A study of public policies derived from the war on drugs and how policy fuels recidivism among African American males in Atlanta, Georgia who commit drug related offenses

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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SHONDRIKA R. STEELE B.S. SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE, 2012

A STUDY OF PUBLIC POLICIES DERIVED FROM THE WAR ON DRUGS AND HOW POLICY FUELS RECIDIVISM AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA WHO COMMIT DRUG RELATED OFFENSES

Advisor: Dr. Joyce M. Goosby

Thesis dated May 2013

The field of Social Work covers an array of avenues which we advocate and apply practice, research and policy such as abuse, education and employment barriers, and mental health issues. Prior Social Work practice has scarcely address the issue of recidivism among African American males who are drug offenders. An essential factor of research evaluation of the public policies derived from the War on Drugs and how these policies fuel recidivism among African American males in Atlanta, Georgia. Recidivism is a viscous cycle which keeps African American male out of the African American homes and communities causing a detrimental effect on children, families, communities and the drug offender. A qualitative and quantitative analysis was used in this study. The research indicated factors such as employment discrimination, housing and social services restrictions, socio-economical, and socio-psychological factors all
play a vital rule in recidivism among African American males in Atlanta, Georgia. The research developed insight into why public policies derived from the War on Drugs should be evaluated for their effectiveness on stemming drug abuse and consequences of creating an oppressed class of individuals who are given minimal chances of becoming rehabilitated and leading law abiding lives within society.
A STUDY OF PUBLIC POLICIES DERIVED FROM THE WAR ON DRUGS AND HOW
POLICY FUELS RECIDIVISM AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN
ATLANTA, GEORGIA WHO COMMIT DRUG RELATED OFFENSES

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR., SCHOOL
OF SOCIAL WORK IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

SHONDRICKA R. STEELE

CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

ATLANTA, GA
MAY 2013
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As I ponder on this challenging yet inspirational journey of attaining this degree, I look to you Lord and simply say Thank You. Lord, without your many blessings of supportive family, friends and the faculty of Whitney M. Young, Jr.'s School of Social Work this journey would have been negated some time ago. I would like to thank my daughters, Shani Bryanna and Ayanna Noelle for their remarkable patience and mature understanding that Mommy is doing “this” for all of us. My mother, Dorethia Simmons who’s unwavering encouragement, prayers and holistic support empowered me to simply push through until I see the end. To my sister, Jemelia Simmons, thank you for support and being that safety net when I needed it. I also would like to thank all my friends, old and new for all of the encouragement and support, you guys constantly had me singing “That’s what friends are for”. To my “One”, you have been my rock and I look forward to spending the rest of my life showing you how I am so appreciative of your love and support, not only in this journey but also in my life. I’ve always believed there is a big difference between an educator and teacher. I am so blessed to have been educated by the best to include Dr. Sandra Foster, Dr. Robert Waymer, Dr. Susan Kossak, Dr. Gerry White and Dr. Joyce Goosby and to have the constant academic support of Mrs. Claudette King. You all have challenged me, inspired me, transformed me and most importantly educated me to be a Social Worker on the Masters level and I will carry your teachings in my spirit and also in my practice.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Fueled by the proclaimed War on Drugs in the United States there are now escalating prison populations which have ensued prison crowding, a societal barrier which impedes the transition back into society for ex-felons, and an oxymoron systematic failure of our penal system. The numbers of offenders imprisoned for drug related charges is steadfastly increasing with recidivism among African American males being an astronomical phenomenon. It seems that instead of battling drugs, our society has used this war to oppress African American males with a drug charge who unfortunately fall into the black hole of the judicial system.

Subsequent to the War on Drugs, America still has a major drug calamity. There have been many debates on why the U.S. seems to be losing this war. One perspective of why there is still a drug problem comes from a legal standpoint. Some members of law enforcement believe that the drug crisis is similar to the fallout from alcohol prohibition. There are some people, especially in law enforcement, that believe our Government needs to switch their focus from the prohibition of drugs to the legalization and regulation of illicit drugs (O'Conner, 2005). There is a group of conservative republicans who are also against prohibition based on the belief that prohibition promotes misuse and that illicit drugs should be sold in the same style as liquor stores which are regulated by the
The profits from these ‘drug stores’ would generate revenues for education and drug treatments. The numbers are alarming when one figure that the U.S. accounts for only 5% of the world’s population however uses more that 65% of the illicit drugs in the world. Prohibition has generated a significant black market on the drug trade. The majority of the profits are making foreign drug lords rich. If our government would change focus to legalization and regulation most of the profits would stay here in the U.S. and the revenues generated would be able to stay in this country’s economy (O’Conner, 2005).

The drug phenomenon in the United States is a significant contributor of recidivism for African American drug offenders. Prisons in the United States tend to have a negative effect on the nonviolent offender, consequently making him a better criminal, therefore also playing an essential role in the recidivism rate (Jones, 2010). It has been reported in Confronting Confinement, a June 2006 U.S. prison study by a bipartisan Commission on Safety and Abuse in American’s Prisons, that on any given day more than 2 million people are in prison or jail in the United States, and in the time period of a year, 13.5 million spend some time incarcerated. African Americans are likely to be incarcerated at a rate seven times higher than whites. Sixty seven percent of ex-offenders are rearrested and 52% are re-incarcerated within 3 years of their post release date. This alarming recidivism rate calls into question the efficiency of the costly $69 billion a year American penal system (U.S. Prisons Overcrowded and Violent, Recidivism High, 2007).
The demoralizing consequences of criminal prosecution for drug related crimes tend to have life time penalizations. This is yet another factor which influences the recidivism rate among African American males who commit drug offenses. Most public benefits are revoked, denied or reduced on the sole basis of a past or recent drug conviction. Also, unfortunately many policies and individuals have conceptualized drug-related charges to include any and everything drug related which includes possession charges. This creates an external barrier of individuals who are attempting to re-engage into society. Policies that were created in response to the War on Drug have dispensed these barriers which seem to be in place as a make shift blockade to a successful re-engagement into society. Such barriers include housing restrictions, higher education restrictions, restrictions regarding welfare reform and food stamps, felony disenfranchisement, immigration and child welfare (Drug Policy Alliance, 2010).

The United States criminal justice system plays a pivot role in the detrimental effect of how drug related policies negatively impacts families and communities of drug offenders. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, in 2007 an estimated 744,200 state and federal prisoners in the United States were fathers to 1,599,200 children under the age of 18. Presently there is an estimated 7.4 million children who have a parent in prison, in jail or under correctional supervision (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009). As a result of the degeneration of the Black family in respect to the War on Drugs, a child born in slavery had more of a chance being raised by both parents than an African-American child born today as the War on Drug wages on (Alexander, 2010).
Within this phenomenon of rising incarceration rates in combination with alarming recidivism rates, our communities are greatly affected because ex-offenders are experiencing difficulty reconnecting with their families. The relationship between ex-offenders and their families is essential to a successful re-entry into society. If this relationship is not bonded it can have a devastating effect on the ex-offender, the family construct and also on society. Recidivism is caustic when considering that out of the 1.5 million children who have a parent incarcerated, 94% of these incarcerated parents are African-American males (Dyer, 2005).

There are many factors which contribute to why it may be difficult for an ex-offender to reconnect to his family. However, one of the most significant factors is this upset of the African-American family is the ex-offender himself, his attitudes and behaviors. Unfortunately, those who commit crimes tend to have anti-social tendencies and also possess egocentric behaviors and attitudes. It is a profound notion that incarceration and harmful reformatory acquired behaviors from prison tend to sever family ties with an ex-offender and his family (Dyer, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Recidivism is considered as any illegal act that has a consequence of re-arrest, reconviction, or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year post release from a correctional facility (State and Federal Prisoners and Prison Facilities, 2010). The War on Drugs has not diminished the number of repeat drug offenders. Actually, since the United States implemented the campaign to wage a War on Drugs, jails are seeing more repeat drug offenders than ever before. This phenomenon of the
Recidivism of drug offenders brings about the validity of the on War on Drugs success and at spotlight the societal causalities of this war.

Recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses has a multifaceted effect. The United States penal system, judicial system, communities, and families all share a stake in this unfortunate phenomenon. Recidivism among African American drug offenders plays a significant factor in prison overcrowding. America has the highest rate of incarceration in the world. Our economy is spending an estimated $40 billion a year into a criminal justice system that shows significant disparity in regards to African-American males.

There are several risk factors which contribute to the high anomaly of African American males that end up in the criminal justice system with a drug charge to include single female parent upbringing, socio-economic factors and the break-down of a supportive community. There is a 16% probability of an African American male going to prison in their lifetime. Once they are in the system, 7 out of 10 offenders fall into the cycle of recidivism (Reed, 2010). It is disturbing that there are more African American males in our penal system than in our colleges and universities. Our penal system is spending an estimated $25,000 a year per prisoner which is significantly more expensive than state college tuition (Matsuyanna, 2010). It should be a public outcry in response to the resources being utilized, implementation of more policies and restrictions to incarcerate and oppress than to educate and employ our citizens. During a time of economic downturn, as a government one would think we would want more of a positive return on our scarce monetary resources.
Communities are also feeling the dire impact of recidivism among African American males. African American communities have greatly transitioned from the traditional two parent home, into homes where there is no male head of household. This crisis also plays a significant role in addressing reasons why recidivism exists all together and it's a poignant fuel to this cycle that's eradicating African American males from their communities and creating significant modification to the structure of the black family.

A significant issue that affects recidivism includes the short comings of the penal system. It seems as if the penal system systematically punishes and all together dismisses the rehabilitation aspect of preparing its drug offenders to transition back into society. The U.S. judicial system has protruded sentencing disparities which seem to target the African American community more drastically than any other race for the same type of crime.

The proclaimed War on Drugs also plays a vital role on recidivism among African American drug offenders. The intent of this research is address significant dilemmas associated with the War on Drugs and demonstrate how it fuels recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses. The various public policies which are derived from the War on Drugs are essential problems because they have created barriers for convicted drug offenders to successfully re-enter society after serving their prison term (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009). The War on Drugs has created a systematic form of oppression which is similar to how slavery has deteriorated the structure of the African American family. The policies stemming from
the War on Drugs have presented barriers for many African American males and prevented them from reunifying and remaining with their families.

Recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses is important to both child health and welfare and also the health and mental health foundations of social work practice. As evident to the detriments of having an incarcerated parent, it is warranted to target attention and efforts which will acquire data in order to gage a scope of the welfare and development of these children. Assessing children of prisoners to look at their biological, psychological, sociological issues, including living situations and resources, can assist families and greatly benefit at risk children. Many of these children are in the child welfare system even before their parent becomes incarcerated and many others enter into the system after the parent is sentenced to serve time in prison. A great interest for social workers in addressing child welfare is the consideration of the financial stability and work situations of mothers caring for children while their fathers are in prison. In addition, there is the matter of significant concern which is related to what happens when the incarcerated parent returns to his or her family unit (Children with Incarcerated Parents, 2008).

There are noteworthy challenges that children and families with incarcerated parents confront. In addition to experiencing the ordeal of loss, but they also deal with a multitude of relationships, economic, and social challenges that occur because of the parent's incarceration. Risk factors which signals this population's vulnerability include parental mental illness, family violence, parental substance abuse, and poverty
which have been reported in many children's homes and lives before their parent's incarceration (Bouchet, 2012).

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore public policies in relation to the War on Drugs which may manifest into barriers which causes recidivism among African American males who are drug offenders. The study will examine common external and internal barriers which may prevent these individuals from transforming into a productive member of society as opposed to remaining a delinquent to society once released from prison. Furthermore, this study aims to identify the major risk factors related to recidivism and create proposals which can possibly decrease the rate of recidivism and increase the rate of African American males who successfully transition back into their communities after serving their time in prison. The benefits of having these males back into the community without returning to the lifestyle which caused the original or subsequent arrest will set milestones in the war that America is waging on drugs.

Research Questions

As a means of completing a comprehensive study on public policies derived from the war on drugs and how policy fuels recidivism among African American males in Atlanta, Georgia the following research questions were developed.

Research Question One: What impact does job discrimination based on a felony record contribute to the recidivism rate of African American males who commit drug offenses?
Research Question Two: To what extent does the War on Drugs public policies to include housing and social services banishment play into recidivism of African-American males who commit drug offenses?

Research Question Three: To what extent does recidivism influence children whose parents are repeat offenders to engage in criminal activity?

Research Question Four: To what extent do socio-economic factors play into recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses?

Research Question Five: To what extent do socio-psychological issues impact recidivism among African American male drug offenders?

Hypothesis

There is a relationship between the derivatives of the War on Drugs to include housing, social benefits, employment and educational barriers, family relationships and attributes of the penal system and judicial system, which has a significant influence on the recidivism rate among African American males who commit drug related offenses.

Significance of the Study

Exploring the internal and external factors which may impact the recidivism rate of African American males who commit drug offenses is significant for several groups of stakeholders. These stakeholders include the United States government, the criminal justice system, society, the felon, communities, and the families of the ex-felon. The War on Drugs has created a systematic break down in the judicial system in regards to drug crimes. The judicial system has lumped all drug related crime into a one size fit all
resolution. However, most drug related crimes are multifaceted with so many other underlying issues besides the drug offender.

The War on Drugs has embedded our society with many disparities beginning with the initial entry into the judicial system without proper representation, sentencing, punishment versus rehabilitation, and even after being released back into society with housing, jobs, and social services barriers. The War on Drugs can easily be seen as the present day Jim Crow of society being that it is a systematic way that society has created to impede African American males from ever being productive citizens once they have a drug conviction on record. This form of modern day oppression has created a permanent American undercaste (Alexander, 2010).

It is essential to understand factors which contribute to recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses because with this understanding social workers and others have adequate weapons to successfully fight the War on Drugs and re-establish the presence of African American males in families and communities. Another reason that this study is significant is because of the strong impact incarceration have on children. Children who have spent their childhood visiting parents and other family members in prison tend to have the perspective that incarceration is simply a part of life. These children tend to embrace a lifestyle that will lead them in the direction of incarceration as if it’s a rite of passage (Staples, 2007).

The researcher hopes that the results of this study will empower social workers to become advocates on behalf of ex-drug offenders, their families and their communities. There is a need for advocacy to pursue policy changes in regards to the War on Drugs.
Additionally, there is a need for direct intervention within and outside of prison for ex-offenders to provide rehabilitation as well as emotional, family and physiological support.

The War on Drugs in reality should be a multifaceted conquest, but unfortunately it appears to be biased toward the African American community. It is the intent of the study to provide inference for the field of social work to generate policies and programs that emphasize best practice interventions for an ex-drug offender that will enable them to remain in society and out of prison.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Historical Perspective

The current War on Drugs was declared by the Reagan Administration in 1982 when drug crimes were actually declining. It was evident that the declaration on the War on Drugs was mostly derived from a racial political agenda. The former First Lady, Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" anti-drug campaign turns into a focal point of the Reagan administration's anti-drug campaign. The movement concentrates on white, middle class children and is supported by donations from business and the private sector. Shortly after the War on Drugs was declared by President Reagan, crack-cocaine strolled on the streets of inner city neighborhoods. This event along with media propaganda solidified the justification for the War on Drugs and its harsh punitive actions (Alexander, 2010).

The War on Drugs was initiated by Republicans; however during the Clinton Democratic Administration it was felt that there was a need to also prove that they were not soft on crime. This triggered overkill on initiating anti – drug policies which resulted in historic records in the increase in federal and state prisons inmates. Clinton and his Democrats introduced legislation banning drug felons from public housing and also denying them from basic public assistance benefits for life. Clinton's administration set the stage for the government to legally impose discrimination and impose oppressive
barriers for drug offenders to a substantial amount of civic benefits such as political, economic, educational and social prospects (Alexander, 2010). This review of literature explores the various ways by which the War on Drugs stimulates recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses. The policies which were initiated as a fall out from the War on Drugs tend to have a corrosive effect on the African American community, especially under educated, unmotivated, antisocial and economically challenged African-American males. The literature spotlights common barriers such as employment, reunification with family members, housing restrictions, and education opportunities restrictions. These barriers employ a daunting challenge for ex-offenders as they attempt transition back into society after being incarcerated. The literature review manifested insight into how such barriers impact the increased risks for a drug-related ex-offender to become a repeat offender. The review will also investigate the methods that are currently being utilized by various judicial systems which attempt to address the detriment of recidivism among drug offenders by offsetting their attention and objectives towards the most significant issue which is the many-sided crisis of drug abuse (Do Drug Courts Work? Findings From Drug Court Research, 2010).

As per the review of the literature, the War on Drugs’ battlegrounds are logistically fought in poor communities of color, even though studies have emphasized that people of all races use and sell illegal drugs. The literature suggests that white youths are more inclined to use illegal drugs than African American youths. White youths are 3 times more likely to be seen in the Emergency Room than African-American youths as a result of drug related incidents. It seems that study after study as per the
literature reflects the disproportionate number of African Americans males who are incarcerated due to drug related offenses in comparison to other races who also abuse drugs. African American males represent an alarming 80% - 90% of drug offenders who are incarcerated in some states (Crack/Cocaine Sentencing Disparity, 2010). For the purpose of this research, the following list of terms has been operationalized to acquire a better understanding of the focus of the research.

**Definition of Terms and Factors**

*Recidivism* is described by criminal acts which subsequently lead to the re-arrest, re-conviction, and re-incarceration of an ex-offender during a three year period of post release from prison (Summary of Recidivism Research, 2001).

*Crack/Cocaine Sentencing Disparity*, five grams of crack yields a mandatory five year sentence while it takes 500 grams of powder cocaine to carry that same mandatory sentence (Crack/Cocaine Sentencing Disparity, 2010).

*Housing*, tenants who apply for public housing can be denied admission if they have a felony drug conviction or if they are currently in a drug treatment program. The federal “One Strike” allows public housing to evict anyone who has been involved in any drug related activity (Barriers to Re-Entry for Convicted Drug Offenders, 2003).

*Higher Education*, the Higher Education Act of 1998 was amended to prohibit anyone with a drug conviction from receiving federal financial aid for post-secondary education (Barriers to Re-Entry for Convicted Drug Offenders, 2003).
Welfare Reform and Food Stamps, anyone with a felony drug-related conviction is barred from receiving public assistance to include cash and food stamps permanently (Barriers to Re-Entry for Convicted Drug Offenders, 2003).

Felon Disenfranchisement, convicted drug offenders are denied the right to vote in many states (Barriers to Re-Entry for Convicted Drug Offenders, 2003).

Recidivism and the Drug Offender

According to the literature it is difficult to compare recidivism rates by states for a few reasons to include that currently there in no standardize or measurement and some states have yet to begin tracking recidivism (Recidivism in Connecticut, 2010). The cumulative literature does share consistent numbers regarding recidivism rates when looking at recidivism on the national level. The literature reflects common patterns and tendencies when researching recidivism. In the literature, the researcher found there was a specific demographic and criminal characteristic which seems to forecast recidivism. An offender’s age at the time of the original arrest according to the literature can be an indicator of that offender becoming a repeat offender. The literature suggests that the younger the offender is upon entering the penal system the more likely he will become a repeat offender. There is also a consensus within the literature that there is a significant account for males in the recidivism rates. Recidivism research within the literature have also concluded that African-American tend to represent a large portion of the recidivism statistics. Upon the review of the literature, the researcher discovered studies which gathered that most repeat offenders had a history of drug abuse and the more habitual and
entrenched the addiction the more increase of an impact the addition had on the risk of possible recidivism (Recidivism in Connecticut, 2010).

The review of literature conveys that researchers have found there is a relationship between the lack of education and/or employment and the degree of difficulty of transitioning back into society after incarceration. As a result of not possessing skills, a trade or education many ex-offenders find it challenging to say the least to find and maintain employment. This is noteworthy factor because many ex-offenders exploit this to return to criminal activity as a means of survival (Recidivism in Connecticut, 2010). The literature review yields information in regards to how program participation may impact recidivism. There are various programs within prisons and community based programs where their objectives are to rehabilitate, supervise and assist offenders. However, according to the literature there have not been systematic or scientific evaluations of these programs causing the findings to be inconclusive.

The most apparent and even the most solemn collateral effect of incarceration is its effect on a family. Incarceration emasculates families and has a negative impact on children, caretakers, and the communities in which they live. The family separation tends to have an irrevocable effect on both parents and children. Time is something that can never be regain once it’s gone and a childhood lost is a childhood which can never be recovered. The rising harshness of sentencing laws guarantee that incarcerated parents, and their children, will be separated for a considerable amount of the children's lives (Gentry, 2003).
The literature details how family separation is a significant detriment of incarceration in regards to parent-child relationships which are special and in its own degree. Factors include that parenting includes intangible elements that overcome the absence of daily physical presence, "parenting from a distance" evoke grim, irrefutable confines on the parent-child relationship. The negative effects of parental incarceration on families are fueled when incarcerated parents and their children do not have consistent contact with each other. The weight of maintaining contact between parent and child during incarceration has been emphasized throughout the literature; however recent studies conclude that this rarely happens. Unfortunately less than fifty percent of the incarcerated parents in state prisons ever see their children in person while they are incarcerated (Gentry, 2003).

Policy Reformations and Programs

In respect to the literature review the researcher discovered a few essential policies which have been implemented federally to combat this phenomenon of recidivism among drug offenders. Indeed the policies that have been created are steps in the right direction toward our current drug policy's reformation, however it is also merely a drop in the bucket when considering how astronomical of a detrimental effect it has had on our society particularly the African American community.

Several documented studies poised a significant question - "What can be done to lower recidivism?" The literature conveyed an agreement that the current Penal System in the United States tend to have an adverse reaction to offenders. Instead of rehabilitating the offenders, the day to day life in Prison often makes offenders a better
criminal (Seiter, 2005). There are some programs which attempt to address recidivism and curb the numbers of drug offenders in the United States. The literature suggests that instead of concentrating on mandatory sentencing laws and creating policies which attempt to strip offenders of any hope to become a productive member of society, the focus needs to how do society assist with rehabilitation with a social justice mindset provide a second chance for these offenders (Jones, 2010).


President Barack Obama signed the Fair Sentencing Act in August 2010. This Act addresses the disparity in crack/powder mandatory sentencing policy. The Anti-Drug Act of 1986 mandated that for a drug sale with five grams of crack cocaine carries the same mandatory sentence as five hundred grams of powder cocaine. This mandatory sentencing law indicated the bipartisan drug war frenzy of the day and was basically politically driven without any scientific research or even the consideration of the long term cost in monetary and human capital (Nadelmann, 2010). As President Obama made an effort towards reforming American’s Drug Policy it could be seen as a move in the right direction. This milestone in reforming the War on Drugs in the United States also
represented that significant African-American stakeholders are also recognizing the importance of criminal justice reform and are making waves to address this issue (Nadelmann, 2010).

There is a need for a common understanding among researchers who are addressing recidivism and how to successfully transition an offender back into the community to study professionals who are based in the community. Faith based programs according to the literature has been successful in the transition process for many offenders. Faith based programs in partnership with correctional professionals often have success with providing ex-offenders with basic needs such as employment, housing, support, and counseling services. The faith based programs provide an empathetic, compassionate supportive environment providing a balance to the unforgiving, judgmental, dysfunctional and discriminating society (Reed, 2010).

Afrocentric Perspective

The Afrocentric perspective stems from historical Africa prior to the introduction of Europeans and Arabs and this tradition has it philosophical veracity in continental Africa even after the European and Arabic influence. The Afrocentric paradigm suggests that slavery has destroyed some but not all of the African traditional culture in African-Americans. Afrocentrists believe that because the degree of African culture that still remains an essential factor in African American lives that African Americans should be studied as a distinct cultural and ethnic group and Eurocentric behavioral theories should not be utilized when attempting to explain the behavioral conduct of African Americans (Fisher, 2005).
According to the literature the Afrocentric perspective contend that the majority of human issues in the United States are a result of oppression and estrangement. The Afrocentric viewpoint accounts the phenomenon of substance abuse on political, economic and socio-cultural aspects of the United States. The literature suggests that Afrocentrists believe that there is a conspiracy in the United States where there is an elite few who has political and economic authority and to maintain their power these elite few have strategized by destabilizing a significant portion of the population to be passive. This group of elitists has utilized substance abuse and any derivative of it as an instrument to maintain their grip at the top. The literature suggests that this weapon was targeted directly at the African American community where the majority of the people are in dire socio-economical situations which are also a feeding frenzy for substance abuse (Fisher, 2005).

The War on Drugs and recidivism among African American males who commit drug crimes should be on the front line of issues which needs to be addressed in the African American community through the Afrocentric Perspective. The policies which have derived from the War on Drugs have a multifaceted consequence in the African American communities. Polices which hinder employment result in barriers to African American males to not only provide for themselves but to also be a financial provider to their families. Policies which bar drug offenders from public housing are encouraging single parent households. Policies which restrict eligibility for drug offenders to financial aid for education denies the drug offender the opportunity to escape the realm of socio-
economical disarray which may have initially engaged that individual to become a drug offender.

Social workers who take on the War on Drugs in the Afrocentric Perspective attempt to unmask the social and judicial disparities of the anti-drug policies which are attempting to drive African American males into a social apocalypse. The War on Drugs is yielding a sort of bondage for ex-offenders which cause them to trip up and fall back into the matrix of delinquency and recidivism. This vortex has wreaked havoc into the African American community affecting more than just the drug addict or the drug dealer but their families especially their children. The Afrocentric perspective seeks to comprehend and address issues which negatively affect the entire African American community.

Social workers who deal with clients who have experienced incarceration directly or indirectly can greatly benefit their client by utilizing the Afrocentric perspective to collectively address the client’s needs. Incarceration of an individual with a drug charge affects all client systems which that client has been involved. Social workers working with offenders who are transitioning back into society should consider working with the offender’s family and community so that a collective effort can be made to avoid recidivism and provide the means to have the offender to successfully transition back into his family’s lives and his community.
Theoretical Framework

It has been researched that there are both psychological causes and social perspectives that also stimulate the drug problem in the U.S. The essential psychological accounts for drug abuse include either the consequences of the lack of social learning and the fortification of drug-taking behaviors or some type of personality disorder (Jones, 2010). According to Jones, in the article *Why America Has Repeat Drug Offenders*, there is also a significant degree of the social angle of why there is a momentous drug predicament in the United States. The symbolic interactionist perspective, functionalist perspective, and conflict perspective are some to the social perspectives on this drug crisis. It is believed that within the symbolic interactionist perspective there exist a “drug subculture” and the more time an individual spends in that subculture the more detached from society and more connected within that drug subculture, subsequently leading to drug abuse and drug related crimes.

Another degree of the symbolic interactionist approach to the drug problem is the labeling conjecture. Sociologists theorized that once society places a the label of drug addict on an individual, society then blames the individual and holds that person solely responsible for their behavior. This is where the systematic breakdown is initiated because instead of identifying the issue of drugs as a social problem it’s labeled as a personal issue (Jones, 2010). Sociologists also look at the functionalist standpoint on drug use within the United States. This perspective maintains that drug offenders do have a purpose in society. The drug offenders stimulate our economy by creating jobs for the pharmaceutical, correctional, and law enforcement sectors, however at the cost of many
lives. In addition, Sociologist suggests that the conflict perspective believe that individuals in high positions in economic and political power have made illicit drugs that are abused by the poor illegal a fashion of oppression to control a group of individuals (Jones, 2010).

The literature review suggests that the functionalist theory describes crime as a subsequent to the absence of social structure with a society. The absence of this social structure is an instigated by social tensions with the society (Taylor, 2010). Buchanan within the article, *Theories regarding Criminal Behavior and Recidivism and Offenses*, describes that the functionalist theory suggests that when a person is unable to survive by legal avenues, they will eventually stray away from the law and find illegal revenues to survive (Taylor, 2010). Taylor also explains that the conflict theory emphasizes that economics and social authorities within a society are the reasons for crime. The radical theory summarized through the literature review is yet another social theory which may contribute to recidivism. The radical theory suggests that people with wealth and power are less likely to commit crimes. The radical theory implies that street crimes receive harsher punishment than white collar crimes. The radical theory attempts to explain the racial disparities in the judicial system as it relates to drug crimes (Taylor, 2010).

The literature suggests the United States judicial system should employ more social workers as a mean to bring more social justice into the current criminal justice system to address the issues of escalating prison populations and increased recidivism rates. One consideration would be to provide access to evidence-based bio-psychosocial
treatment while the offender is incarcerated, and to provide similar services once the
inmate reenters his community (Wilson, 2010).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Methods and procedures utilized in the management of this study, which is about public polices derived from the war on drugs and how policy fuels recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses in Atlanta, Georgia, are offered and discussed in this chapter. This chapter exemplifies research design, description of the site, sample and population, description of the instrument, data collection, and treatment of the data and limitation of the study.

Research Design

The design of this study is formulated through a two tier descriptive approach. The researcher utilizes both qualitative and quantitative elements to acquire a higher degree of comprehension of research findings. Quantitative research will be employed with examining the statistical data gathered from the study in order to acquire a relationship among trends and the actual phenomenon researched. The research will apply triangulation to promote a degree of control for validity and reliability. The triangulation process of the research will gather data from 3 different research sites and two separate populations which are impacted by the research study. Triangulation is an analytical approach which incorporates multiple data sources to enhance the understanding of a phenomenon and direct policy decision making to tackle such issues.
Triangulation is simply defined as the fusion and combination of data from multiple sources by the means of collection, examination, comparison and interpretation. The data collection process utilizes Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved questionnaires and the literature review.

Description of the Site

Utilizing the triangulation method the researcher, data will be collected from three different locations which have interaction with ex-offenders who commit drug crimes in Atlanta, Georgia. The Atlanta Transitional Center, located at 332 Ponce De Leon Avenue NE, Atlanta, Georgia, is a program which provides housing and other services for ex-offenders who are transitioning from incarceration back into society. Jefferson Place, located at 1135 Jefferson Street, Atlanta, Georgia is a homeless shelter for men in Fulton County, Georgia. Fulton County Drug Court, located at 1135A Jefferson Street, Atlanta, Georgia, is a court mandated Intensive Outpatient Program which provides services to drug offenders in Fulton County. All three research sites provide services and programs to a significant number of African American males who are drug offenders in Atlanta, Georgia.

Sample and Sample Population

The research is cumulated from 33 random participants from each of the three different research sites. The targeted total number of participants for the study is 99. One cohort of participants is ex-offenders who are African American males and have committed a drug offense, ages will range from 18 years old to 60 years old. The second set of participants is human service professionals who have interaction with drug ex-
offenders and members of this population not specific to age, gender or race. The concentration of the data collected, will consist of participants who have committed a drug related crime.

Description of the Instrument

Two different questionnaires were used in this study. The primary instrument utilized was a 20-item questionnaire which was designed to gauge the demographics, experiences and opinions as it relates to the public policies derived from the War on Drugs and African American males who are drug offenders in Atlanta, Georgia. Subsequently, a 7-item questionnaire was used to capture data from human service professionals employed at the three research sites that also have some type of interaction with African American males who are drug offenders in Atlanta, Georgia. This questionnaire was designed using the Likert scale with a range of 1-4 to gauge their opinions and perspectives on the derivative of the public policies on the War on Drugs and how these policies impact the recidivism rate of African American males, as ex-offenders who commit drug offenses in Atlanta, Georgia.

Data Collection

For the purpose of this study, the research used the questionnaire, “A Descriptive Study of the Public Policies Derived from the War on Drugs and How Policy Fuel Recidivism among African American Males in Atlanta, Georgia who Commit Drug Related Offenses,” as a tool to collect data. The questionnaires were randomly administered from October 1, 2012 through October 8, 2012 by the researcher at the three
research sites, Atlanta Transitional Center, Jefferson Place and Fulton County Accountability Court.

Treatment of the Data

Data was collected and presented to the researcher for investigation. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were applied to detect any possible trends and magnitude of the issue. Chi square was calculated by utilization of cross-tabulation. Chi square was employed as a trial statistics to resolve if there was a statically noteworthy relationship among the research variables. In order to produce a 2x2 cross tabulation, the variables in the offenders questionnaire question 10 (Drug Conviction), question 15 (A drug conviction has prevented me from securing three or more employment) had to be recoded.

Limitation of the Study

The limitations related to this study involve researching only one urban city. Recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses is a national issue. The process of obtaining valuable information from multiple demographic locations will yield a more generalized conclusion of the research. The major pitfall of this study was that it conducted exclusively to the city of Atlanta, Georgia. However, the study will provide some insight on factors which are related to public polices derived from the war on drugs and how policy affects recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses. In addition another limitation of the study included the instrument utilized in the research which did not incorporate a statistical analysis or test
run to determine the questionnaires' validity. In spite of the limitations of the study, the findings and the questions raised by this study can evoke interest into the evaluation of public policies derived from the War on Drugs and also future research regarding how the judicial system is failing African American families and communities.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the research study. It describes the psychosocial outcomes of African American males who are ex-felons with drug related charges in Atlanta, Georgia; subsequently perspectives from human services professionals who work with this population will also be presented. The findings are divided into four sections: demographic data, offender participants’ perspectives, human service participants' perspectives and research question and hypothesis.

Demographic Data

A demographic synopsis was created of both groups of research participants. Descriptive statistics for the drug offenders were utilized to investigate the following: age group, ethnicity, gender, highest education, marital status, children, employment history, housing, criminal history, drug convictions and personal drug convictions. Additional descriptive statistics for the human service professionals included position and place of employment.

The research population was comprised of eighty nine (89) African American adult males with the age range of under 20 to over 50 who indicated that their highest education were elementary school (32.6%), high school (39.3%), vocational school (19.1%) and college (9%). Participants indicated their marital state as being married
(21.3%), never married (38.2%), divorced (37.1%) and widowed (3.4%). The research participants indicated having children (77.5%) and not having any children (22.5%). Participants reported data on their employment history as being no employment history (9%), unemployed for 1 year or less (23.6%), unemployed 2-5 years (29.2%), unemployed 5+ years (15.7%), employed part-time (10.1%), employed full-time (4.5%) and working under the table (7.9%). In the area of housing, participants reported as being homeless (27%), living with a family friend (61.8%), and having own home-apartment (11.2%). The criminal history for the research population were shown to be misdemeanors (23.6%), 1-2 felony convictions (59.6%), 3-4 felony convictions (13.5%) and 5+ felony convictions (3.4%). Drug convictions for the study participants were indicated as no drug convictions (18%), 1-2 drug convictions (71.9%) and 3+ drug convictions (10.1%). The inquiry’s sampling specified that they acquired no personal drug convictions (19.1%), personal drug conviction as a user (48.3%), personal drug convictions as a dealer-distributor (32.6%). Table 1 is a synopsis of the research participants who are drug offenders. It displays the frequency distribution of the demographic variables.

Table 1
Demographic Profile for Research Drug Offenders Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 up</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 Continued
Demographic Profile for Research Drug Offenders Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
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<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Married</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Employment history</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed 1 year or less</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed for 2-5 years</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed 5+ years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed part-time</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed full-time</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under the table</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Education</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School/GED</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with family-friend</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having own home/apartment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 Continued
Demographic Profile for Research Drug Offenders Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misdemeanors</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Felony Convictions</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 Felony Convictions</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ Felony Convictions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Convictions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Drug Convictions</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Drug Convictions</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>71.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+ Drug Convictions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Drug Convictions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Personal Drug Convictions</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a User</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a Dealer-Distributor</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 1, the typical offender respondent was an under 40 African American male, never married, without children, has a high school/GED education, living with a friend/family member, has 1-2 felony convictions and 1-2 drug convictions as a user.

Drug Offenders Participant's Perspectives

Table 2
I am able to provide stable financial support for my family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 is a frequency distribution of 89 men indicating whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed or strongly agreed that they are able to provide stable financial support for their family. Of the 89 participants, 57 (64%) disagreed on some level that they are able to provide stable financial support for their family and 32 (36%) agreed that they were not able to provide stable financial support for their family.

Table 3

A Drug Conviction has negatively impacted my relationship with my family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 is a frequency distribution of 89 men indicating whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed that a drug conviction has negatively impacted their relationship with their family. As shown in Table 3, the majority of participants agreed that a drug conviction has negatively impacted their relationships with their family. Of the 89 participants, 56 (63%) agreed on some level that a drug conviction has negatively impacted their relationship with their family, while 33 (37%) disagreed on some level that a drug conviction has negatively impacted their relationship with their family.
Table 4
Housing restrictions have prevented me from living in the same house with my children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 is a frequency distribution of 89 men indicating whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, strongly agreed, or agreed that housing restrictions have prevented them from living in the same house with their children. As shown in Table 4, most participants agreed that housing restrictions have prevented them from living in the same house as their children. Of the 89 participants, 50 (56.2%) agreed on some level that housing restrictions have prevented them from living with their children, and 39 (43.8%) disagreed that housing restrictions have prevented them from living in the same house as their children.

Table 5
A drug conviction has prevented me from securing three or more employment opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 is a frequency distribution of 89 men indicating whether they strongly agreed, agreed, strongly agreed that a drug conviction has prevented them from securing
three or more employment opportunities. As shown in Table 5, most participants report that they agreed that a drug conviction has prevented them from securing 3 or more job opportunities. Of the 89 participants, 53 (59.5%) agreed on some level that a drug conviction has prevented them from securing three or more job opportunities, while 36 (40.4%) disagreed on some level that a drug conviction has prevented them from securing three of more job opportunities.

Table 6
A drug conviction has discouraged me from looking for legitimate employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 is a frequency distribution of 89 men indicating whether they strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree that a drug conviction has discouraged them from looking for legitimate employment. The majority of the research participants agreed on some level that a drug conviction has discouraged them from looking for legitimate employment. Of the 89, men 57 (64%) agreed on some level that a drug conviction has discouraged them from looking for legitimate employment, while 32 (35.9%) of the participants reported that a drug conviction has discouraged them from looking for legitimate employment.
Table 7
A drug conviction has prevented me from attending college or vocational school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 is a frequency distribution of 89 men indicating whether they strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree whether a drug conviction has prevented them from attending college or vocational school. The majority of the research sample indicated that they disagreed on some level that a drug conviction has prevented them from attending college or vocational school. Of the 89 men, 57 (64%) disagreed that a drug conviction has prevented them from attending college or vocational school, while 32 (35.9%) agreed on some level that a drug conviction has prevented them from attending college or vocational school.

Table 8
I have thought about engaging in illegal activities to support myself or my family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 is a frequency distribution of 89 men indicating whether they strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly disagree that they thought about engaging in
illegal activities to support themselves or their family. The majority of the participants indicated that they agreed that they have thought about engaging in criminal activity to support themselves or their family. Of the 89 men, 61 (68.6%) reported that they agreed on some level that they thought about engaging in criminal activity to support themselves or their family, whereas 28 (31.5%) disagreed on some level that they have not thought about engaging in illegal activities to support themselves or their family.

Table 9
I sometimes feel that my drug conviction is a lifetime penalty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 is a frequency distribution of 89 men who participated in the research study and whether they strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree that they sometimes feel a drug conviction is a lifetime penalty. The majority of the study participants' perception was that they agreed on some level and indicated that they felt a drug conviction is a lifetime penalty. Of the 89 men, 54 (60.7%) indicated that they agreed on some level that they felt a drug conviction is a lifetime penalty, while 35 (39.3%) of the participants reported that they disagreed on some level that they feel a drug conviction is a lifetime penalty.
Table 10
I feel there are sufficient opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 is a frequency distribution of 89 men, indicating whether they strongly disagree, disagree or agree that they feel there are sufficient opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction. The majority of the participants disagreed that they feel there are sufficient opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction. Of the 89 men, 89 (91%) disagreed on some level that they feel there are sufficient opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction, whereas 8 (9.0%) participants agree that they feel there are sufficient opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction.

Table 11
Demographic Profile for Study Participants who are Human Service Professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Manager</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinician</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In which agency are you employed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulton County Drug Court</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Place</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta Transitional Center</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 represents a typical human service professional respondent as being a Case Manager from Fulton County Drug Court.
Table 12
What is the most significant obstacle for ex-drug offenders in finding employment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal History</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Experience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12, is a frequency distribution of nine (9) human service professionals' perspective on whether criminal history, no experience or homelessness is the most significant obstacle for ex-drug offenders in finding employment. The majority of the human service professional surveyed reported criminal history as being the most significant obstacle for ex-offenders in finding employment. Of the 9 respondents, 5 (55.6%) reported criminal history as being the most significant, 1 (11.1%) indicated no experience and 3 (33.3) reported homelessness as being the most significant obstacle for ex-drug offenders in finding employment.

Table 13
Which clients are more successful with the completion of your program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13, is a frequency distribution of nine (9) human service professionals’ perspective on which clients are more successful with the completion of their program. Of the 9 participants, 9 (100%) reported that employed clients are more successful with the completion of their program.
Table 14
Which clients are more likely to be terminated from your program or commit another crime?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Deficiencies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14 is a frequency distribution of nine (9) human service professionals’ perspective on which clients are more likely to be terminated from their program or commit another crime. The majority of the human service professionals indicated unemployed clients are more likely to be terminated from their program or commit another crime. Of the nine (9) respondents, six (66.7%) felt unemployed clients, two (22.2%) reported clients with educational deficiencies and one (11.1%) reported homeless clients are more likely to be terminated from their program or commit another crime.

Table 15
Which clients tend to transition back into society and refrain from committing another crime?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>77.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug-Alcohol Free</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15 is a frequency distribution of nine (9) human service professionals’ perspective on whether an employed or a drug-alcohol free client tend to transition back into society and refrain from committing another crime. The majority of the human
service professionals indicated that employed clients tend to transition back into society. Of the nine (9) participants, seven (77.6%) perspective was that employed clients tend to transition back into society, whereas two (22.2%) human service professionals' perspective was that drug-alcohol free clients tend to transition back into society.

Table 16
Which clients have a stable support system from family and the community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16 is a frequency distribution of nine (9) human service professionals' perspective on which clients have a stable support system from their families and communities. Of the nine (9) respondents, 9 (100) of the human service professionals indicated that employed clients tend to have a stable support system from their families and communities.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: There is a relationship between job discrimination based on a felony record and the recidivism rate of African American males who commit drug offenses

Hypothesis: There is no statistical significance relationship between the job discrimination based on a felony record and the recidivism rate of African American males who commit drug offenses in Atlanta, Georgia.
Table 17 is a cross tabulation of employment history and rather a drug conviction has prevented the drug offender from securing three or more job opportunities. It shows the relationship between the two variables and indicates whether there was a relationship between the employment history and the job opportunities of drug offenders which are American males who live in Atlanta, Georgia.

Table 17

Cross tabulation of War on Drugs policies to include job discrimination and the employment history of African American males who commit drug offenses (N=89)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment History</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-5 years</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A drug conviction has prevented me from securing three or more employment opportunities

| Disagree   | 31 | 34.8% | 5 | 5.6% | 36 | 40.4% |

Table 17 continued

Cross tabulation of War on Drugs policies to include job discrimination and the employment history of African American males who commit drug offenses (N=89)

| Agree      | 38 | 42.7% | 15 | 16.9% | 53 | 59.6% |

| Total      | 69 | 77.5% | 20 | 22.5% | 89 | 100% |

Chi square = 2.56 df 1

Table 17 indicates that of the 89 ex drug offenders, 38 or 42.7 percent agreed that there is a relationship between a drug conviction discrimination and job history. When the chi square test was applied the null hypothesis was rejected. As shown in Table 17,
the chi square test indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship (2.56) between criminal history discrimination and job history at the .05 level of the probability.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY AND SOCIAL WORK IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion of the Study

The study was designed to describe the public policies derived from the War on Drugs and how policy fuels recidivism among African American drug offenders in Atlanta, Georgia. The study also analyzed the target population and answered five research questions about drug offenders’ experiences and perspectives on the public policies stemming from the War on Drugs and how policy can affect the potential of recidivism among this population. Subsequently the research took into consideration prior literature to include journals and articles which were related to public policies derived from the War on Drugs and how these policies can influence recidivism among African American males.

The intent of this research was to explore the independent variables of housing restrictions, employment, education barriers which are all public policies derived from the War on Drugs and analyzed how these variables influence African American males’ actions and perceptions which can land them back in jail which is the dependent variable of recidivism. The study hopes to explore the detrimental effects in African American families and communities where African American males who are drug offenders are an important commodity.
The conclusions and recommendations of the study findings are presented in this chapter. Each research question is presented in order to summarize the significant findings of interest.

Research Question 1: There is a relationship between job discrimination based on a felony record and the recidivism rate of African American males who commit drug offenses.

As a means to determine what extent does the War on Drugs public policies to include housing and social services banishment play into the recidivism of the 89 African American males in this study, who commit drug offenses in Atlanta, Georgia a cross tabulation of the two variables were tabulated. The analysis indicated that of the researched 89 men, 36 (40.4%) disagreed that a drug conviction has prevented them from obtaining three or more employment opportunities, while 53 (59.6%) agreed that a drug conviction has prevented them from obtaining three or more employment opportunities. The analysis of this cross tabulation would suggest that the majority of African American males who commit drug offenses in Atlanta, Georgia believe that their felony drug conviction has prevented them from securing three or more job opportunities.

Research Question Two: To what extent do the War on Drugs public policies to include housing and social services banishment play into recidivism of African American males who commit drug offenses?

As a means to determine the extent of how public policies derived from the War on Drugs to include housing and social services banishment have on the recidivism of
African American males who commit drug offenses, the researcher utilized the Liker
Scale to gauge to perspective of 89 African American male drug offenders in Atlanta,
Georgia. The findings of these offenders perspective based on their own personal
experiences are that of the 89 participants 50 (56.2%) reported that housing restrictions
have prevented them from living in the same house with their children, while 39 (43.8%)
reported that they disagreed with the statement “Housing restrictions have prevented me
from living in the same house with my children.” The researcher concluded that the
majority of the participants were restricted from living in the same home as their
children, considering the demographics of the study population of only 69 (77.5%)
reported having children.

The researcher subsequently studied literature of articles and journals regarding
housing restrictions and social service banishments as result of a drug conviction. The
literature heightened the notion that Legislation meant to fight drug use by disallowing
government services to convicted drug users appears to intensify drug abuse while
compelling recently released drug offenders back into a life of crime.

Research Question Three: To what extent does recidivism influence children whose
parents are repeat offenders to engage in criminal activity?

As a means to determine the extent of how recidivism influence children whose
parents are repeat offenders to engage in criminal activity the researcher utilized the Liket
Scale to establish the demographics of 89 African American male drug offenders in
Atlanta, Georgia who does not reside in the home with their children due to housing
restrictions derived from the War on Drugs. The research finding concluded that the
majority of the sample population did not reside at home with their children due to housing restrictions against a felony drug conviction. The effects of having a parent, especially the male parent, living outside of the home has its own set of accelerated risks for children. The effects of having a parent arrested and incarcerated face its own type of unique difficulties in children to include the trauma of sudden separation from their caregiver, the vulnerability to feelings of fear, anxiety, anger, sadness, depression and guilt. They may be moved from caretaker to caretaker. The behavioral consequences can be severe when there is an absent positive intervention. Negative behavioral indicators can include sadness, withdrawal, low self-esteem, poor school performance, truancy, the use of drugs or alcohol and aggression which are all prerequisites of an African American male fated to be involved in the penal system.

Research Question Four: To what extent do socio-economic factors play into recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses?

There is no conclusive evidence proving that socioeconomic status is directly related to recidivism however for the purpose of this study the attempt to determine the extent of how socio-economic factors play into recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses the researcher utilized the Likert Scale to establish the demographics of 89 African American male drug offenders in Atlanta, Georgia to gauge their current socio-economic status to determine if certain factors to include the level of education, employment, marital status and income are common characteristics of an African American male drug offender in Atlanta, Georgia. The study found that out of the 89 participants, the typical African American male drug offender in Atlanta, Georgia
35 (39.3%) had a high school/GED diploma/certificate, 34 (38.2%) has never been married, 55 (61.8%) lives with family/friend, 26 (29.2%) has been unemployed for 2-5 years, and 57 (64%) is unable to financially provide for his family.

The researcher subsequently performed an analysis of the literature of articles and journals as a means to convey a descriptive conclusion of how socio-economic factors influence recidivism among African American males who commit drug offences. The diverse array of literature implies that socio-economic factors to education, employment, marital status, community and culture can be skewed as at-risk socio-economic factors which can significantly impact the cycle of recidivism among African American males who commit a drug offense.

Research Question Five: To what extent do socio-psychological issues impact recidivism among African American male drug offenders?

As a means to determine the extent of socio-psychological issues impact on recidivism among African American males who commit drug offenses, the researcher utilized the Likert Scale in an attempt to scope the perspective of the 89 research participants. Of the 89 males, 80 (91%) disagree that there are significant opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction. 56 (63%) agree that a drug conviction has negatively impacted their relationship with their families. The majority 61 (64.6%) of the participants have thought about engaging in illegal activity to support himself or his family, also the majority of the participants 54 (60.7) feel as if their drug conviction is a lifetime penalty. The researcher subsequently performed an analysis of the literature of articles and journals as a means to weigh in a descriptive conclusion of how socio-
psychological factors influence recidivism among African American males who commit drug offences. The assorted collection of literature implies that socio-psychological factors can impact coping efficacy and be pretenses for barriers which can impede a successful re-entry in society.

The research was guided by a tailored Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs of the African American male in Atlanta, Georgia. The public policies derived from the War on Drugs have affected the majority of the study's participants in a detrimental way and has negated a fundamental theory of human development. Employment discrimination results in a high unemployment rate for this population of individuals and significantly impacts a drug offender's ability to acquire shelter, food, and their basic necessities to survive. Housing restrictions and drug convictions which affects the majority of the participants has negatively impacted the drug offender's relationship with his family, which presents issues with safety and love/belonging in the hierarchy of needs. The majority of the participants felt that their drug conviction was a lifetime penalty; the feeling of hopelessness could be a factor which would cause a drug offender to go out and commit another crime as a means to support himself or his family.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Upon the conclusion of this research, the investigator proposes to invest the findings of the study into significant social work implications with the integration of the Afrocentric Perspective in the areas of practice, policy and research. The War on Drugs have considerably impacted the African American community in such a significant manner through its caustic effect on African American males. Once their punitive sentences have been served, African American males are depleted of opportunities and
resources which can assist them into becoming productive law abiding citizens, sons, husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles, and most importantly part of the community.

**Practice**

Future social workers can benefit from the finding of this study and implement more innovative and effective practice applications of individual and group therapy while the drug offender is in prison. Utilizing modalities of Cognitive Behavior Therapy to challenge and change the drug offender’s criminal mentality to change his behavior can have an effective effect on the recidivism rate of African American males. Social workers are a part of the collective whole in the African American community and as social workers we can embark on this journey as advocates for communities, families, children and even the drug offender. Advocacy is needed in our judicial system, churches, schools, and communities for the plight of children of convicted drug offenders, families of the convicted drug offenders and the convicted drug offender himself. Advocacy is essential to discourage job and housing discrimination for drug offenders so that they may have the opportunity to support and reside with their family. There is a collective consequence when a drug offender is sent to prison; therefore a collective effort is needed in addressing the real issue of substance abuse in this phenomenon. In the area of practice in addressing the issue of a drug offender it is valuable to enhance or it may be necessary to even develop a drug offender’s moral value in an attempt to help him understand the effects of using and selling drugs as it directly relates to him having a detrimental effect on his family and community. Social Workers should be incorporated more into our judicial system during the court process as a means to be a guardian ad litem for the community as a whole and advocate for implementing
more programs such as Drug Courts and seeking substance abuse interventions instead of punitive prison terms for some drug related charge, of course depending on the magnitude of the charge.

**Policy**

The findings of this study have major ramifications for the implementation of policy changes. The War on Drugs itself needs to be transformed to actually be a war on drugs and not a war on African American males who have drug related charges. Instead of public policies which encourage housing restrictions and social services barriers, policies should be executed to encourage housing assistance and other social service assistance to include vocational rehabilitation, family reunification programs and other constructive programs which can assist the drug offender to transition back into their communities with their families.

**Research**

Social work research can certainly benefit from the findings of this study. Presently there are limited research studies on the children effected by this phenomena of recidivism among African American males who are drug offenders. There are multifaceted issues associated with having a father in prison, living outside of the household, stigmatized by society, unemployed or homeless. Further research in the social work field is essential to study the significance of the policy issues addressed in this study. Future research can provide more validity to the findings of not only this study but also the sparse amount of other research on this topic. Subsequent research is needed to evaluate and improve practice and policies which address not only the War on
Drugs but also the drug offender and the real significance of substance abuse in the African American community.
Appendix A – Institutional Review Board Approval

CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board
Office of Sponsored Programs

September 28, 2012

Ms. Shondricka Steele <shondricka.steele@students.cau.edu>
School Social Work
Clark Atlanta University
Atlanta, GA 30314

RE: A Descriptive Study of the Public Policies Derived from the War on Drugs and How Policy Fuels Recidivism Among African American Males in Atlanta, Georgia Who Commit Drug Related Offenses

Principal Investigator(s): Shondricka Steele
Human Subjects Code Number: HR2012-9-452-1

Dear Ms. Steele:

The Human Subjects Committee of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your protocol and approved of it as exempt in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Your Protocol Approval Code is HR2012-9-452-1/A

This permit will expire on September 29, 2013. Thereafter, continued approval is contingent upon the annual submission of a renewal form to this office.

The CAU IRB acknowledges your timely completion of the CITI IRB Training in Protection of Human Subjects - “Social and Behavioral Sciences Track”. Your certification is valid for two years.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Georgianna Bolden at the Office of Sponsored Programs (404) 880-6979 or Dr. Paul I. Musey, (404) 880-6829.

Sincerely:

Paul I. Musey, Ph.D.
Chair
IRB: Human Subjects Committee

cc. Office of Sponsored Programs, “Dr. Georgianna Bolden” <gbolden@cau.edu>
Appendix B - Consent Form

You are invited to be in a research study of public policies derived from the War on Drugs and how it fuels recidivism among drug offenders. You were selected randomly as a possible participant because of your participation in a program offered by one of the preselected research sites. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study. This study is being conducted by: Shondricka Steele, MSW Student (Clark Atlanta University)

**Background Information:** The purpose of this study is: To describe the effect of the public policies stemming from the War on Drugs and how they can hinder an offender from successfully transition back into society.

**Procedures:** If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things. Answer the survey questions as honest as possible using the full extent of your knowledge and experiences.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:** The study has no physical, psychological, social, or economic risks to participation. The benefits to participation are: This Study will bring awareness to a detrimental social issue which is plaguing our African American Communities. The awareness can trigger changes in laws and public policies which will benefit individuals, families and communities.
Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. The research records will be destroyed three years from the date of completion by the participant.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the researcher, or Clark Atlanta University. Participation in this research is voluntary; you have the freedom to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships previously identified. If you decide to withdraw from the study, contact the researcher and your data will be shredded and not used in the research study.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is: Shondricka Steele You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact the researcher(s) at: Phone: 404-880-8529 Dr. Joyce Goosby If you have any questions now, or later, related to the integrity of the research, (the rights of research subjects or research-related injuries, where applicable), you are encouraged to contact Dr. Georgianna Bolden at the Office of Sponsored Programs (404 880-6979) or Dr. Paul I. Musey, (404) 880-6829 at Clark Atlanta University.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.
Signature ___________________________ Date: ________________

Signature of Investigator ___________________________ Date: ________________
Appendix C: Survey Questionnaires

A Descriptive Study of the Public Policies Derived from the War on Drugs and How Policy Fuel Recidivism among African American Males in Atlanta, Georgia who Commit Drug Related Offenses

**Section I: Demographic Information**

Instructions: Place a mark (x) next to the appropriate item. Choose only one answer for each statement.

1. **Age Group**
   1) ______ Under 20
   2) ______ 20-29
   3) ______ 30-39
   4) ______ 40-49
   5) ______ 50 & over

2. **Gender**
   1) ______ Male
   2) ______ Female

3. **Marital Status**
   1) ______ Married
   2) ______ Never Married
   3) ______ Divorce
   4) ______ Widowed

4. **Children**
   1) ______ Yes
   2) ______ No

5. **Ethnicity**
   1) ______ African American/Black
   2) ______ White
   3) ______ Hispanic
   4) ______ Asian
   5) ______ Other
6. Highest Education
   1) ____ Elementary
   2) ____ High School (GED)
   3) ____ Vocational
   4) ____ College

7. Employment History
   1) ____ No Employment History
   2) ____ Has been unemployed for 1 year or less
   3) ____ Has been unemployed for 2-5 years
   4) ____ Has been unemployed for 5+ years
   5) ____ Employed part-time
   6) ____ Employed full-time
   7) ____ “Under the table”

8. Housing
   1) ____ Homeless
   2) ____ Living with family/friend
   3) ____ Have own home/apartment

9. Criminal History
   1) ____ No Criminal history
   2) ____ Misdemeanors
   3) ____ 1-2 Felony Convictions
   4) ____ 3-4 Felony Convictions
   5) ____ 5+ Felony Convictions

10. Drug Convictions
    1) ____ No drug convictions
    2) ____ 1-2 convictions
    3) ____ 3+ convictions

11. Personal Drug Convictions
    1) ____ No personal drug convictions
    2) ____ As a User
    3) ____ As a Dealer/Distributor

Go to next page....
Section II: Instrument

The following statements are designed to get your opinion about your experiences that occurred after a felony drug conviction with family, education, employment and housing. Please check the appropriate number which reflects your opinion about the following statements.

12. I am able to provide stable financial support for my family.
   1) _____ Strongly Disagree
   2) _____ Disagree
   3) _____ Agree
   4) _____ Strongly Agree

13. A drug conviction has negatively impacted my relationship with my family.
   1) _____ Strongly Disagree
   2) _____ Disagree
   3) _____ Agree
   4) _____ Strongly Agree

14. Housing restrictions have prevented me from living in the same home with my children due to a drug conviction.
   1) _____ Strongly Disagree
   2) _____ Disagree
   3) _____ Agree
   4) _____ Strongly Agree

15. A drug conviction has prevented me from securing three or more employment opportunities.
   1) _____ Strongly Disagree
   2) _____ Disagree
   3) _____ Agree
   4) _____ Strongly Agree

16. A drug conviction has discouraged me from looking for legitimate employment.
   1) _____ Strongly Disagree
   2) _____ Disagree
   3) _____ Agree
   4) _____ Strongly Agree

17. A felony drug conviction has prevented me from attending college or vocational school.
   1) _____ Strongly Disagree
2) ____ Disagree
3) ____ Agree
4) ____ Strongly Agree

Section II continued...

18. I’ve thought about engaging in illegal activities to support myself or my family.
   1) ____ Strongly Disagree
   2) ____ Disagree
   3) ____ Agree
   4) ____ Strongly Agree

19. I sometimes feel that my drug conviction is a lifetime penalty that will keep me from achieving my goals in life.
   1) ____ Strongly Disagree
   2) ____ Disagree
   3) ____ Agree
   4) ____ Strongly Agree

20. I feel there are sufficient opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction.

Thank you for your cooperation
Survey Questionnaire

A Descriptive Study of the Public Policies Derived from the War on Drugs and How Policy Fuel Recidivism among African American Males in Atlanta, Georgia who Commit Drug Related Offenses

Instructions: Place a mark (x) next to the appropriate item. Choose only one answer for each statement.

1. My position: 1) _______ Case Manager 2) _______ Clinician

2. In which agency are you employed?
   1) _____ Fulton County Accountability Court
   2) _____ Jefferson Place
   3) _____ Atlanta Transitional Center

3. Considering your clients, what is the most significant obstacle for ex-drug offenders in finding employment?
   1) _____ Criminal history
   2) _____ No experience
   3) _____ Educational deficiencies
   4) _____ Homelessness

4. Considering your caseload, which clients are more successful with the completion of your program?
   1) _____ Employed
   2) _____ Educated
   3) _____ Drug/Alcohol free

5. Considering your caseload, which clients are more likely to be terminated from your program and commit another crime?
   1) _____ Unemployed
   2) _____ Employed
   3) _____ Educational deficiencies
   4) _____ Homelessness

6. Considering your clients, which clients tend to transition back into society and refrain from committing another crime?
   1) _____ Employed
   2) _____ Educated
3) _____ Drug/Alcohol free

7. Considering your clients, which clients have a stable support system from family and the community?

1) _____ Employed
2) _____ Unemployed
3) _____ Homelessness

Thank you for your cooperation
Appendix D – SPSS Program

TITLE 'PUBLIC POLICIES DERIVED FROM THE WAR ON DRUGS'.
SUBTITLE 'Shondricka Steele - School of Social Work'.

DATA LIST FIXED/
ID 1-3
AGEGRP 4
GENDER 5
MARITAL 6
CHILDREN 7
ETHNIC 8
EDUCAT 9
EMPLOY 10
HOUSING 11
HISTORY 12
DCONVICT 13
PERSONAL 14
SUPPORT 15
NEGATIVE 16
PREVENT 17
OPPORTUN 18
LOOKING 19
COLLEGE 20
ILLEGAL 21
PENALTY 22
IFEEL 23.

VARIABLE LABELS
ID 'Case Number'
AGEGRP 'Q1 Age Group'
GENDER 'Q2 Gender'
MARITAL 'Q3 Marital Status'
CHILDREN 'Q4 Children'
ETHNIC 'Q5 Ethnicity'
EDUCAT 'Q6 Highest Education'
EMPLOY 'Q7 Employment History'
HOUSING 'Q8 Housing'
HISTORY 'Q9 Criminal History'
DCONVICT 'Q10 Drug Convictions'
PERSONAL 'Q11 Personal Drug Convictions'
SUPPORT 'Q12 I am able to provide stable financial support for my family'
NEGATIVE 'Q13 A drug conviction has negatively impacted my relationship with my family'
PREVENT 'Q14 Housing restrictions have prevented me from living in the same house with my children'
OPPORTUN 'Q15 A drug conviction has prevented me from securing three or more employment opportunities'
LOOKING 'Q16 A drug conviction has discouraged me from looking for legitimate employment'
COLLEGE 'Q17 A drug conviction has prevented me from attending college or vocational school'
ILLEGAL 'Q18 I have thought about engaging in illegal activities to support myself or my family'
PENALTY 'Q19 I sometimes feel that my drug conviction is a lifetime penalty'
IFEEL 'Q20 I feel there are sufficient opportunities for an individual with a drug conviction'.

VALUE LABELS
AGEGRP
1 'Under 20'
2 '20-29'
3 '30-39'
4 '40-49'
5 '50 up'/
GENDER
1 'Male'
2 'Female'/
MARITAL
1 'Married'
2 'Never Married'
3 'Divorce'
4 'Widowed'/
CHILDREN
1 'Yes'
2 'No'/
ETHNIC
1 'AfricanAmer-Blk'
2 'White'
3 'Hispanic'
4 'Asian'
5 'Other'/
EDUCAT
1 'Elementary'
2 'High School-GED'
3 'Vocational'
4 'College'/
EMPLOY
1 'No employment history'
2 'Unemployed 1 year or less'
3 'Unemployed 2-5 years'
4 'Unemployed 5+ years'
5 'Employed part-time'
6 'Employed full-time'
7 'Under the table'/

HOUSING
1 'Homeless'
2 'Living with family-friend'
3 'Have own home-apartment'/

HISTORY
1 'No criminal history'
2 'Misdemeanors'
3 '1-2 Felony convictions'
4 '3-4 Felony convictions'
5 '5+ Felony convictions'/

DCONVICT
1 'No drug convictions'
2 '1-2 convictions'
3 '3+ convictions'/

PERSONAL
1 'No personal convictions'
2 'As a User'
3 'As a Dealer-Distributor'/

SUPPORT
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

NEGATIVE
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

PREVENT
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

OPPORTUN
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

LOOKING
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'

COLLEGE
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'

ILLEGAL
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'

PENALTY
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'

IFEEL
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'

RECODE LOOKING OPPORTUN (1 THRU 2.99=2)(3 THRU 4.99=3).
RECODE DCONVICT (2 THRU 3.99=3).

MISSING VALUES
AGEGRP GENDER MARITAL CHILDREN ETHNIC EDUCAT EMPLOY HOUSING HISTORY DCONVICT PERSONAL SUPPORT NEGATIVE PREVENT OPPORTUN LOOKING COLLEGE ILLEGAL PENALTY IFEEL (0).

BEGIN DATA
00141311141532332233232
00241311241432332233241
0033121113132332233341
00441111323322222222231
00521211332232233323332
00641311322332333333333
007412111523223223333332
008313113223223222222231
00931211132322332223231
010513113523223333333321
01142213413223332323232
01241111463223223322232
FREQUENCIES
/VARIABLES AGEGRP GENDERMARITAL CHILDREN ETHNIC EDUCAT EMPLOY HOUSING
HISTORY DCONVICT PERSONAL SUPPORT NEGATIVE PREVENT OPPORTUN LOOKING
COLLEGE ILLEGAL PENALTY IFEEL
/STATISTICS = DEFAULT.
REFERENCES


