciplinary infractions and the amount of times sent to administrative segregation or detention.

## **Chapter 2: The Criminal Justice System: An Overview**

### **Introduction**

Chapter two will provide an overview and descriptive analysis of the rates of incarceration in the United States with specific interest on its comparison to other countries. In an effort to provide the reader with a comprehensive understanding, the basic profile of those sentenced to federal and state prisons, along with inmate sociodemographic characteristics such as race, gender, age, level of educational achievement, and marital status will be examined.

### **US incarceration rates**

Based on its philosophical beliefs about deviant behavior, all nations have a strategy on how to address crime and deviant criminal behavior. Upon closer examination, data on incarceration confirms that the US strategy has historically ascribed to a punitive ideology and culture where prisons are utilized as a form of social control. Over the past 40 years the US philosophy of being "*tough on crime*," with the hopes of reducing future involvement of offenders in the criminal justice system, is thought by some to be demonstrated by its high rates of incarceration (Barkan & Cohn, 2005; Cole, 2011; Katel, 2009; Unnever & Cullen, 2010).

The US Census Bureau (2013) acknowledges that the entire population of the United States is only 4.4% of the world population. However, as Walmsley (2009) reported, the US prison population rate is the highest in the world at 756 per 100,000 of the national population or 23% of the entire world prison population. Moreover, the United States outpaces all other countries in rates of incarceration and leads the world with 2.5 million incarcerated. As a comparison, despite having a population three times the size of

the US, China has the second highest rate with 1.5 million incarcerated and Russia is in a distant third place with 890,000 incarcerated (Pew Center on the States, 2008). These statistics paint a disturbing picture of US policies and practices appearing to prefer incarceration as a primary response to criminal behavior, especially for a specific demographic of individuals: poor and minorities, no matter the severity of the wrongdoing.

United States Attorney General Eric Holder asserts “too many Americans go to jail for far too long and for no truly good law enforcement reason” (Guercio, 2013, p. 6). Since the 1970s and throughout the early 1990s America’s response to crime has been to incarcerate at an alarming rate with extensive prison sentences (Barkan & Cohn, 2005; Cole, 2011; Katel, 2009; Travis & Petersilia, 2001; Unnever & Cullen, 2010). In reality, incarceration rates and crime rates in the US have shown to move independently of each other. For example, during the period of 1973-2009 US prisons saw a 70% growth (Pew Center on the States, 2011). However, in contrast to the growth, estimates indicate that during this period the increase only resulted in the US reducing crime by 10% (Cole, 2009; Western, 2006; Wilson, 2010). In her book, *The New Jim Crow*, Michelle Alexander (2012) contends that it was President Clinton’s administration that contributed to modern day United States having the largest increase in federal and state inmates, surpassing any other US President.

According to Stephan (2008), the United States has approximately 1,821 federal and state prisons. A deeper look at the data gathered by the US Bureau of Justice Statistics BJS (2012) reveals that the United States has approximately 2,239,800 inmates in federal (9.5%) or state prisons (57.5%) and county jails (32.8%). To further elucidate the scope of those involved in the criminal justice system, the US Bureau of Justice Statistics (2012)

highlights the fact that in the United States an additional 4,814,200 people are also under the auspices of community supervision such as parole or probation. Although few citizens would dispute the fact that incarceration plays a role in any public safety strategy, when compared to other nations the United States numbers are not only alarming, but are also disproportionate to the rest of the world.

### **Incarceration Demographics**

#### **Race**

Since the earlier days of colonization and beyond, racism and oppression has been a major aspect of life for people of color in the United States. As a result, the demographic of race in federal and state prisons remains highly controversial in the US. Undoubtedly, most conservative Americans maintain that people of color are not incarcerated because of the color of their skin, but due to their criminal behavior. However, the facts remain that in the United States minorities and the poor are arrested, convicted, and sentenced to prison more often than non-minorities and more often than those with higher socioeconomic status (Cnaan, Draine, Frazier & Sinha, 2008; Kain, 2011). As a result, it is prudent to recognize the impact of racism on the penal system and crime control policies (Barkan & Cohn, 2005; Unnever & Cullen, 2010). A closer examination of the ratio of race among those incarcerated further illustrates the disproportionate number of Blacks and Latinos in the penal system. According to the Pew Center on the States (2008), for males 18 years of age or older, US rates of incarceration by race are as follows: 1 out of 106 for Whites, 1 out of 36 for Hispanics, and Blacks are an alarming 1 out of 15.

The high incarceration rates of Blacks date back as far as slavery and the post-Civil War era. During those periods, incarcerating Blacks was a common practice much like in

modern US. While the passing of the thirteenth amendment abolished slavery, involuntary servitude became punishment for societal issues such as poverty, homelessness and vagrancy (Blackmon, 2009; Oshinsky, 1996). Unnever and Cullen (2010) argue that whether it be past or present, the reason for the persistent disparity and overrepresentation of Blacks and Hispanics in the US prison population is due to public policy that allows for the American criminal justice system to blatantly discriminate and incarcerated those in which they feel are inferior and less desirable in society. Nevertheless, as it remains in 2014, US prisons continue to see a parallel between post-Civil War segregation laws and the high disproportion of incarceration rates for ethnic minorities and people of color, particularly African Americans and Latinos.

Berg and DeLisi (2006), conclude that “racial and ethnic minorities, specifically African Americans and Hispanics, have been bearing and continue to bear the brunt of increased incarceration” (p. 631). Their contention is supported by US Census (2010) data which informs that Blacks made up 13% of the US population and yet, comprised 41% of the prison and jail system in the United States (Carson & Sabol, 2012; Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011; Wagner, 2005; West, 2010). Similarly disproportionate, Hispanics (non-white) made up 16% of the US population (Humes et al., 2011), and yet, comprised 21% of the prison and jail system in the United States (Carson & Sabol, 2012; West, 2010). In other words, despite only comprising 28% of the US population, 62% of ethnic minorities are overwhelmingly represented in US prisons.

### **Gender**

The get tough on crime philosophy was not reserved for male offenders, but as criminologists have discovered, was an equal opportunity animus among policy makers



regarding female offenders. When examining the aspect of gender in the US penal system, the data yields a distinct contrast between men and women. According to Bloom, Owen, and Covington (2003), the female offender profile can be summarized as: being in their early to mid-thirties, convicted of a drug offense, with a history of physical and emotional trauma. Available data from the Census of Federal and State Correctional Facilities (2005) presented findings which indicated the male to female inmate ratio in federal and state prison combined was approximately 9:1, with male inmates accounting for approximately 92% of the inmate population (Stephan, 2008). As of 2010, male inmates had an incarceration rate of 943 per 100,000 male US residents. Comparatively, the female rate was only 67 per 100,000 female inmates (Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011).

When examining gender and race is factored, a clear distinction occurs. The incarceration rate of Black (non-Hispanic) men to White (non-Hispanic) men varies tremendously with Black men being incarcerated at a rate of seven times higher. Black (non-Hispanic) women also continue to propel beyond that of White (non-Hispanic) women with an incarceration rate of three times higher (Guerino et al., 2011). While the number of incarcerated females remains lower than their male counterpart, there remains a further need to examine the global and national trend of the increasing female offender population.

### **Age**

The United States prison population also varies in age distribution. Juvenile data is omitted from this study due to juvenile incarceration occurring under a different system and this study focuses on the adult population. Carson and Sabol (2012) presented combined federal and state prison population data reflecting 30-34 years of age (16%) as the largest

age group in US prisons. It is important to recognize this age group is not only the largest for Black males (17.1%), and White females (17.4%), but also Black females (16.5%). Conversely, 25-29 years of age was the largest age group for Hispanic males (18.8%) and Hispanic females (19.6%). On the other hand, with regards to White males the data reflects an equal percentage of 14.4% for both groups 25-29 and 30-34 years of age.

Not only did the US tough on crime reform of the 80s and 90s aid in the United States having the highest incarceration rates in the world, but also contributed to an increase in US prisons housing more elderly inmates. Although Rowe and Tittle (1977) assert that criminal behavior decreases with age due to maturity and socialization into societal norms, this does not fully explain the increase of baby boomers in US prisons. Contributing factors include federal and state legislatively imposed reform efforts such as mandatory minimum sentences and three-strike laws for offenders who commit their third offense. In addition, as a result of many states abolishing the death penalty, inmates once sentenced to death are experiencing their sentence being converted to life in prison, thus resulting in them remaining in prison longer than expected (Alexander, 2011; Wilson, 2010). Also contributing to the “graying” of America’s prisons is the fact that life expectancy is greater than in past year decades. As a result, inmates 50 years and older now represent one of the fastest growing age groups for both federal and state prisons, increasing from nearly 42,000 to more than 113,000 or 172% between 1992 and 2001 (Abner, 2006).

### **Education**

If federal and state inmates are the “most educationally disadvantaged population in the United States,” adult basic education and vocational training must be the cornerstone of any effort to effectively study incarceration, violence and reentry (Klein, Tolbert, Bugarin,

Cataldi, & Tauschek, 2004, p. 1). Research has shown there is a correlation between educational achievement and involvement in the criminal justice system (Harlow, 2003). For instance, 70% of inmates in America's prisons cannot read above a fourth-grade level (Department of Justice, 1999). In addition, few have marketable skills, and 68% do not have a high school diploma (Cnaan et al., 2008; Cox, 1999; Harlow, 2003; Petersilia, 2003). Moreover, it has been argued that increasing an inmate's educational level by just one additional year of educational achievement can result in a reduction of violent crime by 30% (Lochner & Moretti, 2001).

In a six-year study conducted by Harlow (2003), data revealed that 26.5% of federal and 39.7% of state inmates and 46.5% county jail inmates had a High School Diploma or less. Furthermore, Harlow (2003) demonstrated in a cohort of state sentenced inmates who had not completed high school or obtained their GED, that when controlling for other demographics and covariates, the results were as follow: 42% were males, 44% were Black, 52% were 24 years or younger, 47% had a drug offense, and 12% had military service.

Given the low level of educational attainment, compounded by the shame and stigma often experienced by inmates with lower educational levels, it can often create a hostile situation resulting in inmate misconduct when their academic difficulties are exposed to other inmates. Not only can an inmate's educational involvement be utilized as a correctional management tool for reducing misconduct and violence, it is also critically important for assessing the likelihood of offender recidivism. While it is not certain that the more education an inmate obtains, the better decisions they make, Harlow (2003) presented data that connects educational attainment to the rate of recidivism. Of the state sentenced

inmates in his study, the recidivism rates were 66% for those with some college, 71% those who finished high school and 77% for those who did not complete high school or a GED. However, for those with a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) the rate was 81%.

### **Marital and Parental Status**

As a criminal justice system attempts to punish those who violate the law, collateral familial sanctions have emerged; hence resulting in families being significantly impacted by incarceration (Arditti, Lambert-Shute, & Joest, 2003; Carlson & Cervera, 1992; La Vigne, Naser, Brooks, & Castro, 2005; Travis, 2005). According to criminal justice scholars, an inmates' rehabilitative process is enhanced when there is the existence of a supportive family (Bales & Mears, 2008; Cobean & Power, 1978; Herman-Stahl, Kan, & McKay, 2008). As a result, further consideration must be given to inmate marital and parental status in relationship to prison conduct. It is worth noting that the literature has found mixed results on the relationship between marital status and prison misconduct, as well as parenthood and prison misconduct. According to Visher, Knight, Chalfin and Roman (2009), empirical literature supports the idea that marital status reduces criminal activity. However, findings in existing literature are derived from samples of former inmates and do not specially examine the degree to which marital status has on the reduction of violent behavior and disciplinary infractions while incarcerated. On the other hand, some research suggests that marital status does not influence the likelihood of criminal behavior (Farrington, 1989; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Knight, Osborn, & West, 1977; Wright & Wright, 1992). Work by Jiang and Fisher-Giorlando (2002) demonstrates that married inmates had a higher number of disciplinary infractions than those who were not married. However, the researchers quickly acknowledge that due to

most states allowing for an uncontested divorce when a spouse is convicted of a felony, it is highly possible that the inmates may have been divorced at the actual time of committing the infraction (Jiang & Fisher-Giorlando, 2002).

Existing literature supports the idea that familial bonds and connections during incarceration is not only emotionally beneficial to the inmate, but aid in the rehabilitative process; making them less likely to engage in prison misconduct (Jiang & Fisher-Giorlando, 2002). One rationale is that violating prison rules are likely to result in disciplinary sanctions that may include a reduction or loss of privileges such as visits and phone contact. Inmates who are parents and who were actively involved in the lives of their children prior to incarceration or who are trying to reconnect with their children may not want to risk disappointing them by not being able to call or by having a visit canceled due to receiving a disciplinary infraction. However, some studies also indicate parental status does not reduce the likelihood of continued deviant behavior (Knight et al., 1977; Wright & Wright, 1992). As found in Jiang and Fisher-Giorlando (2002), the number of children and prison misconduct had an inverse relationship. In other words, the more children an inmate had, the higher the number of disciplinary infractions they committed.

### **Chapter Summary**

Demographic data of those incarcerated in the US demonstrates a controversial bias. The most socially disenfranchised citizens and residents: the poor and/or ethnic minorities, are arrested, convicted and sentenced to prison more often than non-minorities and more often than those with higher socioeconomic status (Cnaan, Draine, Frazier & Sinha, 2008). Regarding gender and age, males account for approximately 92% of the inmate population (Stephan, 2008) and data reflects 30-34 years of age as the largest age group in US prisons

(Carson & Sabol, 2012). Low educational achievement is a reoccurring theme throughout most prisons. According to the Department of Justice (1999), 70% of inmates in America's prisons cannot read above a fourth-grade level. Even more disturbing is the fact that 68% do not have a high school diploma (Cnaan et al., 2008; Cox, 1999; Harlow, 2003).

Despite the fact that criminal behavioral is an equal opportunity maladaptive behavior, more than often when mainstream Americans hear the term, “inmate” or “prisoner”, they conjure consistent and similar descriptions such as uneducated, young, Black and Hispanic men. Generally speaking, these descriptions would be considered nothing more than racially charged stereotypes. Unfortunately, notwithstanding the argument of an unfair criminal justice system, data overwhelmingly provides concrete evidence that the majority of prisons in the United States are filled with just that: undereducated, young, Black and Hispanic men. This data reflects more than just a stereotype, but an outward manifestation of an unjust society.

## **Chapter 3: Offense and Offender Typology**

### **Introduction**

Chapter three examines statistical data on the frequency of everyday violence in the United States. In further support of the discussion on violent behaviors, this chapter will also probe available data on offenses for which offenders are sentenced to prison and explores the prevalence of inmates with a history of substance abuse.

### **Violent Offenses**

Monitored by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), the Uniform Crime Report (2012) defines the following as violent crimes: murder, manslaughter, robbery, forcible rape and aggregated assault. More specifically, an immense overview of the crime clock provides a clear description of just how violent is the United States. In 2011, the US Crime Clock maintained that every 26.2 seconds a violent crime occurs, resulting in an estimated 1,203,564 occurring nationwide. In other words; a murder occurred every 36 minutes, forcible rape every 6.3 minutes, robbery every 1.5 minutes, and aggravated assaults every 42 seconds. Likewise, in 2011 there was an estimated 386.3 violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants, in which aggravated assaults (62%) accounted for the highest number of violent crimes reported to law enforcement, robbery 29.4%, forcible rape 6.9% and murder accounted for 1.2% (Uniform Crime Report, 2011).

### **Violent Offenders**

In the United States prisons are known as a place where violence occurs daily (Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). During the period of 2000-2010, violent offenders in state prisons increased by 99,400 or 16% (Carson & Sabol, 2012). According to Carson and Sabol (2012), 2010 data indicated the following types of offenses for which state sentenced

inmates were serving time: 53.2% violent offense, 18.3% property offenses, 17.4% drug offenses and 10.5% public order. According to the US Department of Justice (2011) at the end of 2010, an estimated 54% (689,000) of males held in state prisons were for violent crimes, compared to only 37% (34,100) of females. Interestingly, those serving time for murder were similar for both males (12%) and females (10%). Robbery was the most common violent crime for males (14%), followed by murder (12%), and assault (11%). Hispanics (57%) and Blacks (55%) held in state prisons on violent offenses exceeded that for Whites (49%). However, Whites (16%) were imprisoned at a higher rate for both rape and other sexual assaults than Blacks (8%) and Hispanics (12%). When comparing federal to state prisons, violent offenses differed drastically. Data further reveals those convicted of federal crimes represented a relatively low population of 7.6% for violent offenses and 5.4% for property offenses; yet drug offenses (48%) and public disorder (35%) represented the majority of the inmate population (US Department of Justice, 2011).

### **Substance Abuse**

The US tough on crime decades launched a national assault on drug offenses, especially in urban neighborhoods, which aided in record numbers of minorities and the poor being incarcerated. Newly imposed reforms such as mandatory minimums resulted in the lack of sentencing discretion for judges (Magnani & Wray, 2006; Rehavi & Starr, 2012). As a result of these reforms, they produced extensive prison sentences and catapulted the process of mass incarceration. Furthermore, the newly implemented drug policies also resulted in a new category of offenders being arrested. The United States began to fill its federal and state prisons with: 1) low-level drug offenders who eventually



were housed with more criminally deviant and violent inmates; and 2) drug traffickers who now found a captive audience of customers (Stevens, 1997).

Not only did the US crime strategy fail to prevent crime, many aspects of the newly implemented system may have exacerbated the potential for future criminal behavior.

Stevenson (2011) echoed this position by pointing out that ironically its “criminogenic effect increased the likelihood of recidivism and additional criminal behavior” (p. 2). With a large portion of US prisons being comprised of those with a history of substance abuse, it would be prudent to examine the extent of the population with substance issues. Data gathered by Mumola and Karberg (2006) shows:

- 53% of state prisoners and 45% of federal prisoners meet Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental health (4<sup>th</sup> ed.; DSM-IV) criterion of drug abuse or dependence;
- 16.6% of state prisoners and 18.4% of federal prisoners committed their crimes to obtain money for drugs;
- One in three state prisoners reported using drugs at the time of their offense;
- One in four violent offenders reported drug use at the time of their crime (Berzoff, 2012).

Each inmate that suffers from substance abuse is likely to have affected the community through antisocial behavior resulting in criminal activities (Hawkins, 2003). Research conducted through the utilization of risk needs assessments has shown an association between the frequencies of use and a high percentage of alcohol with criminal conduct (Hawkins, 2003; Roslund & Larson, 1979). Additionally, other behavioral risk factors associated with crime and substance abuse include hostility, aggression, and violence (Cherek, Moeller, Schnapp, & Dougherty, 1997; Hawkins, 2003; Heilbrun, 1982).

Considering the cost both crime and substance abuse has on society, effective rehabilitative programs could potentially save billions in taxpayer dollars and reduce future victimization (Hawkins, 2003). Current US strategy of addressing substance abuse through

mass incarceration is not a prudent resolution or effective treatment modality. This strategy has resulted in the United States being criticized by various international and national advocacy groups. The criticism stems from the amount of people the US incarcerates annually and for the fact that many addiction treatment advocates believe substance abusers could be better served in specialized community-based drug treatment programs instead of costly federal and state prisons.

### **Chapter Summary**

With a violent crime occurring every 26.2 seconds in the United States, the prevalence of violence in the US is evident (US Department of Justice, 2011). Violent crimes are defined as murder, manslaughter, robbery, forcible rape and aggravated assault (Uniform Crime Report, 2012). Once these crimes are committed, and the perpetrators are arrested and convicted, they must be housed somewhere secured where they are no longer considered a danger to society. For some, prisons and supermax facilities become the ideal institution and in the case of the more dangerous offender, the only option for others. As mass incarceration continues, US prisons have become the most densely populated place where deviant and/or violent people reside and where the propensity for violence increases daily (Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). Furthermore, as the number of offenders sentenced to prison increase and federal and state budgets for prison expansion decrease, not only does overcrowding become a psychological and physical stressor for inmates, it also becomes a continuous management concern for prison administrators.

Given the environmental and psychological deprivation also experienced in prison, coupled with oppressive conditions and a high concentration of violent offenders in one location, inmate violence and misconduct no longer becomes a possibility, but a guarantee.

Further impacting the potential for continued antisocial behavior and potential violence in America's prisons is the fact that prisons are filled with a substantial amount of substance abusers (Mumola & Karberg, 2006). Often these inmates are lower-level drug offenders who, as a result of being incarcerated, have the potential to 1) become victims of prison violence at the hands of the more criminally deviant and violent inmate and 2) engage in the same negative behaviors as the other inmates. In addition to possible victimization, these inmates also have the potential to become a customer base for convicted drug traffickers looking to expand their brand of entrepreneurial and pharmaceutical skills within the prison environment.

Consequently, when society houses its most deviant in one location, roles become redefined and new perpetrators and victims emerge, resulting in each inmate's prison experience becoming idiomatic. Chapter four will attempt further to illuminate the prison experience and the daily trauma experienced while incarcerated.

## **Chapter 4: The Experience of Incarceration**

### **Introduction**

Chapter four presents an overview of the complex and controversial phenomenon known as the prison experience. The reader will be introduced to statistical data on prison violence and documented incidents of inmate on inmate and inmate on staff violent incidents, as well as the difficulties faced by prison officials and researchers for collecting data on such incidents. The chapter will also briefly explore the history of the reentry movement and the fiscal impact of recidivism.

### **Prevalence of Inmate Violence**

As presented previously, the number of violent crimes committed in America undoubtedly can only lead to an increase in the number of violent inmates in the penal system. In 2009, only 8% of the federal prisoners were there for a violent offense (West, Sabol, & Greenman, 2010). However, in 2010, 53% of males and 36% of females who were sentenced to more than one year incarceration in state prison were there for violent offenses (Carson & Sabol, 2012). Theorist suggests this is largely due to violent offenses receiving much harsher sentences; therefore, they remain in prison longer than the non-violent offender and are usually held in more restrictive housing units (Alexander, 2012; Cooke, 1992; Wortley, 2002).

Nationally, correctional officials and correctional personnel take a solemn oath to a public mission of a sworn commitment to a safe, secure and orderly operations of the correctional institution (Kerley, Copes, Tewksbury, & Dabney, 2011). Although inmates are sentenced to Departments' of Corrections in an attempt to "*correct*" their criminal

behavior, it does not mean they immediately abandon their violent behavior on the mere fact that they were sentenced to prison (Berzoff, 2012). The tendency for violence and misconduct within US prisons increases as the number of those sentenced to prison for committing violent offenses also increases. Accordingly, the offenders reckless disregard for others and prison rules and regulations, in addition to their aggressiveness, irritability, and failed attempts to conform to society through lawful behaviors, are all behaviors consistent with antisocial personality disorder (American Psychiatric Association, DSM-V, 2013) and are expected to be observed in a prison environment.

Inarguably, living in a prison is a dangerous lifestyle and requires a plethora of survival tactics (Cnaan et al., 2008). When cohorts of people with antisocial characteristics, violent behaviors, combat survival skills, and limited conflict negotiation skills are housed together in extremely oppressive circumstances, it provides clear risk factors for the perfect storm of prison violence (Wolff, Blitz, Shi, Siegal, & Bachman, 2007). Berzoff (2012) contends, as a result of the sociological and psychological dynamics of the prison environment; living under such conditions could make inmates more likely to behave in dehumanizing ways. Likewise, inmates are known for their limited capacity to abide by prison rules and regulations, as well as their limited ability to walk away from a perceived threat to one's safety or ego. Displaying toughness, restricting emotions and acting out becomes a highly probable method utilized by inmates for coping (Cnaan et al., 2008; Gilligan & Lee, 2004). For some, these coping mechanisms become more difficult to immediately eliminate or suppress even upon release from prison.

Currently, the availability of published studies on federal and state prison rates of inmate misconduct is limited. Even more concerning is the fact that national data for

comparing federal and state prison incidents of violence is virtually non-existent. Often, the collection of this type of data is difficult due to the “*code of silence*” amongst inmates. In the prison environment disclosing or “*snitching*” that one was a victim of prison violence is considered to be taboo or disrespectful by the inmate population. Even worse, if the alleged perpetrator is identified, prison life becomes even more dangerous for the victim. The danger is largely because perpetrator identification may further subject an inmate to “violent reprisal by other inmates”; thus resulting in further victimization (Kuper & Toch, 1999, pg. 19; Wolff et al., 2007). As a result of this code of silence, data collected by prison officials and inmate self-reports are inconsistent. For instance, in 2000 physical assaults in US prisons were reported by prison officials at a rate of 28 per 1,000 inmates (Stephan & Karberg, 2003; Wolff et al., 2007). Conversely, according to a study conducted by Wolff et al. (2007), inmate self-reports; albeit limited to a one-year study at a specific Department of Corrections in mid-Atlantic state, inmate-on-inmate physical assaults were more likely to be reported by women at 92 per 1,000 and 75 per 1,000 for men. However, in the same study data examined over the duration of the subjects’ entire period of incarceration, assaults were reported at 204 per 1,000 for women and 252 per 1,000 for men (Wolff et al., 2007).

Prisons create “more violent and crime-prone” men and women (James, 2005, p.54). In a world with increasing violence, “violent inmate behavior is a way of maintaining status and is used to ‘*save face*’ in an effort to survive prison culture” (Stevens, 1997, p. 21). Drawing from the work of Stephan and Karberg (2003), episodes of inmate-on-inmate assault are common in most prisons. For example, the Prison Census (1995) reports there were 25,208 inmate-on-inmate assaults and 13,938 inmate-on-staff assaults

reported by federal, state and private correctional facilities. Furthermore, in the 12-month period preceding the 2000 Prison Census, data revealed an increase with 34,355 inmate-on-inmate and 17,792 inmate-on-staff assaults reported by federal, state and private correctional facilities. Of the inmate-on-inmate assaults that occurred, 53 of them resulted in fatalities. In addition, five correctional staff died due to the inmate-on-staff assaults. Lastly, research also found that inmates under 25 years of age (310 per 1,000) were more likely than older inmates (227 per 1,000) to report physical assault (Wolff et al., 2007).

While not all prison inmates misbehave or turn to violence as a prison survival tactic, research has shown that those who were nonviolent prior to incarceration, “were more likely to favor violent crime as an option to get what they wanted after their prison experiences than before those prison experiences” (Stevens, 1997, p. 24).

### **The Reentry Phenomenon**

Although it has been previously well documented that the United States ranks first in the world with its rate of incarceration, much attention has recently been focused on those leaving prison. In the US there exist societal myths that sending a person to prison will result in them remaining there until they die. What most members of society fail to comprehend is the fact that few inmates will remain in prison until their death. In actuality, other than the small amount of inmates that will die while serving their sentence, the vast majority will return home (Petersilia, 2003; “What Works,” 2009). The process is basic logic: the more people incarcerated the more released, reentering society and returning to the community. According to the testimony of Jeremy Travis on “What Works” (2009), current release numbers have tripled when compared to thirty years ago when the release rate was approximately 200,000 individuals annually. In the 2007 Midyear report, the US

Bureau of Justice declared that over 700,000 inmates are released from federal and state prisons (Couture & Sabol, 2008; Department of Justice, 2008; Guerin et al., 2011; Pratt, 2009; Travis et al., 2009). Additionally, more than seven million are released from county jails (Reentry Policy Council, n.d.; Wilson, 2010).

Americans have long been ambivalent about the purpose of the criminal justice system. Known for being capricious or as described by DiIulio (1993) as having a swing in public mood on its ideology towards offenders, US sentiments can be summarized as:

Among other things, they have wanted a criminal justice system that apprehends and visits harm upon the guilty (*punishment*); makes offenders more virtuous, or at least more law abiding (*rehabilitation*); dissuades would-be offenders from criminal pursuits (*deterrence*); protects innocent citizens from being victimized by convicted criminals (*incapacitation*); and enables most criminals to return as productive citizens to the bosom of the free community (*reintegration*) (DiIulio, 1993, p. 6).

Over the past two decades, the United States has experienced a return to the rehabilitative model of incarceration. As such, this has resulted in an increased interest not only in the rates of incarceration in the US, but also the pressing social problem of the community impact of the returning home ex-offender. For some elected officials, the motive for the social change is the civil rights issue of racial disparities in sentencing and the disproportion of incarcerated minorities. For others, it is merely economics: the more people returning to prison, the more burden to the taxpayer.

During the period of 1985-2009, annual state correctional budgets grew from 6.7 billion to over 47 billion or 700% (Subramanian & Tublitz, 2012). Annual cost of incarceration per inmate varies by state and may also vary by city. For example, 2010 data revealed the national state average is \$31,286, with New York ranking as the highest at \$60,076 per inmate and Kentucky at the lowest rate at \$14,603 (Henrichson & Delaney,



2012). According to a 2012 report from the Independent Budget Office for the City of New York, Riker's Island Correctional facility in Queens, the city-operated facility, spends an annual average \$167,731 per inmate. Comparatively, the cost of an undergraduate degree at the elite Harvard University is less expensive at a cost of approximately \$155,564 (Guercio, 2013).

Generally speaking, prison spending is a bipartisan issue with both Democrats and Republicans having expressed their concerns regarding prisoner reentry and its fiscal impact on the nation. As prisons continue to heavily consume many federal, state and local budgets, surpassing what is being spent on other vital public services, i.e. education, veterans and services for senior citizens, public interest has surged and taxpayers are demanding an explanation to what correctional officials are doing to address this problem. Elected officials have also increased their interest by requesting an examination to which cost effective methods, such as religious services and faith-based programs can have on the inmate rehabilitative process and how they can help reduce prison budgets (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006).

In an effort to examine prisoner reentry and rectify the surge of mass incarceration during the Clinton Administration, Attorney General Janet Reno, called for a new approach as she declared prisoner reentry one of the "most pressing problems we face as a nation" (Reno, 2000). However, it was not until President George W. Bush did advocates for the issue of prisoner reentry have a political platform (Travis, Crayton, & Mukamal, 2009). Contrary to the historically conservative GOP philosophy of locking them up and throwing away the key, once shared by President George H. W. Bush, the administration of President George W. Bush was one that spoke of second chances. Not only did his administration use

its influence and resources to fund two specific reentry initiatives such as, the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) and the President's Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI), in his 2004 State of the Union address he publically proclaimed his position on inmates being released from prison ("What Works," 2009). In his State of the State address President G.W. Bush declared:

This year, some 600,000 inmates will be released from prison back into society. We know from long experience that if they can't find work or a home or help, are much more likely to commit crime and return to prison. So tonight, I propose a four-year, \$300 million Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative to expand job training and placement services, to provide transitional housing and to help newly released prisoners get mentoring, including from faith-based groups. America is the land of second chance, and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life ("Text of President," January 20, 2004).

What exactly is reentry? Simply put, reentry is defined as the process of leaving prison and going home (Travis, Solomon, & Waul, 2001). Former Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections Director, Reginald Wilkinson, offered a unique perspective by asserting "reentry is a philosophy, not a program" (Ohio DRC, 2002, p. 4). Reentry is explained as the process of assisting offenders in changing their behavior so they can return to their community and lead a crime-free and productive lifestyle. Likewise, successful reentry requires a holistic and collaborative approach in which the examination and implementation of all aspects of the rehabilitative process occur. According to Travis and Petersilia (2001), the responsibility of reentry is multidimensional. Indeed, the inmate plays a significant role in the behavioral change process by being an active participant in their own rehabilitation. However, correctional agencies and elected officials also play a crucial role by creating an atmosphere where change can occur and by providing resources and evidenced-based programs and services that address and support cognitive behavioral change. In other words, the necessary approach requires policy makers and leaders "to be

frank about which policies have proven effective and which have not..... embrace data-driven solutions and reject the tired assumptions of the past” (Holder, 2013).

### **Recidivism**

The fiscal crisis of ballooning prison budgets has called for a more comprehensive examination of the criminal justice system. The high rates of reincarceration have proven two things: 1) the US strategy of being tough on crime has not worked, and 2) the US criminal justice system has and continues to fail specific groups in society. In response to this failure, the nation has begun to shift focus from retribution to rehabilitation by concentrating on the issue of reducing recidivism. Often described as the repetition of criminal behavior patterns, recidivism is categorized as the process of the revolving door of prison for repeat offenders.

As found in Langan and Levin (2002), recidivism is studied in four specific measures: “rearrest, reconviction, resentenced to prison, and return to prison with or without a new sentence” (p. 1). A study tracking a cohort of inmates released in 1994 revealed that 51.8% of offenders released were back in prison within three years, either for committing a new crime or for violating rules of their supervision (Pew Center on the States, 2011). A similar study tracking a 1999 cohort reported a slight decrease with 45.4% being re-incarcerated within three years, either for committing a new crime or for violating conditions governing their release. Most recent available data on recidivism remains alarming. A study involving a 2004 cohort of released inmates showed a marginal decrease by concluding that 43.3% were re-incarcerated within three years, either for committing a new crime or for violating conditions of their release (Pew Center on the States, 2011). Comparatively, in the same study a total of six states reported a recidivism rate at 50% or

higher, with Minnesota reporting the highest rate at 61.2%. Five states reported in the lower percentage of 30% or less, with Oregon reporting the lowest rate at 22.8% (Pew Center on the States, 2011).

With prison budgets experiencing an alarming rate of unprecedented growth and federal and state revenues plunging, elected officials and policy makers are interested in reducing the federal and state appropriations for prisons by evaluating the efficacy of prison programs and services. According to the Pew Center on the States (2011):

The costs associated with recidivism have been well documented. Total state spending on corrections is now about \$52 billion, the bulk of which is spent on prisons. State spending on corrections quadrupled during the past two decades, making it the second fastest growing area of state budgets, trailing only medicaid (p. 1).

In response to the recidivism crisis; legislators, law enforcement agencies, prison officials, and taxpayers have become interested in performance measures that will allow for the accountability of the criminal justice system to produce law-abiding and rehabilitated citizens. As a result, governing agencies and community stakeholders have begun to require an open examination of all aspects of prison operations. The process includes evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of treatment modalities utilized by prisons to address inmate behavior and to produce rehabilitated citizens with more prosocial behaviors, thus preventing future victimization and reducing taxpayer burden.

### **Chapter Summary**

Correctional staff pledge allegiance to a public mission of the safe, secure and orderly operations of the prison (Kerley et al., 2011). According to some law enforcement agencies and criminal justice theorist, this allegiance is the first and the sole mission of the prison system. As inmates serve their prison sentence, some choose to utilize their time

working on changing their criminal behavior while others choose not to abandon their deviant, violent and criminal behavior and often learn new ones while incarcerated. The continued displays of antisocial personality behavioral traits by some inmates have become a daily representation of their refusal to conform to society through lawful behaviors. This failure to conform makes prison not only difficult, but at times a dangerous environment for social workers to provide rehabilitative services. What is most important for citizens to understand is the staggering reality that rehabilitated or not, release from federal and state prisons is inevitable for the vast majority of inmates.

America's often fluctuating ideology, described by DiIulio (1993) as temperamental in mood, has caused the pendulum of justice to perpetually vacillate from a punitive incapacitating culture to one that actively embraces more progressive rehabilitative methods. Whether the motive is political or economic, two facts remain clear. First, the US tough on crime movement failed as a comprehensive smart on crime approach. Secondly, due to swelling prison budgets and the burden incarceration has caused the taxpayer; society demands accountability not just from the convicted felon, but from those responsible for their custody, care and rehabilitation.

Without ideological transformation and comprehension of theoretical factors associated with criminal behavior, prisons will remain a revolving door and a reoccurring lifestyle for some. Chapter five will examine four major theories of criminal behavior that may provide insight to how criminal behavior is learned and equally important, the influences necessary for change.

## **Chapter 5: Guiding Theories of Criminal Behavior**

### **Introduction**

Chapter five delivers a comprehensive look into theoretical factors associated with deviant behavior. In an effort to understand the development of criminal behaviors, the reader will be provided with various theoretical frameworks on criminal behavior by examining four prominent theories: social control, frustration-aggression, social learning and differential association theory.

### **Social Control Theory**

Developed in the 1950's, social control theory is one of the sociological theories which examine how various sanctions prevent delinquency. In social control theory, everyone is considered capable of committing a crime and naturally commits crime. The difference between criminals and other members of society is the fact that the deviant individual simply did what all humans have the capacity and an unconscious desire to do. Simply put, in social control theory the focus is on why people chose not violate laws, versus why they violate them. Whereas most people restrain their criminal instinct and unconscious desires, the social deviant fails to practice self-restraint (Berzoff, 2012; Morris, 2001). Furthermore, social control theory asserts that the encompassing behaviors of those who conform to the law are not present in criminals; thus, unlawful behavior occurs. With social control theory the approach to crime is to examine what traits do not exist in offenders, rather than what traits do exist. Missing traits are described as values, norms, commitment, and social bonds (Hirschi, 1969).

When people have a healthy development within these four specific areas, it aids in their prosocial activities and discourages them from violating the laws of society. Hirschi (1969) argues that criminal behavior can be explained, as a result of the absence of social bonds. More specifically, perpetrators of deviant behavior failed to form or maintain bonds in four specific elements of conformity: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief (Wiatrowski, Griswold, & Roberts, 1981).

Attachments consist of the foundation of the family environment, specific to the relationship between parent and child as parental impartation of values and behavior are critical in the formative years of development. Commitment is an interpersonal agreement with oneself based on one's ability to conduct a risk benefits analysis. "The aspiration of going to college and attaining a high status job" are those things in which one might risk losing should they chose to indulge in deviant behavior (Wiatrowski et al., 1981, p. 525).

Kelly (1993) states it as follows:

To the person committed to conventional lines of action, risking one to ten years in prison for a ten-dollar holdup is stupidity, because to the committed person the cost and risks obviously exceed ten dollars in value (p. 166).

The third element is involvement. The English proverb idle minds are the devil's workshop has received recent attention in sociological writing on control theory and delinquency (Kelly, 1993). Simply put, a person involved in prosocial activities will not find time to consider or seek opportunities to engage in antisocial activities. It is argued "religious individuals tend to be bonded to religious institutions that provide informal social control over their behaviors" (Kerley, Matthew & Blanchard, 2005, pg. 444; Johnson et al. 2000, 2001). Therefore, an inmate's level of religiosity or involvement with faith-based, worship services, or other faith-related rehabilitative activities can be an opportunity for an inmate

to become involved in occupying their day. As a result, this could aid in avoiding the pitfalls of prison misconduct and reduce future antisocial behavior.

The final element of conformity is belief. It assumes there is a common or shared value and “acceptance of the moral validity of the central social-value system” (Wiatrowski et al., 1981, p. 525). A strong conscience and a sense of personal morality are both forms of internal control that develops in each of us. As a result of socialization, it prevents a person from committing a crime. However, given the fact that social deviants tend to have no respect for society, social norms, laws, and are not committed to the moral validity of the larger society, misconduct and criminal behavior is highly probable.

### **Frustration-Aggression Theory**

The Oxford English dictionary defines “frustration” as: “1) the feeling of being upset or annoyed, as a result, of being unable to change or achieve something, 2) the prevention of the progress, success, or fulfillment of something” (“frustration” Oxford English Dictionary). Further, it defines “aggression” as: “1) feelings of anger or antipathy resulting in hostile or violent behavior; readiness to attack or confront” (“aggression” Oxford English Dictionary).

Frustration-aggression theory is a psychological theory which contends that frustration and aggression are a part of human make-up. The development of human aggression as nature or nurture is an argument that is centuries old, and the opinions vary throughout history. Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory lays claim to the theory that humans are born with two influential instincts regarding life and death. Suicide and self-injurious behaviors are the death instinct being focused inwardly, whereas with anger that results in violent behavior, it is the death instinct being directed outwardly (Grottesman &



Brown, 1999). Object relations theorist, Melanie Klein (1975) lamented that people are born with an aggressive drive and that they develop by how we handle our aggression. Klein (1975) further asserts that in order for a person to defend oneself from a perceived attack, one is constantly projecting part of themselves through rage and aggression. This results in a sense of paranoia as now the person has to worry about retaliation. While aggression may have been necessary for survival in the early years of the development of mankind and self-preservation, as humans evolved so did their ability to suppress and regulate aggressive tendencies; therefore, the ability to refrain from violent behavior should be displayed.

Advanced by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears (1939), the frustration-aggression theory was the first attempt to explain frustration and aggression as a response to environmental factors. Scholars have varied opinions on the degree to which frustration and aggression are related; however, Dollard affirms, "Frustration always leads to aggression and vice versa" (Gottesman & Brown, 1999, p 322). Frustration aggression theory contends frustration *often* provokes an aggressive response. However, scholars such as Berkowitz (1978) suggest that while frustration *can* lead to anger, it *may* result in aggressive behavior under certain conditions.

Applied to criminal behavior, frustration-aggression theory associates aggression and frustration as the root of an individual's impulsivity to commit a crime. Environmental aspects specific to past experiences that contribute to unaddressed frustrations, lead to aggression, which may manifest in criminal behaviors. In other words, frustration occurs when a person cannot achieve a goal or has the perception that they are being prohibited

from attaining a goal (Dollard et al., 1939; Dill & Anderson, 1995). However, Bandura (1973) negates this theory and labels it as “another drive theory” (p. 74).

Other scholars such as Zillmann (1979) argue that failing to achieve a goal or to be “blocked” from a goal will not produce frustration or aggression (p. 139); while Baron (1977) contends that aggressive reactions would occur when barriers to goal achievement were unexpected. This frustration, if not controlled, can turn into aggression when activated by another person or an uncomfortable situation such as prison living. Conversely, Grottesman and Brown (1999) argue that the aggressive behavior is not always the result of frustration. Other emotions or behaviors such as “anger, annoyance, or readiness to aggressive behavior” are all potential outcomes. In addition, “if the frustration is justifiable, legitimate or unexpected” the likelihood of aggression is lowered (Gottesman & Brown, 1999, p. 323).

Reducing aggressive behavior in adults requires an examination of the various methods for effectiveness. Historically, the United States has looked to the criminal justice system as a primary vehicle for reducing aggressive and violent criminal behavior. According to Gottesman and Brown (1999) research findings have shown “severe punishment does not seem to deter violent crimes” (p. 323). In reality, it drastically conflicts with outcomes. To further explain his point they assert that studies have found that countries with severe sanctions such as the death penalty “do not have lower violent crime rates” (p. 323).

Some have likened the unreleased inmate aggression to that of a boiling tea kettle. Albeit inappropriate, violence is a way of releasing the tension produced by frustrating situations. Considering this philosophy, it is believed that by engaging in prosocial

activities such as worship services and faith-based programs, aid in the reduction of deviant and aggressive behavior. In the context of a prison environment participation in prosocial activities serves as a method for reducing frustration resulting in the reduction of the number of disciplinary infractions.

### **Social Learning Theory**

While social control theory looks at how various sanctions prevent delinquency, social learning theory examines what causes and prevents delinquency. Another sociological theory, social learning theory is mostly known, as a result of the contributions by Albert Bandura (1971). As one of the most widely cited researchers in psychology, Bandura abandoned previous Freudian ideology of psychoanalytic and instinct driven philosophy that dominated the era and focused on a person's cognitive capabilities. According to Bandura (1971) it is not a matter of a person being influenced by drives or environment, but by continual and mutual interactions "between behavior and its controlling conditions" (p. 2). In social learning theory, behavior is learned before it is performed (Bandura, 1971). People develop beliefs about certain behaviors and, therefore, control their action based on the various consequences attached to each behavior demonstrated.

With the 1959 publication of *Adolescent Aggression*, Bandura and Walters (1959) found that aggressive adolescents modeled hostile attitudes demonstrated by their parents. Not only did the parents demonstrate aggressive behavior at home, but they also condoned their children being physically aggressive at school. Bandura offered a very similar argument on modeling as revealed through the Bobo doll experiment (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961). In this experiment, violence was modeled on a Bobo doll to children within

the experimental group and nonviolent behavior was demonstrated to the control group. The experimental group demonstrated the violence modeled, whereas the control group did not. Bandura's work has shown that social modeling can reduce aggression and promote prosocial behavior (Bandura & Rosenthal, 1966). Aker, Krohn, Lanza-Kaduce, and Radosevich, (1979) point out that criminal behavior can be strengthened, eradicated or changed by eliminating the reward of the behavior, and increasing the negative consequences, or changing the balance of reward or punishment for the behavior.

Social learning theory proclaims that criminals are not born; they are made (Tarde, 2001). Criminals "acquired criminal traits through apprenticeships in a milieu where criminogenic influences predominated" (Sylvester, 1972, p. 79). Through interaction with others; criminal and noncriminal, people are able to imitate those behaviors or characteristic in which they desire, especially those in which they are in close contact with (Tarde, 2001). Undoubtedly, US prisons are a prime milieu where close contact is unavoidable and criminogenic influences not only reside, but flourish. Social learning theory is "complementary to other sociological theories" such as differential association theory, "and could be used to integrate extant formulations to achieve more comprehensive explanations of deviance" (Aker et al., 1979, p. 637).

### **Differential Association Theory**

Similar to Bandura's modeling and Tarde's laws of imitation, Edwin Sutherland's Differential Association Theory also asserts that one is not born a criminal, but learns criminal behavior (Sutherland, 1946; Sutherland, Cressey, & Luckenbill, 1992). Through direct communication and interacting with others, not mere observations, individuals learn the values, attitudes, techniques, and motives for criminal behavior (Sutherland et al.,

1992). According to Sutherland et al. (1992), other methods such as watching movies that glorified criminal activities, or reading crime novels, had little influence in committing criminal behavior. In other words, behavior is strongly impacted by interaction with those peer groups which have the strongest influence on the value of the reinforcements and punishments. However, Sutherland is quick to correct a misnomer often believed about the influence of the peer group. While some tend to criticize or misinterpret the theory of differential associations as the excuse that my “bad companions” are responsible for my actions, differential association theory “is more concerned with the ratios of associations of pattern of behavior” regardless of the character of the person influencing the behavior (Sutherland et al., 1992, p. 92).

Understandably, modeled behavior becomes more desirable when performed by those in which the person has high regards for i.e. peers, family members. In environments with an abundance of antisocial behaviors, such as jails and prisons, often seen are the implications of social learning theory and differential association theory. Inmates, who are admired for their tough, no non-sense reputation and violent criminal history have the ability to influence other inmates’ behavior. This influence can be negative, for instance, by encouraging a much younger and naive inmate to commit a minor infraction or worst, a violent act. The influence can also be positive, by encouraging the same inmate to not follow the negative and misbehaving inmates and by encouraging him that it is acceptable or “cool” to go to school while in prison.

### **Chapter Summary**

Undoubtedly understanding theories on how one learns deviant behavior is crucial to modern day prison administration. Societal control theory examines how sanctions or

laws prevent deviant behavior. Key factors are family environment, risk-benefit analysis, involvement in prosocial activities, and belief in societal values. Frustration aggression theory contends frustration and aggression is a part of human makeup and is a response to environmental factors. Furthermore, when one cannot achieve their desired dreams or experience feeling being held back from achieving something, their frustration overwhelms their ability to suppress their anger. Social learning theory and differential association suggests that when sizable numbers of inmates with similar values and beliefs engaged in similarly prosocial activities such as religious practice, it results in a positive effect on their behavior. Moreover, such engagement and prosocial reinforcement can aid in the reduction of hostility among inmates, hence reducing the likelihood of violent incidents and disciplinary infractions.

Given the ideological and theoretical foundation of deviant behavior, chapter six will scrutinize societal response through the utilization of mass incarceration.

## **Chapter 6: The History of Corrections in the United States**

### **Introduction**

Understanding the history of the development of prisons in the United States and its response to criminal behavior is crucial to modern day correctional management. Through exploration, it provides significant knowledge of previous methods of ineffective reform and aids in the development of current rehabilitative strategies and programs that model and increase prosocial inmate behavior. Chapter six provides a historical overview of the US prison system beginning with the US separation from Great Britain to present day.

Commencing with a description of the foundation of prisons in the United States by discussing two of the earliest penal systems: Auburn, NY and Philadelphia, PA; the reader is guided through a discussion on the interconnectedness of slavery and the modern day issue of the disproportion of minorities in federal and state prisons. Given the fact the existence and availability of an abundance of historical information, the discussion is not intended to be an exhaustive and in-depth history of the penal system. However, commencing with the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it will provide a condensed overview of prison development relative to the discussion of key ideologies such as prison growth and the philosophical debate and conflict of religion versus rehabilitation and confinement.

### **The Foundation of American Prisons**

According to Hirsch (1992), “before the 1800’s, European theorists dominated the field of criminology, supplying the basic postulates and blueprints upon which American facilities were built” (p. 112). Although New York and Pennsylvania receive the most literary attention for the early establishment of prison systems, it was Massachusetts that was the first to establish a statewide prison system (Hirsch, 1992). From the inception of

prisons, penology and theology were interconnected. As with the example from Magnani and Wray (2006):

There are two strands of influence on its development: the religious understanding of the relationship between punishment and penitence, and the intellectual climate of the enlightenment period. It is impossible to overstate the religious fervor that accompanied the penitentiary movement. The word *penitentiary* derives from the word penitent, and both derived from roots they share with the words, pain, penal and punishment (p. 22).

Penal institutions were known for their high moral regard for correcting the sinful nature of man. They became known as “penitentiaries” to describe those who were sent there as religious penitents who had to serve time for their sins.

Also prevalent during the earlier days of prison development was demonology: a mixture of logic and religious beliefs in an attempt to explain criminal behavior. For the religious conservatives, those whom committed crimes were thought to be evil, under the influence of the devil, and in need of repenting and a spiritual healing. Additionally, it was believed that the only way to prevent criminal behavior was through prayer, rituals, torture or death. In refute of the theory of demonology, ultimately it was believed that people were capable of understanding right from wrong and were clear about the consequence they would face should they chose wrong. Hirsch (1992) expounded on the relationship between theology and penology by emphasizing that in the earlier days, clergy utilized their pulpits to deliver sermons on sinful behavior, as well as the behavioral consequences of seeking atonement for such sinful behavior through envelopment in God’s word. Likewise, clergy also played a pivotal role in the drafting of early criminal penal codes.

During the earlier part of the Colonial period the purpose of prison was more widely understood to be predominately concerned with the reform and rehabilitation of inmates (Meskell, 1999). For example, in 1681 William Penn, a Quaker who believed in



the humane treatment of offenders created the first house of corrections for law breakers in which their punishment included confinement (Ferro, 2011). However, as society evolved into a more complex and less homogeneous entity, so did the philosophy and attitudes of its citizens, especially the political leaders. This ultimately led to a shift in the mission of prisons from reform to public safety through inmate containment (Meskell, 1999).

The creation of the American prison system was heavily influenced by the English criminal justice system. Prior to the Revolutionary War, English prisoners were shipped to American colonies; however this practice was terminated some time during the war (Meskell, 1999). It is important to recognize that although the American system was heavily influenced by the English system and ultimately the US adopted many of the systems implemented by the English, initially America opted to forgo the English practice of a punitive nature in their treatment of inmates. According to Meksell (1999); “America had a history of repulsion to the harshness of the English code” (p. 843).

Shifting the focus from the criminological profile and pathology of the offender, known Italian criminologist and founder of the Classical School of Criminology, Cesare Beccaria asserted that the focus of criminology must shift from merely punitive sanctions to prisons and legal reform (Allen & Simonsen, 1995; Beccaria, Thomas, & Parzen, 2009). Beccaria et al. (2009) went on to further assert that the criminal codes of earlier centuries were not only draconian, but needed to be revised and that due process should be respected and applied to all. In addition, Beccaria et al. (2009) also declared that the use of capital punishment should be reduced and that prisons should not disregard the crimes in which a person is incarcerated for, but should be a place in which human dignity is preserved.

America was ready for the philosophical change introduced by Beccaria and at first appeared to welcome the new ideology of reform.

### **The Reformatory Years (1776-1899)**

Modeled after the English system, correctional facilities were known as “houses of corrections” or “workhouses” with the intended goal of reducing idleness (Hirsch, 1992). During this time, religious doctrine that proclaimed crime was a result of a person’s disconnection from GOD permeated penological and theological circles. Moreover, it was believed the fear of the Lord would reconnect one to faith and behavioral change would be inevitable (Hirsch, 1992). As a result of this dogma, “*treatment plans*” for rehabilitation consisted of two key elements: hard physical labor and penitence.

As correctional facilities emerged and evolved, they began to house various types of convicted felons (Hirsch, 1992). In 1791, the Pennsylvania legislature voted to allow “the Quakers to operate a wing of the Walnut Street jail as a penitentiary for convicted felons” (Ferro, 2011, p. 144). In 1816, Auburn, New York started building a new facility to expand the prison design from having housing units with single segregated cells to include a mess hall and the housing unit tier system which remain in existence in most US prison complexes. Both the New York and Pennsylvania system had unique operational differences. The New York system was one of congregate inmate activities which allowed interaction between inmates; whereas the Pennsylvania system continued with the operation of solitary confinement with the purpose of inmate moral reflection (Christianson, 1998; Rotman, 1990). Early 1800’s also gave birth to the concept of the earliest forms of modern day institutions. The criminal justice system began referring to its facilities as “penitentiaries” and mental health facilities became known as “insane asylums”

(Rothman, 2009, p. 79). Controversy remains today around the social justice issue of the United States practice of institutionalizing the mentally ill not only in long-term mental health facilities, but also in prisons.

The mid-1800's provides historical insight into another modern day social justice issue of the over-representation of minorities in the US criminal justice system. During this time period Blacks were incarcerated at a rate higher than Whites. Today, the evidence remains the same with Blacks being incarcerated at a rate of three times higher than Whites (Ayers, 1984; Christianson, 1998). Upon the ending of the Civil War, freed Blacks were incarcerated for petty crimes such as idleness, vagrancy and their inability to pay their debt (Blackmon, 2009; Oshinsky, 1996; Vale, 2000). These unfair laws targeted Blacks who no longer had a "*home*" on the plantation and allowed lawmakers in the south to continue the practice of involuntary servitude with state sentenced inmates under the guise of legalized convict leasing. Convict leasing was a process where companies paid the prison administration as little as .30 to rent an inmate (Ayers, 1984; Blackman, 2009; Magnani & Wray, 2006; Meskill, 2011). These and other controversial issues of inmate exploitation, aided in the 1870 establishment of the National Prison Association (known today as the American Correctional Association) who called for the reform of prison operations and the mistreatment of inmates.

Post-Civil War, the nation, began to experience the impact of the over-representation of minorities and prison overcrowding (Rothman, 2002). The United States embarked upon modifying the ideology of prisons solely as a place of spiritual enlightenment and set about to implement prison reform. Correctional systems began its first attempt of establishing inmate classification systems, developing provisions for inmate

education and treatment programs, and implemented regulations on the use of physical force, standards for incarcerating juveniles, and the separation and the imprisonment of inmates by gender (Christianson, 1998; Ferro, 2011). By 1876, the philosophical shift continued and the concept of reformatory versus prison for first time offenders and the youthful population, 16-30 years of age, emerged. Believing that youthful inmates were “more amenable to rehabilitation” than the repeat offender with more serious charges, these facilities also implemented a system of good time credits and vocational training (Ferro, 2011, p. 147).

### **Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1900 to 1969)**

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the abolishment of convict leasing programs in 1928, only to be replaced with an even worse oppression in the form of prison chain gangs. By 1934, the US continued to emphasize the importance of reform models. With the goal of housing inmates based on rehabilitative needs, age, and criminal offense, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) formalized the inmate classification process, which remains in practice in most US federal and state prisons (Christianson, 1998; Ferro, 2011; McKelvey, 1977). Additionally, the BOP reorganized and transferred the duties of federal parole supervision from the US Marshall, whose mission was specifically law enforcement, to the federal courts supervision unit (Ferro, 2011). During the earlier part of the decade, the mission of the federal courts supervision unit was more case management and social work in nature, and its purpose was to develop an “after-care system that was treatment-oriented and less punitive in its approach to ex-convicts” (Ferro, 2011, p. 148).

As inmate behavior became more disruptive and increasingly difficult to manage, federal and state prison systems responded with the development of more secure facilities,

known as supermax prisons or management control units. The federal government converted Alcatraz, a military prison in California to a supermax penitentiary (1933-1963) and state government responded by opening its own supermax facility located in the segregated south in the state of Mississippi (Ferro, 2011).

Known as the decade of the civil rights movement, the late 1960's was also marked by inmate legal claims of poor conditions and lack of humane treatment by correctional staff. Eventually, inmate outcry during this period propelled America's prison industry into what would be the most deadly decade for correctional systems. The era also experienced the development and enactment of the inmate bill of rights, which included an inmate's right to practice the religion of their choice while incarcerated.

### **Tough on Crime: Mass Incarceration (1970 to 2000)**

In the 1970's starting with Nixon's run for the White House, being tough on crime became a key national issue with every presidential candidate thereafter attempting to address it in their efforts to be elected (Vidich, 1990). For the criminal justice system, the 70's was one of the bloodiest and deadly decades for prison staff and inmates. This period witnessed an increase in the amount of inmate violence and riots that had never been experienced in the history of the US prison system. The violence expanded across the nation from Soledad prison in California to Attica prison in New York with both situations resulting in the death of numerous inmates and correctional personnel (Ferro, 2011; McKelvey, 1977). Due to public discord these events confirmed the belief held by many members of the public: the courts and prison management must focus their attention on one thing and one thing only and that is public safety. Utilizing a confinement model, Logan (1993) offered a very similar description of the societal sentiment during the 70's and

throughout the early 90's in his work on performance measures for secured correctional facility:

The mission of a prison is to keep prisoners — keep them in, keep them safe, keep them in line, keep them healthy, and keep them busy — and do it with fairness, without undue suffering, and as efficiently as possible (Logan, 1993, p. 25).

Armed with this ideology the criminal justice system ushered in a dramatic shift resulting in lawmakers supporting and enacting legislation such as lengthy prison sentences with no judiciary discretion and the 1973 Rockefeller Drug Laws. Once again with the ever changing pendulum on correctional management, the public outcry had now solidified its expectation of the US prison system: inmate control and confinement by any means necessary.

Campaigning on the promise of fighting crime and welfare reform, the 1980 election of President Reagan resulted in communities having to suffer from the political dominance of conservatism and social repression. Furthermore, “*Reaganomics*” resulted in the nation’s poor experiencing low wages, high cost of living and a reduction in the social funding allocations for the poor. President Reagan held a strong opinion regarding the criminal justice system:

So, too, the problem of crime--one as real and deadly serious as any in America today. It demands that we seek transformation of our legal system, which overly protects the rights of criminals while it leaves society and the innocent victims of crime without justice (Reagan, 1987, p. 7).

Despite the fact that less than 2% of the nation viewed drugs as the most important issue, like President Nixon who declared it as “public enemy number 1” (Nixon, 1971), President Reagan supported the United States aggressive launch on the war on drugs (Alexander, 2010). Ultimately, this would lead to the creation of additional non-discretionary sentencing guidelines that aided in the phenomenon known today as mass incarceration.

The tough on crime movement demanded an increase in the length of prison sentence for violent crimes and a reduction in the use of community supervision for those convicted of crimes against another person and for the possession and distribution of drugs (Ferro, 2011). With no room for discretion, federal and state judges were under strict adherence to the newly established sentencing guidelines (Wilson, 2010). The implementation of mandatory minimum sentencing, along with the crack cocaine epidemic, would once again expose the issue of prison overcrowding and the issue of the disproportion of minority representation in the US prison system. By convicting and incarcerating record numbers of more than 7,400 drug offenders, the US unofficially declared its commencement on becoming the nation with the highest incarceration rates. This process would continue throughout the decades of both Presidents George H. W. Bush and William Clinton.

### **Rehabilitation to Reentry (2001 to present)**

By 2001, the pendulum of public opinion had once again swung in favor of rehabilitation. In a national study by Hart (2001) support for mandatory minimums had dropped from 55% in 1995 to 38% in 2001. Furthermore, the same study informed that 65% of the public believed that it was more important to deal with the causes of criminal behavior compared to 32% who continued to support harsh prison punishment.

With incarceration rates rising beyond any other nation, the repeal of the Rockefeller Drug Laws and mandatory minimum reform, prisoner reentry and recidivism became the social justice issues of the decade for the criminal justice system. Interestingly, data revealed that the last several decades of tough on crime policies did not yield the intended results (Pew Center on the States, 2008). Consequently, years of being tough on

crime had only overburdened federal, state and local budgets with, “cost they can ill afford and failing to have a clear impact either on recidivism or overall crime” (Pew Center on the States, 2008, p. 1).

Despite the ever increasing prison budgets, limited funding was designated and utilized for programs that aid in reducing recidivism and assisting inmates with their post-release reentry needs (Ferro, 2011). The Pew Charitable Trust (2008) projecting the United States prison population to increase by 13% over five years, created a sense of urgency for the US to address the issue of high rates of incarceration. As a direct result, the philosophical debate of inmate control and confinement versus inmate reform and rehabilitation resumed again in US government. In response to severe budget deficits, federal and state prison systems looked to readopt the ideology and practices of inmate programs and services that emphasized reform and rehabilitation. As federal and state prison officials looked to mobilize and find efficiencies, the paradigm shift supported the examination and utilization of evidence-informed/based practices for reducing recidivism and creating effective reentry policies (Scott-Hayward, 2009).

### **Chapter Summary**

The United States philosophy on prison and its role in society have undergone a continual and cyclical paradigm shift since inception. From hard physical labor and penitence, to reform and the treatment; through mass incarceration and back to rehabilitation; America continues to be challenged with establishing an effective method for addressing crime and punishment.

It is well-documented that the early development of the US prison system was built on the foundation of religious precepts. Criminals were considered void of morality and



decency. Behavioral change was considered inevitable providing that the offender: 1) gained a sense of fear of GOD's wrath and 2) spent time reconnecting with their faith (Hirsch, 1992). Controversial and former FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, summarize earlier US sentiments on deviant conduct as follows:

Invariably when you analyze the reasons for such [criminal] actions, certain facts stand out stark and revealing—the faith of our father, the love of God, and the observance of his commandments have either been thrust aside or they never existed in the heart of the individual transgressor....(Hirschi & Starks, 1969, p. 202).

Ironically, the United States tends to be duplicitous when it comes to the subject of morality. While quickly defining behaviors of the poor and disenfranchised as immoral, the United States' own system of unfair laws and discriminatory practices such as slavery, convict leasing, arresting freed Black for petty nuisances such as idleness, or their inability to pay debts, segregation and numerous other modern day issues such as racial profiling, are somehow not classified as being void of the same morality or considered contributing factors to the alleged immorality. Given the early emphasis on morality and the influence of religion on the criminal justice system, chapter seven will examine the intersection of theology and penology.

## **Chapter 7: Theology and Penology**

### **Introduction**

With religion having a profound influence on the early development and operations of US prisons, chapter seven will examine the history of religion in penology and its place in modern day inmate management. The chapter will also illuminate religious programs and services available in prison, as well as engage the reader in a brief discussion on the role of prison chaplains in facilitating those services. The discussion will then present a thumbnail outline of four prominent religions practiced in US prisons: Islam, Catholicism, Judaism, and Protestantism, and exam the commonalities in their doctrinal teachings on conduct and their expectations for changing deviant behavior.

### **Religiosity: A form of behavior modification**

Throughout history, religion has served as a catalyst for various forms of change. Most major religions renounce crime and mandate nonaggressive tactics as a method for addressing conflict (Clear, Hardyman, Stout, Lucken, & Dammer, 2000). Kusha (2009) maintains that the existence of religions lay within a “moralistic context albeit with social and economic parameters” and, as a result, requires its members to uphold moral standards (p. 5). Generally speaking, prison administrators support the idea that “one need not be good in order to act good” (Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006, p. 253). While clergy are concerned with changing a person’s moral character, prison officials are concerned with managing unacceptable behaviors such as prison violence and rule infractions. According to Regnerus and Smith (2005), those who possess a high religious commitment are more likely to demonstrate more positive attitude and appropriate conduct.

I'm reminded of an inmate who spent 90 percent of his time in disciplinary confinement until he got "saved." The change in his life was so dramatic that the institution was never the same. He never got into another fight after that (Johnson, 2011, p. 155).

According to Johnson et al. (1997), devotion to religion helps to minimize "antisocial values, emphasizes accountability and responsibility, changes cognitive approaches to conflict and provides social support and social skills..." (p. 148). Kerley et al. (2005) asserts that lessons on human behavior and conduct, especially civility, are outlined and emphasized in all major religions. To fully practice religion, it requires discipline and adherence to religious laws and teachings. Ideally, this level of commitment and discipline would aid inmates in the development of social bonds and better self-regulation, thus reducing incidents of disciplinary infractions (Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006).

It is understandable that critics question the sincerity of inmates who find religion while in prison. Often skeptics accuse "jailhouse conversions" of being meaningless, manipulative and short-lived (Johnson, 2011). In-prison religious conversion aids inmates in constructing a "prosocial narrative identity" and provides guidance for understanding that their previous criminal behavior may not have been "true reflections" of their identity and may help them with reconstructing a new identity (Johnson, 2011; Kerley & Copes, 2009). In addition, religious conversion also provides inmates with a sense of control over their lives and their futures in an environment in which they have very limited control (Kerley & Copes, 2009).

Controversial for its time, an early attempt to look at the issue of religion and crime was through the efforts of Hirschi and Stark (1969). In their study titled "*Hellfire and Delinquency*" they found that religiosity and crime among youth was not related to reducing crime and delinquency. Over time researchers have held different perspectives on

the issue of crime and religiosity. Replications of the Hirschi and Stark (1969) study expanded the scope to include the nexus of religiosity and inmate behavior. Johnson (1984) conducted one of the early studies on religiosity and prisoner adjustment. Although his study did not result in proving a relationship between religious involvement and prison adjustment, it did create an interest in future research on religiosity and inmate misconduct (Camp et al., 2008; Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, & Shapiro, 1992b).

Recent studies have shown improved institutional adjustment for a select group of inmates who participate in religious programming (Clear et al., 1992a, 1992b; Johnson et al., 1997; Johnson, 2011; O'Conner, Ryan, & Parikh, 1997; Sundt et al., 2002). Camp et al. (2008) found that federal inmates who participated in faith-based programs reduced their probability of serious infractions, but not minor infractions. Older inmates involved in religious-based activities were found to have fewer infractions than other inmates (Camp et al., 2008; Clear et al., 1992b). Inmates with high levels of participation in Prison Fellowship programs were found to have fewer infractions than those with lower participation in those types of program; while nonreligious inmates were more likely to commit serious infractions than those with high levels of participation in Prison Fellowship (Johnson et al., 1997). By the same token, empirical research suggests that religiosity and spirituality are associated with the prevention and reduced antisocial behaviors and increases prosocial behavior (Barkowski & Regis, 2003; Hill, 1997; Kerley et al., 2005; Martin and Martin, 2002; Mattis, 1997; Sherrat & Ellison, 1999). Furthermore, other studies have shown religiosity and faith-based participation are associated with reduced incidents of inmates arguing and reduced likelihood of altercations (Camp et al., 2008; Clear et al., 1992a; Clear & Sumter, 2002; Kerley et al., 2005; Kerley et al., 2011).

In federal and state prisons religious groups have been established for various reasons such as; protection from other inmates, manipulative purposes such as trying to impress the parole board, gaining material incentives such as snacks, being able to have human contact with visiting religious volunteers, and for a few select inmates, actual true religious conversion (Clear et al., 1992; Maruna, Wilson, & Curran, 2006; Pass, 1999; Rowell, Rodriguez, & Dammer, 2004; Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). According to inmates studied, life in prison is an infinite battle between “Godly and worldly influences” and religious involvement assist with the managing of “negative emotions associated with prison life” (Kerley & Copes, 2009, p. 232). Moreover, religion helps inmates redefine their prison sentence, gain forgiveness through atonement, understand the meaning of what they have done to bring them to prison and what they need to do in order to not return. In addition, religion also helps inmates to deal with losses they may never regain such as family, friends and freedom (Clear et al., 1992, Kerley & Copes, 2009).

### **Religion in US Prisons**

In any discussion on the early development of the prison system in the United States, the interrelatedness of theology and penology must be recognized. Some of the earlier state prisons such as Auburn in New York and Eastern Penitentiary in Pennsylvania stressed redemptive principles and daily religious services in an attempt to change inmate behavior by engaging their time in moral devotion (Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). During this period religious services were considered an influential and acceptable primary treatment protocol for addressing inmate behavior. This influence was also experienced through the architectural design of correctional facilities with the emergence of prison chapels.

Earlier stereotypes alleging inmates were void of religious upbringing and moral character resulted in prison officials imparting their religious ideology and doctrine on the inmates in their custody. Today, freedom of religious choice is widely practiced throughout prisons in the United States and is protected by the US constitution (O’Conner & Perreyclear, 2002; Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). While, in 2000, the 106<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress enacted the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) to protect religious practices of those institutionalized, few studies revealed that one out of every three inmates (32%) participate in religious programs in US prisons (Hicks, 2008; Johnson, Larson, & Pitts, 1997; O’Conner & Perreyclear, 2002; Sundt, Dammer, & Cullen, 2002; U.S. Department of Justice, 1993).

Depending on which region of the US you reside, federal and state prison religious services and programs vary, as well as the number of religious denominations practiced. The most common are: Christianity, Islam, Catholicism, and Judaism (Rowell, Rodriguez, & Dammer, 2004). However, nationally there has been a steady increase in those religions considered non-traditional such as Hinduism, Mormonism, Buddhism, Rastafarian, Curanderismo, Santería, Espiritismo, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Scientists, Wiccan, American Native, and Satanism (Rowell et al., 2004).

### **Prison Chaplains and Services**

Religious principles were an important component and the driving force in the early creation and development of the prison system. As a result, one could deduce that prison chaplains played a major role in the daily management of inmates and facility operations (Camp, Daggert, Kwon, & Klein-Saffran, 2008; Kerley et al., 2011; Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). In so much that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, prison chaplains had influence equal to that

of the prison wardens (Sundt & Cullen, 1998). Today, although chaplains continue to have a unique role in the correctional system, their power to influence prison operations remains to be defined, but their ability to influence inmate behavior remains strong and sometimes underestimated.

In an effort to illustrate the relationship between chaplains and inmates, Shaw (1995) presents an interesting argument. He declared that chaplains are the only profession in the correctional system, aside from the correctional officer, that provides services to the inmate on their housing tiers (Sundt, Dammer, & Cullen, 2002). Undoubtedly, this may have been true for the period of Shaw's work experience as a chaplain in a New York State prison. Presently, in many US prison systems social workers also provide services to inmates on the housing tiers. What remains unique is the distinct difference between the responsibilities of a chaplain from that of a correctional officer. Unlike correctional officers, chaplains are not directly responsible for the confinement, custody and discipline of the inmates housed in their facility (Sundt & Cullen, 1998; Sundt, Dammer, & Cullen, 2002). Therefore, in the eyes of the inmate, chaplains are required to be less judgmental than a correctional officer and report to a "*higher level*" of authority.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century prison chaplains provided a variety of faith, academic and social work type services. In addition to conducting religious services, chaplains performed secular tasks such as operating the prison library, educating inmates, creating discharge plans for offenders preparing for their release, collecting statistical data for legislators, and providing advocacy on behalf of the inmates regarding allegations of correctional staff mistreatment and abuse (Rowell, Rodriguez, & Dammer, 2004; Sundt & Cullen, 1998). By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the role of prison chaplains changed drastically. Tasks chaplains

were once responsible for were now being fulfilled by teachers, social workers, researchers and other professional staff, rendering chaplains isolated and their services marginalized to prison ecumenical services (Sundt & Cullen, 1998; Sundt, Dammer, & Cullen, 2002). Once these roles became fulfilled by other professional disciplines some prison officials no longer considered the role of chaplain as necessary (Rowell et al., 2004).

Despite the change in roles, chaplains continued to assert that religion is crucial to changing inmate behaviors from antisocial to prosocial: hence having a successful impact on the rehabilitation of offenders (Sundt et al., 2002). Today, nearly every prison in the United States has at least one full-time chaplain (Hicks, 2008; Sundt et al., 2002). Consistent with social learning theory, prison chaplains serve as a role model, mentor, teacher, guidance counselor, behavioral therapist and divine negotiator to the inmate population (O'Conner & Perreyclear, 2002). Thus, new and more positive behavior is learned through interaction between chaplain and inmate.

Currently, as budgetary resources diminished for prison systems, chaplains were once again required to provide a menu of religious and secular programs and services. Some of those services include: presiding over ecumenical services, bible study, grief counseling, marital counseling, and pastoral counseling. Not relinquishing their commitment to religious and behavioral change, secular services included, but not limited to: serving as a recruiter, trainer and coordinator of religious volunteers, facilitation of alcoholics and narcotics anonymous groups, death notification, as well as outreach to other community-based organizations (Hicks, 2008; O'Conner & Perreyclear, 2002; Rowell et al., 2004).



Research on prison chaplains revealed 60% indicated they thought behavioral change was best achieved through religion (Hicks, 2008, Sundt et al., 2002). Today, most chaplains continue to retain a significant amount of influence on the socialization of inmates and according to Thomas and Zaitzow (2006), “help tip the scales of behavioral adjustment in a positive direction” (p. 251).

### **Religious perspectives and commonalities on conduct and behavior**

If religious activities are likely to assist inmates with internalizing values modeled and taught by the religious services personnel in prison, it becomes prudent to examine the connection between religion and its doctrine on behavior. The remaining section of this chapter will provide a brief theological overview of the four prominent religions practiced in the US penal system; Islam, Catholicism, Judaism and Protestantism. Understandably, there are many religions with infinite variations with practices that are sometimes quite complex. The following summaries of the four religions are simplified and presented from a broad perspective. The discussion shall serve as a springboard for exploring and understanding the similarities in their teachings on conduct and violence and their explicit connection to inmates’ expected behavior while practicing their faith. Furthermore, the information provides a foundation for exploring the connection between religiosity and inmate misconduct.

More often than not, there are commonalities between most religions. One of the overlapping commonalities is the issue of civility and the standard for treating and interacting with ones’ fellow man (Kerley et al., 2005). For instance:

- "What is hateful to you; do not to your fellow man. That is the entire law; all the rest is commentary" Judaism; The Talmud.
- "No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself" Islam; Hadith.

- "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."Christianity; The Gospel of Matthew." ("Nonviolence: The moral..")

Another similarity is the premise that the commission of crime and violence is based on individual choice and that each person is taught through their faith the proper moral response to these temptations. Religious beliefs influence inmate attitudes, thus influencing behaviors and can be the difference between inmates acting in accordance with prison rules or accumulating violations for infractions.

### **Islam**

Islam is based on the virtue of peace. In the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, it became not only one of the most talked about religions in modern times and it also became one of the most misunderstood. Although Islam has been accused of being inherently synonymous with violence, terrorism, or radicalism; the word "Islam" is derived from the Arabic term meaning "surrender, obedience and peace" (Canda & Furman, 2010; Nadir & Dziegluelewski, 2001; Smith, 2009). Throughout the world Islamic followers strictly adhere to Islamic doctrine as outlined in the Qur'an and tend to live a peaceful lifestyle. In Islam, there is one universal God, Allah, who watches over mankind and its behavior. Accordingly, one's current human conduct will determine their afterlife (Hopfe & Woodard, 1998). Followers of Islam are required to have mutual respect for others and to conduct themselves with model behavior for others to emulate (Canda & Furman, 2010; Esposito, 1998).

In contrast to public belief, the Islamic principles on righteousness and prosocial behavior are also similar to those in the Judaism, Protestant and Catholic religions (Kusha, 2009). According to Kusha (2009) Islam warns against antisocial behaviors such as crime,

violence and aggression and encourages more righteous and prosocial behavior.

Punishment for criminal behavior can often be swift and severe, ranging from flogging to death. Interestingly, in countries where punishment sanctioned by the Qur'an is implemented, there is a low crime rate (Wilkinson, 2008).

Kusha (2009) further asserts that the introduction of Islam in American prisons dates back to the 1930's. According to the Department of Justice (2004), approximately 9,000 inmates or about 6% of the inmate population in federal prison seek Islamic religious services. Islam is a faith of peace and tranquility where good versus evil is an intrinsic nature. Specifically, people are capable of deciding which one they will choose. Similarly to Judaism and Christianity, Islam is "expressively anticriminogenic in its core teaching" and requires believers to "refrain from the commission of sins or crimes", and "enjoins others against such socially harmful victimizing acts" (Kusha, 2009, p. 3).

### **Catholicism**

In its core teachings on conduct, Catholicism premises that man must do good, avoid evil and inflict no harm on anyone (Cathrein, 1909). While the Catholic Church is supportive of a process that aids to rehabilitate offenders, it also emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and rehabilitation while incarcerated. Specifically, Catholicism encourages inmates to "seek spiritual formation and to participate in worship" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2000). Behaviors such as idleness and loafing are considered not fulfilling one's obligations, and demonstration of such behaviors means not being a beneficial member of society. In addition to fulfilling one's obligations, there also exist expectations for interacting with others.

Doctrinal teachings such as “thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not steal, thou shall not give false testimony against your neighbor” (Exodus 20:13-16, New International Version), are shared philosophical teaching with Protestantism and Judaism. These teachings provide a general theoretical framework for peer interactions, crime prevention and violence. Conduct expectations include demonstrating love and justice to all humankind and instinctively resisting any unjust attempts to violate or injure anyone. According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2000), with grace even the worst criminals can change and true justice is achieved through the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. Catholicism further asserts respect belongs to everyone and when the respect of others occurs, only then can one expect the right to be respected in return. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2000) further maintains:

We are convinced that our tradition and our faith offer better alternatives that can hold offenders accountable and challenge them to change their lives; reach out to victims *and* reject vengeance; restore a sense of community and resist the violence that has engulfed so much of our culture (para 4).

In addition to spiritual growth and development as a forum for altering maladaptive behavior, Catholicism asserts parish mentoring that occurs while incarcerated lets those whose are incarcerated know that someone in their community cares for them. Consistent with differential association theory, mentoring provides positive role models for emulation. Finally, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2000) decree that upon an inmates’ release from prison and upon their making amends and working on changing their antisocial behavior, they be welcomed back into their community and parish.

### **Judaism**

Of the three monotheistic religions; Christianity, Judaism, and Islam; Judaism is the oldest and is approximately 2% of the US population (Canda & Furman, 2010; Sheskin, &

Dashefsky, 2013). According to the Aleph Institute (2013), Jews account for approximately 52,000 or 1.7% of those involved in the criminal justice system in the United States.

Many Jewish inmates were relatively non-observant before being incarcerated. For many Jewish inmates, prison is their first real contact with yiddishkite as prisoners tend to seek an affinity group to help them survive the experience and Jews tend to find other Jews - even if they come from a secularized family and don't know what is to be Jewish ("Jewish Prisoner Awareness," 2013).

According to Canda & Furman (2010), Judaism is not just a religion, but a way of life, and ethical commandments are provided to govern ones' behavior. By the same token, Jews are also expected to serve as a light and example to the world in their conduct (Canda & Furman, 2010). Peaceful means of dealing with conflict are expected as Talmudic teaching rejects the use of violence unless in self-defense ("The Halacha of Rodef," 2004). Fundamental to righteous conduct includes helping others, the elderly and the sick, as well as charity. As found in Sundt, Dammer, and Cullen (2002), Rabbi Abraham Holtzberg asserts:

We fully endorse the attempt at vocational guidance and education in our penal institutions. But we are convinced that without God, the philosophy of morality and ethics which stem from such a concept, such as rehabilitation is not possible (p. 63).

Similarly to the previously mentioned religions, in Judaism, the premise of social responsibility is summarized in the commandment of "Loving thy neighbor as thyself" (Wilkinson, 2008). Fairness, justice and restoration are a historic part of the faith and all human beings, including those in prison, are deserving of respect and interaction that is fair and honorable.

### **Protestantism**

Of the major religious denominations in the United States, Christianity makes up 78.4% of the population, with Protestants comprising 51.3% (Pew Forum on Religion

and Public Life, 2008). While specific data on Protestant affiliation of inmates is limited, prison chaplain affiliation is the best example of the estimates that may exist.

Comparatively, a study conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2012) revealed that 85% of the prison chaplains responded of which Evangelical Protestants represented 44%.

The Protestant doctrine taught through the Holy Bible recounts the many biblical leaders who experienced periods of imprisonment and its significance in the faith. Protestantism requires one not to condone sin, but to show unconditional regard for the sinner. In addition, good moral conduct and non-violence is the preferred method for responding to life challenges (Lawrenz, 2012). Similarly to Islam, Catholicism and Judaism; virtues such as peace, love, compassion and forgiveness of those who have done harm are key elements of the Christian doctrine (Avalos, 2005).

Curry (1996) asserts that Conservative Protestantism consists of a literal interpretation and strict adherence to the Bible and includes teachings for interacting with ones' enemies and those who mean to do harm towards them. Any deviation from the literal interpretation is considered cause for punishment. Crucial to the faith is the respect and appreciation of the grace shown by God to the sinners, which should be reciprocated to others. In spite the misuse of the Old Testament scripture of the Holy Bible citing "an eye for an eye" (Leviticus 24:20), further clarified in the New Testament (Matthew 5:38-39) as a call to resist retaliation, members are encouraged to practice forgiveness and unconditional love for others, especially for those who persecute and do wrong towards them.

It is important to recognize that contrary to its doctrine on forgiveness, literature on religiosity informs that Protestants were not always supportive of the rehabilitative ideology of the prison system and at times were more punitive than any other religion when it came to correcting behavior (Unnever & Cullen, 2006). On the other hand, research by Clear et al. (1992) informs that inmates who identified as Protestant had better adjustment to prison than any other identified religion.

### **Chapter Summary**

Throughout history as well as in the modern era of prison management, chaplains play a crucial role in the facilitation of the behavioral change process. By serving as role models for inmates, new and more positive behaviors are learned through the mentor and mentee interaction (O'Conner & Perreyclear, 2002). Religion is widely practiced in US prisons; yet often prison administrators and the social work profession ignores its relevance to the inmate growth and change process (O'Conner & Perreyclear, 2002; Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). This disregard may be largely due to the difficulty of measuring and ascertaining an inmate's level of commitment to their religious beliefs, thus limiting measures to quantified data on attendance at worship services and participation in faith-based activities. Perhaps it may be due to the inability of correctional officials to accept limited scientifically measured methods of treatment, such as religiosity, as an effective means for aiding inmates in changing their behavior due to religiosity being subjective in nature. Whichever the reason, what remains clear is the fact that more research is necessary.

In many ways commonalities exist between the previously mentioned religions in fundamental theological principles of doctrinal teachings on civility, lawfulness and the

standard of conduct for interacting with one another. The thematic lessons shared include more love, kindness and unconditional regard, and less revenge, violence and criminal behavior. Religion is assumed to play a profound role in maintaining a sense of order, providing a blueprint for lawfulness, and sustaining conformity to societal norms (Hirschi & Stark, 1969; O'Conner & Perreyclear, 2002). It ascribes behavioral guidelines for its members and consequence for violations. This level of behavioral influence has garnered interest on religious involvement and its ability to minimize deviant behavior.

Religious involvement behind bars creates a mechanism for inmates to be guided by their faith on the laws and norms of conduct for atonement, forgiveness, and the consequences of further criminal activity, thus aiding in the prevention or reduction in prison violence and misconduct. Ideally, the reduction in inmate violent behavior and disciplinary infractions make the prison environment safer not only for those incarcerated, but also for the correctional social workers who must provide services. The study seeks to increase knowledge regarding to what extent participating in worship services and faith-based programs affects inmate behavior. Once it is more widely understood, the results will provide important insight into the necessary social work services for a correctional setting and the opportunity to implement non-traditional methods of behavioral change in treatment planning. The concept of religion as a regulator of behavior is particularly salient when considering its expectations for rule compliance and its overall impact on inmate behavior. Given the literature, chapter eight will outline the hypotheses and the methodology utilized for this study.



## **Chapter 8: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

Within this chapter, the reader will be provided the methodological outline of the quantitative, secondary data analysis approach utilized in this study. The chapter will also examine the problem statement, hypotheses, research design, sample size, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and measures (dependent and independent variables).

### **Problem Statement**

Violence inside US prisons impacts the environmental and economic culture of our country, creates hazardous and dangerous working conditions not only for forensic social workers, but for those who are sentenced by the courts to serve their time in prison. Prison violence is a public safety issue; yet despite this fact, relatively little attention has focused on this aspect of social work. Despite that studies have shown, those who possess a high religious commitment are more likely to demonstrate a positive attitude and appropriate conduct (Regnerus & Smith, 2005), only recently has the social work profession begun to acknowledge the role of client spirituality in social work practice. As a result, closely examining religiosity as a method for diminishing or ameliorating antisocial behavior that leads to acts of prison misconduct and inmate violence is pivotal in forensic social work.

This study focuses on religiosity and its association with successful prison adjustment. Ultimately the aim is to determine the correlation between religiosity and inmate behavior. The study will assess whether those inmates who actively involve themselves in religious worship services and/or faith-based activities are less likely to violate prison rules, receive disciplinary infractions and time sent to administrative segregation or detention.

## **Hypotheses**

H<sub>1</sub>). Controlling for relevant variables, inmates who attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility will have a lower rate of disciplinary infractions than those who do not attend.

H<sub>2</sub>): Controlling for relevant variables, inmates who attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility will have a lower rate of times sent to administrative segregation or detention than those who do not attend.

## **Research Design**

This study consists of secondary analysis of administrative data previously collected on Religiousness and Post-Release Community Adjustment in the United States (Sumter, 2000). Data on the inmate behavior will be obtained from the review of previously completed inmate prerelease questionnaires and their criminal offense records. The collection and review of this data will allow for more specific examination and analysis of 1) participation in religious worship services, 2) participation in faith-based programming, 3) demographic data and 4) disciplinary infractions.

In conjunction with the judicial branch of government, all prisons in the United States promulgate an inmate handbook. This handbook includes information on the institutional operations, rules of conduct, and a list of disciplinary infractions that outline the level of seriousness and may include the range of sanctions to be imposed upon a finding of guilt. The purpose of the inmate handbook is to maintain order and structure and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the prison in an effort to operate in a safe

and secure manner. These rules and regulations are enforced 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week, by both custody and civilian staff with no room for discretion.

Violent infractions are automatically considered major in severity and consistent of those offenses in which bodily harm occurred or was intended to occur. The consequences are always serious and severe and often result in new criminal charges being filed by the prosecutor. Major non-violent infractions are those offenses that are serious and result in severe sanctions; however no bodily injuries occurred or were intended. Lastly, non-violent infractions are those prohibited acts that are considered less serious and result in less severe sanctions.

### **Sampling Plan**

The sample size in the dataset was reconfigured from 464 inmates to 454 inmates. Ultimately the reduction was due to one participant being under 18 years of age, and 9 participants were missing answers to both the dependent variables; hence not contributing to the primary analysis. Final study participants consist of adult males who were 18-62 years of age, having served a minimum of 3 months of their prison sentence, but not more than 25 years. Participants represent diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds and will include those who are US citizens (born or naturalized), undocumented residents, and those foreign born. As noted previously (see Chapter 2), there is a smaller percentage of female offenders in prison, with the male to female ratio in federal and state facilities combined representing approximately 9:1 (Stephan, 2008). Consequently, female offenders will be excluded. Additional exclusions include those 17 years of age and younger. Those housed in high level security areas such as administrative segregation or detention are excluded for safety and security reasons.

## **Data Collection**

The study intended to collect data from four prisons located in the Mid-Atlantic region. However given the extensive technical requirements for data collection of prison inmates, it was determined that the sample would derive from previously collected inmate records. The comprehensive dataset derived from twelve male correctional facilities across the United States and consisted of 431 previously collected variables for analysis. Variables were scrutinized and condensed to the 46 considered pertinent to these study hypotheses. This secondary data analysis design, consist of two groups: a religious activities groups and a non-religious activities comparison group. In order to be eligible for the religious group, one had to attend weekly religious worship services and/or participate in faith-based programs. While there is no commonly agreed upon definition of the concept of faith-based programs, for the purpose of this study the concept is defined as “funded and administered by a particular religion, focus on the faith and religiosity of clients, and fully express faith in the way they deliver services” (Mear et al., 2006, pg. 352; Smith & Sosin, 2001).

Faith-based activities are those provided by faith-based agencies or those in which the purpose is to promote a specific religion or assist an offender in their establishment of personal and intimate religious practices (Mear et al., 2006). In view of this definition, programs administered by a religious leader or a volunteer from a faith-based or secular agency which do not include specific religious components will not be considered a faith-based program. Examples of acceptable activities include: attending and participating in the following: weekly worship service of one’s religious affiliation, programs offered by a religious leader of the prison or community volunteer, i.e. bible study, Islamic studies, revivals, choir, religious self-improvement, faith-based counseling, and in-prison religious

seminars. Despite the often referenced faith-like language, such as “a higher power” frequently utilized in groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, for the purpose of this study, participation in AA and NA do not constitute as religious worship service or a faith-based program. Lastly, participants considered for the non-religious group will be those who indicate they are not religious and/or whose records demonstrate a lack of participation in any religious worship services or faith-based programs and services.

### **Variable Conceptualization**

Two groups are explored in within this study: 1) those categorized as “religious” and 2) those categorized as “non-religious.” An individual is considered to meet the criteria for the religious group if he frequently participated in prison religious services and/or faith-based programs. An individual is considered to meet the criteria for the non-religious group if they did not or rarely participated or attended prison religious services and/or faith-based programs. Dependent variables, defined as adjudicated disciplinary infractions while in custody, are represented by two different subgroups of violations: 1) all infractions (minor and major) and 2) major infractions (a prohibited act that is considered the most serious and often violent, resulting in severe sanctions); which have been adjudicated by the infractions officer. Additional independent and control variables such as socio-demographic information, substance abuse and treatment history, and criminal history were queried and analyzed. Sociodemographic data included: 1) race, 2) age, 3) educational level, and 4) marital status. Substance abuse history and treatment prior to incarceration and while in prison are also highlighted. Criminal history includes the number of criminal

convictions, the number of prison sentences served and the amount of time served in years and months on their current sentence.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Research on vulnerable populations such as the incarcerated requires compliance with stringent ethical guidelines, not only from the university, but also from prison officials. As a result it was determined that to minimize the ethical considerations and to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants, secondary data analysis of a dataset previously collected and managed through a research databank would be utilized. Through this data collection process, it eliminated the need to obtain informed consent due to confidential information including, but not limited to: the participant's name, inmate identification numbers and prison location are unidentifiable to the researchers and readers. Utilizing unidentifiable participant data ensured that no participants were at risk for coercion or undue influence. Finally, to ensure the protection of vulnerable populations, study protocols were reviewed and approved by the University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board (IRB).

### **Data Analysis**

For the purpose of analysis, data was classified into the following distinct categories: socio-demographic, religiosity, substance abuse and treatment, and criminal history. By utilizing the SPSS system, the researcher was able to run frequencies that provided a socio-demographic profile of the participants. Socio-demographic variables included age, race, gender, educational level and marital status. Religiosity variables were the type of faith indicated, religious and faith-based program involvement and worship services attended. Variables related to inmate behaviors were the number of disciplinary

infractions, number of disciplinary infractions that resulted in serving time in administrative segregation or detention and the type of infraction. In an effort to assess the relationship between infractions received and various control variables, the analysis is presented in two parts: preliminary and primary analysis. Likelihood Ratio Chi Squares of Omnibus Test will be provided. Once the data was gathered, and variables analyzed for appropriateness of this study, parametric values (i.e. mean, median) were calculated. Preliminary analyses consist of T-test, ANOVA, crosstabs, Chi-square test and Spearman's correlation to test the relationship between each pair of variables. The primary analysis consists of negative binomial regression models. Findings are presented in chapter nine.

## Chapter 9: Findings

### **Introduction**

Chapter nine provides the reader with the results of the empirical study and their relationship to the previously discussed hypotheses regarding religiosity and inmate behavior. Descriptive statistics and the results of the bivariate and multivariate analyses will be addresses.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

The racial composition of the study participants was consistent with current demographic of race in most prisons. Blacks makeup 41% of the prison population despite only being 13% of the US population (US Census, 2010; Carson & Sabol, 2012; Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011; Wagner, 2005; West, 2010). As shown in Table 1 about half of the participants in this study identified as Black and 40% White. However, the study sample has a low percentage of Latinos (4.9%) which is way below their 16% presence in the general population and below their 21% presence in most American prisons.

**Table 1**  
Frequencies and Percentages for Categorical Demographic Variable

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Religiosity		
Not Religious	211	46.7
Religious	241	53.3
Faith (religion)		
Protestant	271	61.2
Catholic	53	12.0
Muslim	18	4.1
No Preference/Nonbeliever	64	14.4
Other	37	8.4



Race			
	Caucasian	180	39.8
	African American	234	51.8
	Hispanic	22	4.9
	Native American	16	3.5
Marital Status			
	Married	90	19.9
	Separated	21	4.6
	Divorced	62	13.7
	Single	279	61.7
Educational Level			
	Grade School or Less (Grades 1–8)	74	16.4
	Some High School	141	31.3
	Completed High School/GED	146	32.4
	Some College or Completed College Degree	89	19.8
Times Convicted			
	1	239	53.1
	2	95	21.1
	3	50	11.1
	4	34	7.6
	More Than 4	32	7.1
Time Served			
	3 Years or Less	373	82.2
	More Than 3 Years	81	17.8
Pre-Incarceration Alcohol Use			
	Never	78	17.4
	Less Than Once a Week	109	24.3
	More Than Once a Week	261	58.3
Pre-Incarceration Marijuana Use			
	Never	165	37.1
	Less Than Once a Week	107	24.0
	More Than Once a Week	173	38.9
Pre-Incarceration Drug Use			
	No	245	55.1
	Yes	200	44.9

Participated in Drug Program Since This Sentence		
No	156	34.4
Yes	298	65.6
Participated in Alcohol Counseling Since This Sentence		
No	153	33.7
Yes	301	66.3
Religious Group Gives a Place of Safety		
Strongly Disagree	18	4.0
Disagree	52	11.6
Unsure	64	14.2
Agree	202	44.9
Strongly Agree	114	25.3
Anger in Free World and in Prison		
More Angry in Prison	262	57.8
The Same or More Angry in the Free World	50	11.0
Very Seldom Angry in Either	141	31.1
Frequency Of Anger In Prison		
Never	40	8.8
Seldom	53	11.7
Occasionally	100	22.1
At Least Once a Day	219	48.5
Most of the Time	40	8.8
Fear of Being Attacked in Prison		
Never	196	43.3
Seldom	167	36.9
Occasionally	46	10.2
Often	44	9.7
Fighting in Free World vs. Prison		
Very Seldom Fight	356	79.1
About as Many Fights	27	6.0
More Fights in Free World	34	7.6
More Fights in Prison	33	7.3
Fighting in Prison		
No	296	65.6
Yes	155	34.4

Arguments in Free World vs. Prison			
	Very Seldom Argue	275	61.1
	Same or More Arguments in Free World	78	17.3
	More Arguments in Prison	97	21.6
Frequency of Arguments in Prison			
	Never	113	25.1
	Seldom	248	55.1
	Occasionally	54	12.0
	Often	35	7.8

*Note.* Frequencies not summing to  $N = 454$  reflect missing data. The maximum range for the number of times convicted is 5; although the maximum range for the number of times in prison is 11. This may be attributed to parole violations that resulted in a parolee being remanded back to prison for a technical violation without receiving a new conviction or felony charge.

With Protestants comprising 51.3% of the nation's Christian population (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008), it was without surprise study data revealed that Protestants represented more than half of the faith group (61.2%), while Catholics represented 12%, and 14% of the sample indicated they did not have a religious preference.

One-third of the participants completed high school or had obtained a GED, approximately one third had some high school education, and 16% had only obtained a grade school education. Harlow (2003) offered a complimentary description in her study which found that almost a third of federal inmates and slightly more than a third of state inmates had a High School diploma or less.

More than half of the participants reported being single, and one-fifth reported being married. The average number of times a participant was convicted was 1.9 with a minimum range of once to a maximum range of five times, while slightly more than half of the participants had only one conviction and one-tenth were convicted three times. Length of time served revealed that four-fifths had served three years or less while the remainder had served more than three years.

With regards to substance use six months prior to this incarceration, more than half the participants reported they drank alcohol more than once a week and about one quarter drank less than once a week. Mumola and Karberg (2006) reported that 16.6% of state prisoners and 18.4% of federal prisoners committed their crimes in order to obtain money for drugs and 53% of state prisoners and 45% of federal prisoners meet the criterion of drug abuse or dependence. As such, the study data on drug usage six months prior to incarceration was surprising. Almost two-fifths of inmates reported using marijuana more than once a week and one-quarter used less than once a week. Regarding narcotic usage (hallucinogens, angel dust, crack cocaine, or heroin), more than half of the participants reported not having used drugs. By the same token, two-thirds of the participants reported having engaged in a prison drug treatment program and two-thirds reported having engaged in the prison counseling program for alcohol use.

Table 2 represents the means and standard deviations for continuous demographic variables. The average participant is 29 years of age (s.d. = 7.94) with a range of 18 to 62.

**Table 2**  
Means and Standard Deviations for Continuous Demographic Variable

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Age	453	28.52	7.94	18	62
Times in Prison	446	1.61	1.22	1	11

*Note.* *N*s not equal to 454 reflect missing data.

Despite that research conducted by Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2011) on recidivism has the national rate at 43%, two-thirds of this sample had been to prison

only once. Participants had been to prison an average of 1.6 times with the range of once to eleven times.

Table 3 provides a description of the frequencies and percentages for independent variables specific to worship services or faith-based programs and the level of involvement. Approximately two-thirds indicated they took part (occasionally, fairly frequently or regularly) in their religious services. In addition, slightly more than half indicated in the past year they went to religious services occasionally, fairly frequently or regularly. An astounding 76% indicated they did not receive any pastoral visitation by their pastor from their place of worship in the community, and 82% also indicated they did not participate in daily meditation/sweat lodge ceremonies. The study found that two-fifths of the participants indicated that while in prison they attended Bible/Torah/Koran study and prayer meetings at least once per week.

**Table 3**  
Frequencies and Percentages for Independent Variables

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Took an Active Part in Religious Service		
Never	48	10.7
Seldom	113	25.3
Occasionally	119	26.6
Fairly Frequently	62	13.9
Regularly	105	23.5
Attended Religious Service in the Past Year		
Never	39	8.8
Seldom	81	18.2
Occasionally	113	25.4
Fairly Frequently	93	20.9
Regularly	119	26.7

Participated in Worship Services		
Did Not Participate	112	25.2
Less Than Once a Week	100	22.5
At Least Once a Week	233	52.4
Participated in Bible/Torah/Quran Studies		
Did Not Participate	175	40.0
Less Than Once a Week	79	18.0
At Least Once a Week	184	42.0
Participated in Prayer Meetings		
Did Not Participate	181	41.2
Less Than Once a Week	81	18.5
At Least Once a Week	177	40.3
Participated in Meditation/Sweat Lodges		
Did Not Participate	361	82.4
Less Than Once a Week	24	5.5
At Least Once a Week	53	12.1
Participated in Pastoral Visitation Program		
Did Not Participate	335	75.8
Less Than Once a Week	39	8.8
At Least Once a Week	68	15.4
Attended Seminar Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries		
Never	322	70.9
At Least Once	132	29.1
Attended Bible Study Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries		
No	281	64.2
Yes	157	35.8
Participated in Religious Groups Since This Sentence		
No	252	55.5
Yes	202	44.5

*Note.* Frequencies not summing to  $N = 454$  reflect missing data.

Table 4 represents a description of the dependent variables. The average number of disciplinary infractions is approximately 1.5, with a range of 0-10. More than half of the sample indicated they had not received any disciplinary infractions. The average number of times a participant was sent to administrative segregation was 0.6, with a range of 0-10 times. Study data proved to be insightful when comparing national utilization of restrictive housing such as administrative segregation or detention confinement to the study population. The 2005 prison census revealed the total number of federal and state inmates was 1,525,924 with 81,622 (5%) being held in some form of restrictive housing, whereas, in this study, one-fourth of the participants reported having been sent to administrative segregation or detention (US Department of Justice, 2006; Browne, Cambier, & Agha, 2011).

**Table 4**  
Means and Standard Deviations for Dependent Variables

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Disciplinary Infractions in Current Sentence	454	1.49	2.51	0	10
Times Sent to Disciplinary Confinement/Administrative Segregation	453	.56	1.47	0	10

*Note.* *Ns* not equal to 454 reflect missing data.

### **Bivariate Analysis**

In order to further understand the relationships between the independent, moderator, and dependent variables, a series of bivariate analyses was conducted to help assess which variables to utilize in the multi-variate analysis.

The first hypothesis contents that inmates who participate in worship services or faith-based programs were less likely to have disciplinary infractions than those who did

not participate. Independent variables for worship services or faith-based programs include participating in: worship services, worship services less than once a week, Bible/Torah/Koran studies, Bible/Torah/Koran studies less than once a week, mediation/sweat lodge involvement, mediation/sweat lodge involvement less than once a week, visits from community-based pastor, religious groups this prison sentence, Prison Fellowship Ministries, frequency of taking an active part in religious services and frequency of going to religious services in the past year.

During the bivariate analysis phase the independent variables, demographics and covariates were tested. T-test, ANOVAs, crosstabs with chi-square test, and Spearman's correlation were applied to check the relationship between dependent variables and continuous variables. The results in Table 5 examine the frequencies and percentages for disciplinary infractions by categorical demographic variables. The following categorical demographic variables were significant (at the point five level or lower): religion, race, marital status, time served, pre-incarcerated marijuana use, pre-incarcerated drug use, fighting in the free world versus prison, fighting in prison, frequency of arguments in prison and the number of different convictions.

**Table 5**  
Frequencies and Percentages for Disciplinary Infractions in Current Sentence by Demographic Variables

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i>
Religiosity					2.81	.094
Not Religious	211	1.72	2.68	1.0		
Religious	241	1.31	2.34	.0		



Faith (religion)						10.50	.033
Protestant	271	1.35	<sup>a</sup>	2.43	.0		
Catholic	53	.92	<sup>a</sup>	1.43	.0		
Muslim	18	2.78	<sup>b</sup>	3.67	1.0		
No Preference/Nonbeliever	64	2.06	<sup>ab</sup>	3.00	1.0		
Other	37	2.00	<sup>ab</sup>	2.68	1.0		
Race						8.05	.045
Caucasian	180	1.22	<sup>a</sup>	2.26	.0		
African American	234	1.58	<sup>ab</sup>	2.60	.0		
Hispanic	22	2.05	<sup>ab</sup>	2.84	.5		
Native American	16	2.63	<sup>b</sup>	3.20	1.0		
Marital Status						12.09	.007
Married	90	.99	<sup>a</sup>	2.04	.0		
Separated	21	.95	<sup>ab</sup>	1.50	.0		
Divorced	62	1.21	<sup>ab</sup>	2.36	.0		
Single	279	1.77	<sup>b</sup>	2.71	1.0		
Educational Level						1.50	.682
Grade School or Less (Grades 1-8)	74	1.70		2.90	.0		
Some High School	141	1.65		2.61	.0		
Completed High School/GED	146	1.42		2.37	.5		
Some College or Completed College Degree	89	1.25		2.25	.0		
Time Served						34.16	< .001
3 Years or Less	373	1.10	<sup>a</sup>	1.99	.0		
More Than 3 Years	81	3.31	<sup>b</sup>	3.62	2.0		
Pre-Incarceration Alcohol Use						3.82	.148
Never	78	1.23		2.44	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	109	1.63		2.53	1.0		
More Than Once a Week	261	1.48		2.49	.0		
Pre-Incarceration Marijuana Use						9.45	.009
Never	165	1.19	<sup>a</sup>	2.27	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	107	1.34	<sup>ab</sup>	2.34	.0		
More Than Once a Week	173	1.80	<sup>b</sup>	2.67	1.0		

Pre-Incarceration Drug Use					4.51	.034
No	245	1.28 <sup>a</sup>	2.30	.0		
Yes	200	1.79 <sup>b</sup>	2.76	1.0		
Participated in Drug Program Since This Sentence					.48	.491
Yes	298	1.38	2.34	.0		
No	156	1.71	2.79	.0		
Participated in Alcohol Counseling Since This Sentence					2.04	.153
Yes	301	1.33	2.28	.0		
No	153	1.82	2.88	1.0		
Religious Group Gives a Place of Safety					6.13	.190
Strongly Disagree	18	3.00	3.60	1.5		
Disagree	52	1.67	2.89	.0		
Unsure	64	1.20	2.07	.0		
Agree	202	1.44	2.44	.0		
Strongly Agree	114	1.44	2.45	.0		
Anger in Free World and in Prison					1.75	.417
More Angry in Prison	262	1.42	2.40	.0		
The Same or More Angry in the Free World	50	2.00	3.08	1.0		
Very Seldom Angry in Either	141	1.47	2.48	.0		
Frequency Of Anger In Prison					7.96	.093
Never	40	2.48	3.36	1.0		
Seldom	53	1.36	2.32	.0		
Occasionally	100	1.46	2.36	.0		
At Least Once a Day	219	1.45	2.45	.0		
Most of the Time	40	.95	2.29	.0		
Fear of Being Attacked in Prison					1.36	.715
Never	196	1.70	2.79	.0		
Seldom	167	1.35	2.28	.0		
Occasionally	46	1.09	2.00	.0		
Often	44	1.57	2.48	1.0		

Fighting in Free World and Prison					14.17	.003
Very Seldom Fight	356	1.33 <sup>a</sup>	2.39	.0		
About as Many Fights	27	2.33 <sup>b</sup>	2.75	2.0		
More Fights in Free World	34	1.82 <sup>ab</sup>	2.99	.0		
More Fights in Prison	33	2.24 <sup>b</sup>	2.91	1.0		
Fighting in Prison					48.98	< .001
No	296	1.04 <sup>a</sup>	2.16	.0		
Yes	155	2.37 <sup>b</sup>	2.89	1.0		
Arguments in Free World And Prison					5.82	.054
Very Seldom Argue	275	1.38	2.46	.0		
Same or More Arguments in Free World	78	1.42	2.31	1.0		
More Arguments in Prison	97	1.89	2.80	1.0		
Frequency of Arguments in Prison					14.34	.002
Never	113	.96 <sup>a</sup>	2.14	.0		
Seldom	248	1.62 <sup>b</sup>	2.54	1.0		
Occasionally	54	1.89 <sup>b</sup>	3.01	1.0		
Often	35	1.77 <sup>b</sup>	2.50	1.0		
Times Convicted					25.27	< .001
1	239	.98 <sup>a</sup>	1.96	.0		
2	95	1.98 <sup>b</sup>	2.73	1.0		
3	50	2.46 <sup>b</sup>	3.30	1.0		
4	34	1.68 <sup>b</sup>	2.63	1.0		
More Than 4	32	2.13 <sup>b</sup>	3.14	1.0		

*Note.* Means with different superscripts differ,  $p < .05$ .

The bivariate analysis further revealed the numbers of disciplinary infractions received by inmates who fought in prison were significantly higher than inmates who did not fight in prison. The numbers of disciplinary infractions of Catholic inmates were significantly lower than the numbers for Muslims, and the numbers of disciplinary infractions of inmates who used drugs before incarceration were higher than inmates who did not use drugs before incarceration.

As shown in Table 6, the Spearman correlation between dependent variables and continuous demographic variables provides interesting data. There is a positive relationship between disciplinary infractions and times in prison. For an increase in the number of times an inmate has been to prison, there is an increase in disciplinary infractions received. There is a negative relationship between disciplinary infractions and age. For every one-year increase in age, there is a decrease in disciplinary infractions. On the other hand, there is a positive relationship between times sent to administrative segregation or detention and times in prison. For an increase in the number of times an inmate has been to prison, there is an increase in times sent to administrative segregation or detention.

**Table 6**  
Spearman correlations between dependent variables and continuous demographic variables

	Age	Times in Prison
Disciplinary Infractions in Current Sentence	-.113 *	.141 **
Times Sent to Administrative Segregation/Detention	.003	.097 *

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

A bivariate analysis between the independent variables (participation in religious activities) and the dependent variable (disciplinary infractions) was conducted. As seen in Table 7, the only independent variable that associated significantly with disciplinary infractions was attending Prison Fellowship Ministry seminars. Surprisingly, those who never attended the seminar reported a lower number of disciplinary infractions (average of 1.32) as compared with those who attended at least once (average of 1.92). This will be discussed further in chapter ten.

Table 7  
 Frequencies and percentages for disciplinary infractions in the current sentence by independent variables

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i>
Took an Active Part in Religious Service					1.71	.788
Never	48	1.54	2.71	.5		
Seldom	113	1.42	2.29	1.0		
Occasionally	119	1.50	2.63	.0		
Fairly Frequently	62	1.27	2.28	.0		
Regularly	105	1.67	2.70	1.0		
Attended Religious Service in the Past Year					5.54	.236
Never	39	2.28	3.38	1.0		
Seldom	81	1.67	2.61	1.0		
Occasionally	113	1.34	2.18	.0		
Fairly Frequently	93	1.51	2.37	1.0		
Regularly	119	1.29	2.54	.0		
Participated in Worship Services					.42	.812
Did Not Participate	112	1.53	2.56	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	100	1.61	2.61	1.0		
At Least Once a Week	233	1.45	2.48	.0		
Participated in Bible/Torah/Quran Studies					2.15	.342
Did Not Participate	175	1.48	2.50	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	79	1.86	2.75	1.0		
At Least Once a Week	184	1.38	2.48	.0		
Participated in Prayer Meetings					.74	.690
Did Not Participate	181	1.39	2.41	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	81	1.52	2.37	1.0		
At Least Once a Week	177	1.59	2.67	.0		
Participated in Meditation/Sweat Lodges					1.08	.584
Did Not Participate	361	1.39	2.37	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	24	1.92	2.75	1.0		
At Least Once a Week	53	1.94	3.24	.0		

Participated in Pastoral Visitation Program					99	.609
Did Not Participate	335	1.54	2.54	1.0		
Less Than Once a Week	39	1.23	1.90	.0		
At Least Once a Week	68	1.54	2.79	.0		
Attended Seminar Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries					5.13	.024
Never	322	1.32 <sup>a</sup>	2.32	.0		
At Least Once	132	1.92 <sup>b</sup>	2.88	1.0		
Attended Bible Study Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries					.07	.786
No	281	1.53	2.56	.0		
Yes	157	1.45	2.52	.0		
Participated in Religious Groups Since This Sentence					1.32	.250
No	252	1.59	2.54	.5		
Yes	202	1.38	2.47	.0		

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*Note.* Means with different superscripts differ,  $p < .05$ .

The second hypothesis contends that inmates who participated in worship services or faith-based programs were likely to have spent fewer times in administrative segregation or detention than those who did not participate. Table 8 examines the frequencies and percentages for times sent to administrative segregation or detention by demographic variables. The following four categorical demographic variables were significant: religion, race, time served, and fighting in prison. All other independent and moderator variables had no effect on the number of times sent to administrative segregation or detention.

**Table 8**

Frequencies and percentages for times sent to administrative segregation or detention by demographic variables

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i>
Religiosity					.32	.571
Not Religious	210	.60	1.49	.0		
Religious	241	.53	1.46	.0		
Faith (Religion)					20.02	< .001
Protestant	271	.45 <sup>a</sup>	1.29	.0		
Catholic	53	.25 <sup>a</sup>	.59	.0		
Muslim	18	1.61 <sup>b</sup>	2.00	1.0		
No Preference/Nonbeliever	64	.94 <sup>a</sup>	2.07	.0		
Other	36	.69 <sup>a</sup>	1.93	.0		
Race					14.14	.003
Caucasian	179	.32 <sup>a</sup>	1.03	.0		
African American	234	.69 <sup>b</sup>	1.57	.0		
Hispanic	22	.32 <sup>ab</sup>	.89	.0		
Native American	16	1.63 <sup>b</sup>	3.30	.5		
Marital Status					3.92	.270
Married	89	.48	1.51	.0		
Separated	21	.62	1.40	.0		
Divorced	62	.44	1.43	.0		
Single	279	.61	1.48	.0		
Educational Level					1.39	.707
Grade School or Less (Grades 1-8)	74	.66	1.67	.0		
Some High School	141	.62	1.56	.0		
Completed High School/GED	145	.47	1.33	.0		
Some College or Completed College Degree	89	.52	1.39	.0		
Time Served					28.72	< .001
3 Years or Less	373	.32 <sup>a</sup>	.90	.0		
More Than 3 Years	80	1.65 <sup>b</sup>	2.65	.0		
Pre-Incarceration Alcohol Use					3.35	.187
Never	78	.62	1.83	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	109	.75	1.75	.0		
More Than Once a Week	260	.46	1.21	.0		

Pre-Incarceration Marijuana Use					.42	.811
Never	165	.47	1.27	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	107	.59	1.62	.0		
More Than Once a Week	172	.62	1.58	.0		
Pre-Incarceration Drug Use					2.36	.125
No	245	.53	1.58	.0		
Yes	199	.59	1.36	.0		
Participated in Drug Program Since This Sentence					2.16	.142
Yes	297	.46	1.22	.0		
No	156	.74	1.84	.0		
Participated in Alcohol Counseling Since This Sentence					2.84	.092
Yes	300	.44	1.19	.0		
No	153	.78	1.89	.0		
Religious Group Gives a Place of Safety					9.11	.059
Strongly Disagree	18	1.67	2.72	.0		
Disagree	52	.40	.93	.0		
Unsure	64	.28	.68	.0		
Agree	202	.52	1.45	.0		
Strongly Agree	113	.67	1.70	.0		
Anger in Free World and in Prison					3.04	.219
More Angry in Prison	261	.54	1.51	.0		
The Same or More Angry in the Free World	50	.86	1.87	.0		
Very Seldom Angry in Either	141	.49	1.22	.0		
Frequency Of Anger In Prison					4.92	.296
Never	40	1.05	2.05	.0		
Seldom	53	.49	1.25	.0		
Occasionally	100	.52	1.51	.0		
At Least Once a Day	218	.51	1.33	.0		
Most of the Time	40	.48	1.69	.0		



Fear of Being Attacked in Prison					1.85	.603
Never	195	.59	1.55	.0		
Seldom	167	.44	1.21	.0		
Occasionally	46	.61	1.64	.0		
Often	44	.80	1.83	.0		
Fighting in Free World and Prison					4.49	.213
Very Seldom Fight	355	.50	1.38	.0		
About as Many Fights	27	1.07	2.13	.0		
More Fights in Free World	34	.47	1.16	.0		
More Fights in Prison	33	.79	2.00	.0		
Fighting in Prison					23.63	< .001
No	295	.38 <sup>a</sup>	1.24	.0		
Yes	155	.89 <sup>b</sup>	1.80	.0		
Arguments in Free World And Prison					.48	.786
Very Seldom Argue	274	.56	1.50	.0		
Same or More Arguments in Free World	78	.54	1.39	.0		
More Arguments in Prison	97	.59	1.47	.0		
Frequency of Arguments in Prison					2.36	.502
Never	112	.45	1.35	.0		
Seldom	248	.61	1.56	.0		
Occasionally	54	.43	.98	.0		
Often	35	.74	1.85	.0		
Times in prison					7.62	.107
1	239	.44	1.24	.0		
2	95	.52	1.35	.0		
3	50	.90	1.88	.0		
4	34	.97	2.04	.0		
More Than 4	31	.58	1.91	.0		

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*Note.* Means with different superscripts differ,  $p < .05$ .

Table 9 shows the frequencies and percentages for times sent to administrative segregation or detention by the religious independent variables. Most of the bivariate relationships between independent and dependent variables were not significant with one exception; attended seminar held by Prison Fellowship Ministries,  $p < .05$ . The following had no effect on the times sent to administrative segregation or detention: taking an active part in religious service, and attended religious service in the past year,  $p > .05$ . Also, no effect was shown for participating in: worship service in prison, Bible/Torah/Koran studies, prayer meeting, meditation/sweat lodges, pastoral visitation program, Prison Fellowship Ministries bible study, and religious groups since this sentence,  $p > .05$ .

Table 9  
Frequencies and percentages for times sent to disciplinary confinement/administrative segregation by independent variables

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i>
Took an Active Part in Religious Service					2.51	.642
Never	48	.52	1.62	.0		
Seldom	113	.48	.99	.0		
Occasionally	119	.61	1.54	.0		
Fairly Frequently	62	.48	1.62	.0		
Regularly	104	.63	1.68	.0		
Attended Religious Service in the Past Year					3.91	.418
Never	39	.85	1.90	.0		
Seldom	81	.43	.89	.0		
Occasionally	113	.50	1.32	.0		
Fairly Frequently	93	.72	1.86	.0		
Regularly	118	.47	1.45	.0		
Participated in Worship Services					1.91	.384
Did Not Participate	112	.59	1.38	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	99	.42	.97	.0		
At Least Once a Week	233	.61	1.69	.0		

Participated in Bible/Torah/Quran Studies					.10	.951
Did Not Participate	175	.46	1.29	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	78	.63	1.41	.0		
At Least Once a Week	184	.58	1.64	.0		
Participated in Prayer Meetings					1.47	.479
Did Not Participate	181	.45	1.33	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	81	.42	.92	.0		
At Least Once a Week	176	.66	1.65	.0		
Participated in Meditation/Sweat Lodges					3.83	.148
Did Not Participate	360	.45	1.22	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	24	.50	1.06	.0		
At Least Once a Week	53	1.26	2.66	.0		
Participated in Pastoral Visitation Program					1.78	.412
Did Not Participate	334	.54	1.39	.0		
Less Than Once a Week	39	.33	.98	.0		
At Least Once a Week	68	.78	2.03	.0		
Attended Seminar Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries					9.36	.002
Never	321	.41 <sup>a</sup>	1.18	.0		
At Least Once	132	.90 <sup>b</sup>	1.97	.0		
Attended Bible Study Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries					2.12	.146
No	281	.51	1.42	.0		
Yes	156	.63	1.60	.0		
Participated in Religious Groups Since This Sentence					1.79	.181
No	252	.60	1.42	.0		
Yes	201	.50	1.53	.0		

*Note.* Means with different superscripts differ,  $p < .05$ .

The bivariate analysis also revealed the number of times in administrative segregation or detention for Muslim inmates was significantly higher than other inmates except those who indicated no preference/nonbeliever. The number of times in

administrative segregation or detention for Native Americans was significantly higher than inmates from other ethnicities, and the numbers of times sent to administrative segregation or detention for inmates who fought in prison was significantly higher than inmates who did not fight in prison.

In sum, the relationships between demographics, covariates, dependent and independent variables yielded a miscellany of results. Based on the findings from the preliminary analysis both hypotheses appear not to be supported; hence rendering further analysis a foregone requirement. The next phase of analysis examines negative binomial regression models predicting disciplinary infractions and times sent to administrative segregation or detention.

### **Multivariate Analysis**

In order to test the study hypotheses a multi-variate statistics was employed. Poisson regression and negative binomial regression are commonly used for modeling count data (Berk & MacDonald, 2008). The Poisson regression assumes that the conditional variance of the dependent variable is equal to the conditional mean. In this data, the conditional variables of dependent variables were greater than the conditional mean, known as over-dispersion (Berk & MacDonald, 2008; Osgood 2000). For this reason, the Poisson regression was not applicable. However, according to Berk and MacDonald (2008) negative binomial regression can be used to “correct” for the over-dispersed count data (p. 270). It can be considered as a generalization of Poisson regression because it has the same mean structure that Poisson regression has, and it has an extra parameter to model the over-dispersion (Berk & MacDonald, 2008). Thus, negative binomial regression model was chosen to predict the number of infractions inmates

received, and the amount of times inmates had been placed in administrative segregation or detention.

After the right model was chosen the predictor variables were selected. There were more than 46 variables in this study. To avoid over-fitting, not all variables were placed into the model. The variables needed to influence the model were utilized and those variables that only had trivial effects were removed. First, all independent variables were included in the model because they are related to the research questions. Second, covariates and demographic variables were tested by being placed into the model one by one. If variables did not noticeably change, they were removed from the model.

In order to test the first hypothesis, model 1 which predicts the number of disciplinary infractions, was applied. More specifically, the first hypothesis asserts that when controlling for relevant variables, inmates who are religious and attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility will have a lower rate of disciplinary infractions than those inmates who do not attend.

Variables removed from the model included, but were not limited to: race, education, pre-prison drug and alcohol usage, in-prison drug and alcohol counseling. Overall, it was found that the negative binomial regression model was significant with a likelihood ratio,  $\chi^2(26) = 132.767, p < .001$ . As shown in Table 10, of all the predictor variables, 11 were significant predictors ( $p < .05$ ), three were independent variables, and the remaining eight were covariates. The frequency of participating in prayer meetings was a significant predictor. The incident rate of disciplinary infractions for inmates who participated in prayer meetings at least once a week was 1.647 times higher than was the incident rate for inmates who did not participate in prayer meetings ( $p = .019$ ). The

difference of incident rates between inmates who participated in prayer meetings less than once a week and inmates who did not participate in prayer meetings was not significant ( $p > .05$ ).

**Table 10**  
Negative binomial regression model predicting disciplinary infractions

	B	SE	OR	Wald	P
Intercept	1.559	.60	4.754	6.76	.009
Participated in Worship Services <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	.006	.23	1.006	.00	.979
At Least Once a Week	.024	.23	1.025	.01	.914
Participated in Bible/Torah/Quran Studies <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	.055	.25	1.057	.05	.824
At Least Once a Week	-.342	.21	.710	2.60	.107
Participated in Prayer Meetings <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	.060	.24	1.061	.06	.808
At Least Once a Week	.499	.21	1.647	5.50	.019
Participated in Meditation/Sweat Lodges <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	.053	.34	1.055	.03	.874
At Least Once a Week	.124	.29	1.132	.18	.673
Participated in Pastoral Visitation Program <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Month	.300	.29	1.349	1.07	.301
At Least Once a Month	.220	.26	1.246	.73	.393
Attended Seminar Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries <sup>b</sup>	.596	.17	1.814	12.21	< .001
Attended Bible Study Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries <sup>b</sup>	-.211	.20	.809	1.10	.295
Participated in Religious Groups Since This Sentence <sup>a</sup>	-.167	.19	.846	.76	.384
Took an Active Part in Religious Service	.068	.08	1.071	.80	.370
Attended Religious Service in the Past Year	-.203	.08	.816	5.99	.014

Marital Status <sup>c</sup>					
Separated	.267	.29	1.306	.85	.358
Divorced	-.358	.39	.699	.82	.365
Single	.620	.21	1.859	8.79	.003
Served More Than 3 Years on This Sentence <sup>d</sup>					
	1.140	.19	3.127	34.33	< .001
Age					
	-.042	.01	.959	13.62	< .001
Times Convicted					
	.224	.06	1.252	12.00	.001
Anger in Free World and in Prison <sup>e</sup>					
The Same or More Angry in the Free World	.044	.27	1.045	.03	.872
Very Seldom Angry in Either	-.715	.23	.489	9.31	.002
Frequency Of Anger In Prison					
	-.226	.10	.797	5.62	.018
Fear of Being Attacked in Prison					
	-.247	.08	.781	8.56	.003
Fought in Prison <sup>f</sup>					
	.851	.16	2.341	27.63	< .001

*Note.* Omnibus Test: Likelihood Ratio  $\chi^2(26) = 132.767, p < .001$ . <sup>a</sup>Compared to Did Not Participate. <sup>b</sup> Compared to Never attended. <sup>c</sup> Compared to Married. <sup>d</sup> Compared to served 3 Years or Less on this sentence. <sup>e</sup> Compared to More Angry in Prison. <sup>f</sup> Compared to did not fight in prison.

The in-prison seminar held by Prison Fellowship Ministries was also a significant predictor. The incident rate of disciplinary infractions for inmates who participated in the seminar was 1.814 times higher than was the incident rate for inmates who did not participate in the seminar ( $p < .001$ ). However, people who attended religious service in the past year were less likely to commit disciplinary infractions ( $p < .05$ ).

Inmates' marital status was another significant predictor. The incident rate of infraction for single inmates was 1.859 times higher than was the incident rate for married inmates,  $p = .003$ . The incident rates for separated and divorced inmates were not significantly different from those of married inmates,  $p > .05$ . Time served on this sentence

was a significant predictor. The incident rate of infraction for inmates who had served more than three years was 3.127 times higher than was the incident rate for inmates who had served three years or less,  $p < .001$ .

Inmates' age was also a significant predictor. With a one-year increase in their ages, the percent change in the incident rate of infraction decreased by 4.1%,  $p < .001$ . Another significant predictor was the number of times having been convicted of felony crimes. With a one-time increase, the percent change in the incident rate of infraction increased by 25.2%,  $p = .001$ . The difference between inmates' anger in the free world and inmates' anger in prison was a significant predictor. The incident rate of disciplinary infractions for inmates who were seldom angry in prison and in the free world was 51.1% lower than was the incident rate for inmates who were angrier in prison,  $p = .002$ . The incident rates of disciplinary infractions were not significantly different between inmates who had the same or higher levels of anger in the free world and inmates who had higher levels of anger in prison,  $p > .05$ .

The frequency of anger in prison was also a significant predictor, which had five levels: *never*, *seldom*, *occasionally*, *at least once a day*, and *most of the time*. With a one-level increase, the percent change in the incident rate of infraction decreased 20.3%,  $p = .018$ . The frequency in which an inmate was afraid of being attacked in prison was a significant predictor, which had four levels: *never*, *seldom*, *occasionally*, and *often*. With a one-level increase, the percent change in the incident rate of disciplinary infractions decreased 21.9%,  $p = .003$ . Amount of fights in prison was the last significant predictor. The incident rate of disciplinary infractions for inmates who had fought in prison was 2.341 times higher than was the incident rate for inmates who never fought in prison ( $p < .001$ ).



The study found that three faith-based activities were significantly associated with disciplinary infractions. However, two of them were associated negatively. That is people who attended select religious activities in the prison and those attending Prison Fellowship Ministries seminars were more likely to commit disciplinary infractions. This topic will be discussed in chapter ten.

Those who attended worship services in the year prior to being incarcerated were less likely to commit disciplinary infractions. This is the only religious variable significantly associated with the dependent variable in the hypothesized direction. Quite a few of the moderator variables such as serving more than three years in prison, number of times convicted, age, and level of age were significantly associated with the number of disciplinary infractions. As such, while the first hypothesis was not rejected, it received very little support.

In order to test the second hypothesis model 2 which predicts the number of administrative segregations or detention sanctions, was applied. The second hypothesis asserts that when controlling for relevant variables, inmates who are religious and attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility will have a lower rate of times sent to administrative segregation or detention than those inmates who do not attend. Variables removed from the model included, but were not limited to: age, times convicted, education, pre-prison drug and alcohol usage, in-prison drug and alcohol counseling. It was found that overall, the negative binomial regression model was significant with a likelihood ratio,  $\chi^2(28) = 101.903, p < .001$ .

The results in Table 11 show of all the predictor variables, six were significant predictors, two of them were independent variables and the remaining four were covariates.

The Prison Fellowship Ministries seminar was a significant predictor. The incident rate of administrative segregation or detention for inmates who participated in the Prison Fellowship Ministries seminars was 2.362 times higher than the incident rate for inmates who did not participate ( $p < .001$ ).

**Table 11**  
Negative Binomial Regression Model Predicting Times Sent to Disciplinary Confinement/Administrative Segregation

	B	SE	OR	Wald	p
Intercept	-2.607	.57	.074	20.82	< .001
Participated in Worship Services <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	-.098	.41	.907	.06	.812
At Least Once a Week	.079	.31	1.083	.07	.798
Participated in Bible/Torah/Quran Studies <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	.197	.36	1.217	.30	.586
At Least Once a Week	-.152	.30	.859	.26	.607
Participated in Prayer Meetings <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	.020	.36	1.021	.00	.955
At Least Once a Week	.204	.28	1.227	.53	.467
Participated in Meditation/Sweat Lodges <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Week	-.704	.43	.495	2.73	.098
At Least Once a Week	.595	.39	1.814	2.34	.126
Participated in Pastoral Visitation Program <sup>a</sup>					
Less Than Once a Month	-.509	.49	.601	1.09	.297
At Least Once a Month	-.042	.33	.959	.02	.898
Attended Seminar Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries <sup>b</sup>	.859	.25	2.362	12.31	< .001
Attended Bible Study Held by Prison Fellowship Ministries <sup>b</sup>	.214	.27	1.238	.63	.429

Participated in Religious Groups Since This Sentence <sup>a</sup>	-.461	.26	.631	3.20	.074
Took an Active Part in Religious Service	.087	.13	1.091	.49	.486
Attended Religious Service in the Past Year	-.336	.13	.715	6.94	.008
Faith <sup>c</sup>					
Catholic	-.086	.45	.917	.04	.849
Muslim	1.339	.40	3.817	11.41	.001
No Preference/Nonbeliever	.654	.30	1.924	4.87	.027
Other	-.022	.37	.979	.00	.954
Race <sup>d</sup>					
African American	.479	.26	1.615	3.53	.060
Hispanic	.291	.78	1.338	.14	.709
Native American	1.696	.49	5.451	12.15	< .001
Marital Status <sup>e</sup>					
Separated	-.095	.45	.909	.04	.833
Divorced	-.655	.57	.519	1.31	.253
Single	.489	.28	1.630	3.14	.076
Served More Than 3 Years on This Sentence <sup>f</sup>	1.303	.23	3.682	31.20	< .001
Religious Group Gives a Place of Safety	.184	.10	1.202	3.69	.055
Fought in Prison <sup>g</sup>	.912	.22	2.489	17.88	< .001

Note. Omnibus Test: Likelihood Ratio  $\chi^2(28) = 101.903, p < .001$ . <sup>a</sup> Compared to Did Not Participate. <sup>b</sup> Compared to Never attended. <sup>c</sup> Compared to Protestant. <sup>d</sup> Compared to Caucasian. <sup>e</sup> Compared to Married. <sup>f</sup> Compared to served 3 Years or Less on this sentence. <sup>g</sup> Compared to did not fight in prison.

The frequency of going to religious services in the past year was a significant predictor, which had five levels: *never*, *seldom*, *occasionally*, *fairly frequently*, and *regularly*. With a one-level increase in the frequency, the percent change in the incident rate of administrative segregation decreased by 28.5% ( $p = .008$ ). Inmates' religion was another significant predictor. The incident rate of administrative segregation or detention

for inmates who had no preference of religion or who were nonbelievers was 1.924 times higher than Protestant inmates,  $p = .027$ . The incident rate of administrative segregation or detention for Muslim inmates was 3.817 times higher than that of Protestant inmates,  $p = .001$ . Lastly, the difference between Protestant and Catholic inmates was not significant,  $p > .05$ .

Inmates' race was a significant predictor. The incident rate of administrative segregation or detention for Native American inmates was 5.451 times higher than Caucasian inmates,  $p < .001$ . The differences among Hispanic, African American, and Caucasian inmates were not significant,  $p > .05$ . Time inmates had served on this sentence was a significant predictor. The incident rate of administrative segregation or detention for inmates who had served more than three years was 3.682 times higher than was the incident rate for inmates who had served three years or less,  $p < .001$ . Amount of fights in prison was the last significant predictor. The incident rate of administrative segregation or detention for inmates who had fought in prison was 2.489 times higher than was the incident rate for inmates who never fought in prison,  $p < .001$ .

Regarding administrative segregation or detention, the results found that two religious behaviors were significantly associated. However, one of them was associated negatively. That is people who attended Prison Fellowship Ministries Programs were more likely to be sent to administrative segregation or detention. Again, this topic will be discussed in the next chapter.

Those who attended worship services in the year prior to being incarcerated were less likely to be sent to administrative segregation or detention. This is the only religious variable significantly associated with the dependent variable and in the hypothesized

direction. Quite a few of the moderator (covariate) variables such as race (Native Americans), serving more than three years in prison, and fought in prison were significantly associated with the number of times being sent to administrative segregation or detention. As such, while the second hypothesis was not rejected, it received little support.

### **Chapter Summary**

The findings in this chapter indicate the following demographic /covariates appear to be significant predictors of disciplinary infractions received: marital status, time served on the current sentence, age of the inmate, numbers of time having been convicted, being very seldom angry in prison compared to the free world, frequency of anger in prison, the fear of being attacked in while in the prison, and the amount of fights had in prison.

Although, when controlling for relevant independent variables only two were significant predictors: attending seminars held by Prison Fellowship Ministries (more disciplinary infractions) and attending religious services in the past year (less disciplinary infractions); hence minimally supporting  $H_1$ : inmates who attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility will have a lower rate of disciplinary infractions than those who do not.

Regarding the number of times an inmate was sent to administrative segregation or detention, the following demographic /covariates appear to be significant predictors of times sent to administrative segregation or detention: race, time served on the current sentence, the amount of fights in prison and the inmates selected faith group. However, when controlling for relevant independent variables four were significant predictors: attending seminars held by Prison Fellowship Ministries (more disciplinary infraction), attending religious services in the past year (less disciplinary infractions), being Muslim

(more disciplinary infractions), and having no religious preference (more disciplinary infractions); hence partially supporting H<sub>2</sub>: inmates who attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility will have a lower rate of times sent to administrative segregation or detention than those who do not.

## Chapter 10: Discussion

### **Introduction**

Chapter ten provides an opportunity for the reader to examine the findings and their interpretation. The chapter includes the research limitations of this study, and it concludes with addressing the implications for social work practice and future research.

### **Interpretation of the findings**

When discussing the potential to influence behavior religiosity and spirituality are two of the most overlooked dynamics in the helping profession. According to Chapman (1996) the helping profession tends to spend a great deal of time addressing clients' physical and psychological needs, yet spiritual needs are a mere afterthought, if considered at all. More importantly, if religiosity can influence healthy and prosocial behavior then it is worth examining its effect.

Preliminarily, the research hypotheses appeared not to be supported in the bivariate analysis. On the other hand, when controlling for relevant independent variables, multivariate analysis revealed some support for H<sub>1</sub>: inmates who attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility reported a lower rate of disciplinary infractions than those who do not, and partially supporting and H<sub>2</sub>: inmates who attend weekly worship services and/or faith-based programs in the correctional facility reported a lower rate of times sent to administrative segregation than those who do not. Other faith-based programs and religious variables were not significant; yet one variable (attending programs run by Prison Fellowship Ministries) was significantly negative.

This study yielded three main findings. Overall descriptive statistics were consistent with existing data on prison populations. Second, two independent variables were

significant predictors of disciplinary infractions received: attending seminar held by Prison Fellowship Ministries and attending religious services in the past year. Third, four independent variables were significant predictors of times sent to administrative segregation or detention: attending seminars held by Prison Fellowship Ministries, attending religious services in the past year, being Muslim, and having no religious preference.

Blacks made up 52% of the study population; Protestants were 61%, single inmates were 62%, and mean age was 29 years. However, regarding other demographics or covariates several anomalies were evident. For example, despite research literature which informs US rates of incarceration is 1 out of 36 for Hispanics and 1 out of 106 for Whites, the demographic of race was inconsistent as evidenced by the low Hispanic representation (4.9%) and high White representation (40%) in the study (Pew Center on the States, 2008). Contributing factors to the low participation of Hispanics may have been the result of sample eligibility requirements such as being able to speak, read or write English, the survey not being available in languages other than English or the inability of the researchers to successfully communicate with the participants in their language of choice.

The sample also represented a high degree of inmates with formal education which contradicts current literature on the educational levels of inmates. According to the Department of Justice (1999), 70% of inmates in America's prisons cannot read above a fourth grade level, yet 52% of the study participants indicated having a high school diploma, GED, some college or college degree. The conflicting data suggests a possible sample bias and raise doubts as to the generalizability of the findings.



Most interesting was the incongruous data for pre-incarceration drug use, with 55% indicating no use six months prior to incarceration; however 66% indicated having participated in prison-based drug treatment during their current prison sentence. Possible explanations for this counterintuitive data may be the difference between if the inmate remained in the community prior to trial and sentencing or if they were remanded to the county jail system and then transferred directly to the state or federal prison system. If the latter is true, then it would be feasible to conclude that the lack of drug use six months prior to the state or federal prison sentence was due to limited access. On the other hand, participants may have enrolled in the prison-based drug program to gain favorable administrative consideration or perhaps they finally admitted to themselves they had a substance abuse problem and decided to enter treatment. Further research could clarify the rationale for the finding.

According to fundamental principles of Christian theology, Jesus commanded his followers to visit those in prison. Moreover, it declares that those who visit people in prison would be received in heaven and those who refused to visit would be turned away (Matthew 25:36-41, NIV). Not only was visiting expected of the members of the congregation, it was a requirement of the clergy. However, in contrast to this expectation, study data revealed that an astounding 76% of the participants indicated they did not receive any pastoral visitation by their pastor from their place of worship in the community. I propose there may also be several explanations for this result. The first is geographical distance. The vast majority of state and federal inmates are not housed in prisons within a reasonable distant of their community with some averaging 100 miles away; making visiting not impossible, but an undue travel hardship (Travis, McBride, Solomon, 2006).

Second, it may be the result of participants not having an established relationship with a pastor in the community prior to becoming incarcerated. Nevertheless, further research could also clarify these relationships.

### **Disciplinary Infractions**

In the current study, people who attended religious activities such as participating in prayer meetings at least once a week and attending seminars held by Prison Fellowship Ministries were more likely to commit disciplinary infractions. One possible explanation may be that not all inmates attend faith-based activities with noble intentions. According to some cynics, often an inmate's motive is to con or manipulate, although religious optimists may argue otherwise. For some, free snacks such as cookies, chips and juice provided by the volunteers are a motivating factor for attending. Perks such as snacks from the outside, pleasurable conversation with a prison volunteer often of the opposite gender, as well as possible favorable parole consideration for participating in a prosocial activity, are all reasons that may influence inmate motivation for attending these seminars; not changing their behavior and reducing disciplinary infractions (Clear et al. 1992; Maruna, Wilson, & Curran, 2006; Rowell, Rodriguez, & Dammer, 2004; Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006). In other words, salvation, repentance and prosocial behavioral change are not the only motivating factors for inmates attending activities such as prayer meeting and Prison Fellowship Ministries seminars and for some, were never apart of the plan.

### **Administrative Segregation/Detention**

Four independent variables such as attending seminars held by Prison Fellowship Ministries, attending religious services in the past year, being Muslim, and having no religious preference were significant predictors of times sent to administrative segregation or detention. Similarly to the negative association between Prison Fellowship Ministries

and disciplinary infractions, inmates who also participated in seminars offered by the Prison Fellowship Ministries had a 2.362 times higher rate of administrative segregation than the incident rate for inmates who did not participate. Explanations for these findings may be consistent with previously mentioned explanation for disciplinary infractions.

Studies have shown improved behavior for a select group of inmates who participate in religious programming (Clear et al., 1992a, 1992b; Johnson et al., 1997; Johnson, 2011; O'Conner, Ryan, & Parikh, 1997; Sundt et al., 2002). Current study data did find that with one-level increase in the frequency of going to religious services in the past year, the percent change in the incident rate of administrative segregation decreased by 28.5%. One possible explanation for this maybe after the snacks become commonplace and the lack of willingness of the volunteers to discuss anything outside of the required topic leads to the participant paying attention and availing themselves to receive the message.

Compared with Protestant and Catholics participants, Muslim participants spent more time in administrative segregation or detention than other inmates. More specifically, the incidence rate for Muslim inmates was 3.817 times higher than that of Protestant inmates. According to Clear et al. (1992) Islam in American prisons has a long standing reputation or stereotype of being considered anti-establishment for prison administrators. As a result, some prison leaders may perceive their authority as being constantly challenged by Muslim inmates, hence developing difference toward Muslim inmates. In response to this difference, perceive or real, Muslim inmates may justify serious rule violations that result in harsher sanctions such as administrative segregation or detention.

## **Conclusion**

The recent interest in literature examining the treatment benefits of religion and spirituality in the profession of social work provided the impetus for studying religiosity and its significance in predicting behavior of the incarcerated population. According to Canda (1999), “spirituality is just the way of life; it is the way people find meaning, moral guidance, and proper relationship between themselves” (pg. 5). Like all methods of treatment interventions, religiosity can also be used to guide and transform clients from one state of being to another. This philosophy assumes that when working with inmates, religiosity or involvement in faith-based services aids in shifting their values from anti-social to prosocial.

Also well documented is the fact that reform through religious ideology was the original conceptual framework for the criminal justice system, prison management and inmate behavior modification (McKelvey, 1977; O’Conner & Perreyclear, 2002; Rowell, Rodriguez, & Dammer, 2004). Historically religious influence while in prison was heavy laden with Christian doctrine. Today, freedom of religious choice, including for those in correctional institutions, is protected by the United States Constitution. By the same token, the concept of individual choice is also applicable to inmates and their decision to commit an infraction. While social control theory asserts that all members of society have the capacity and an unconscious desire to commit deviant acts, ultimately it is the self-control exerted that prevents one from acting on those desires.

In many ways religiosity serves as a form of social control. Religion teaches the proper moral response to the temptations of antisocial behavior, as well as the consequences of such actions. It also influences inmate attitudes; thus influencing prosocial

behavior (Barkowski & Regis, 2003; Hill, 1997; Kerley et al., 2005; Martin and Martin, 2002; Mattis, 1997; Sherrat & Ellison, 1999). At the same time, if the inmate has not been taught the proper moral response, it could result in a lesser desirable outcome.

This quantitative study sought to examine the relationship between religiosity and disciplinary infractions and administrative segregation or detention. It proposed that through participating in religious services or involvement in faith-based programs can aid in the amelioration of antisocial behaviors; hence improving their conduct while in prison. The study yielded a miscellany of intriguing information. A bivariate analysis resulted in numerous variables having no effect on the number of disciplinary infractions received, as well as no effect on the number of times an inmate was sent to administrative segregation or detention. By the same token, when controlling for relevant variables a multivariate analysis resulted in a slightly similar outcome. Given these results, the findings suggest that participating in religious services or faith-based programs have minimal to no overall effect on the amount of disciplinary infractions received or the number of times an inmate is required to be housed in a more secured location such as administrative segregation or detention.

It is important to recognize that while this study appears not to fully support the hypotheses, as with most published research it also has several limitations that must be acknowledged.

### **Limitations**

This study acknowledges that while it is possible that internal generalizability; the ability to generalize the results to these specific correctional facilities may be applicable; the external generalizability of the noted outcomes of the inmates in this study may not be

similar or generalizable to other inmates throughout the United States (Maxwell, 1996). The original study from which the dataset was obtained examined a broad perspective of religion and post-release adjustment. Its aim was the effect of religion on recidivism, defined as rearrests, reconviction and reincarceration. Although the original study provided this researcher with an extensive and comprehensive dataset comprising of over 400 variables to consider, with forty-six variables being deemed relevant to the current study, conducting secondary data analysis was not without methodological limitations and shortcomings.

It is important to also acknowledge that the initial study lacked randomization and utilized a convenience sample. Data relied primarily on self-reported information. In light of this, inmates may have minimized their responses based on their perception of what the researcher may have considered appropriate and prosocial responses. Second, despite having the original codebook, the dataset was limited to the survey questions prepared by the previous research team; therefore ensuring that the questions for the current research were fully understood in the context of the purpose for this research was difficult. While a comprehensive review of the data codebook allowed for an analysis of each question, some key questions appeared ambivalent and were difficult to differentiate the point of time in which the participant was to respond. For example, it was not clear if the respondent was to answer from the perspective of prior to being incarcerated or since having been incarcerated when the original survey asked, "how far did you go in school." While this question was retained as a key variable for this study, others which may have been helpful, but whose wording failed to clarify prior to incarceration or while currently incarcerated, were eliminated. In addition, this researcher was also unable to ascertain the specific

disciplinary infractions committed due to the codebook failing to explain the coding utilized for this variable. This missing information could have aided this researcher in categorizing the infractions as major; subject to adjudication to administrative segregation or detention, or minor infractions.

Religiosity is a broad social construct with infinite explanations. It is a personal choice that varies immensely in commitment and practice. The self-reported pre-release questionnaires on inmate activities, behavior and beliefs utilized only present a thumbnail sketch of the depths of the participants' investment in their religious and spiritual orientation. As such, they may not be the most appropriate measures to adequately assess the participant's commitment to their religious beliefs and practices (Johnson et al., 1997). In light of this, the study could have been further enhanced if it had the ability to include a qualitative component by conducting in-depth participant interviews.

As previously argued, prison is a difficult and dangerous environment (Cnaan et al., 2008; Wolff, Blitz, Shi, Siegal, & Bachman, 2007). For the newly incarcerated inmate it becomes a matter of learning how to adjust quickly. For some, this may include embodying the behavior of the perpetrator, in an effort to avoid becoming prey. As an inmates' daily adjustment in the correctional facility becomes routine, their antisocial behavior may subside overtime. Therefore, measuring the efficacy of religiosity and faith-based program involvement over the length of their sentence; i.e. the first two years and again later after another four years, may have yielded relevant data in the hypothesized direction.

Another limitation is the fact the dataset did not provide the ability to differentiate the point of time when the infractions occurred relative to the participant's commencement in religious services or faith-based programs. Consequently, the study was unable to

differentiate if the antisocial behavior: disciplinary infractions and times sent to administrative segregation or detention; occurred prior to, during or after participating in religious services or faith-based programs.

### **Implications for Social Work Practice**

Social work practice is rapidly changing and has begun incorporating many facets to aid in assisting clients with achieving wholeness. However, religion and spirituality continue to be a neglected topic in the profession (Martin & Martin, 2002). Findings suggest there remains a further need to research the intersection of social work and religiosity, its overall efficacy as a tool for practitioners and its benefit to clients.

Correctional social workers are the frontline staff for addressing inmate behavior. With prison budgets increasing for construction and correctional officers, yet decreasing for rehabilitative services, it is important that practitioners embrace a holistic approach and utilize a plethora of interventions, including those considered nontraditional or self-help. To underscore this point, Meichenbaum (2008) argued religious principles in the Bible, Torah and Koran can all be considered forms of “self-help” which provide a form of client support in situations in which clients perceive as uncontrollable. While it remains unclear as to how or to what extent of assistance this form of self-help provides, it is important that social workers explore its value and role in the clients’ life.

Information obtained in this study can also inform social work education and curriculum development. Most practitioners maintain that religiosity is important when working with clients, yet graduate schools of social work fall short in educating social workers in this area (Mattison, Jayaratne, & Croxton, 2000). The Council of Social Work Education (CSWE, 2008) mandates schools of social work educate and train social workers



on the provision of culturally competent services. In addition, the National Association of Social Work (2008) declares “social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, ...religion” (p. 9). Despite that Blacks make up 41% of the US prison and jail system and despite that history has shown that the Afrocentric narrative is based on the foundation of religion and spirituality, modern day social work interventions continue to be Eurocentric by design and secular based, overlooking the need for culturally competent services (Martin & Martin, 2002).

Lastly, correctional social workers provide a myriad of services such as human rights advocacy, family intervention, counseling, case management, reintegration preparation as well as a host of other services. However, current social work education centered on working with those who are incarcerated is limited or nonexistent; causing social workers to be ill-prepared to work in a correctional setting (Cnaan, Draine, Fraizer, & Sinha, 2008; James, 2013).

It is my contention that once an understanding is established regarding the importance of the intersection of religion, spirituality, social work and the criminal justice involved clients, only then will a paradigm shift occur and true holistic social work practice commences.

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