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SPIRITUALITY: THE EFFECTS ON FEMALE INMATES AND
RECIDIVISM

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Criminal Justice

by
Joanne Marie Erbe

June 2004

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Joanne Marie Erbe


June 2004

Approved by:


Dale Sechrest, Chair, Criminal Justice

6-1-04
Date


Deborah A. Parsons


Stephen Tibbetts

ABSTRACT

The number of females entering the United States prisons and jails has more than doubled since the 1990's. These women are primarily ethnic minorities, have low socioeconomic status, they are undereducated, single mothers, and suffer from childhood and adult physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Studies show the women leaving the criminal justice system lack coping skills and support needed to accomplish positive lifestyle changes and that the present system actually helps create a revolving door.

This study examined the effects of the spiritual component of rehabilitation on female inmates who were in-custody during 2002 at the Larry D. Smith Correctional Facility (LDSCF) and how church attendance relates to recidivism. The 73 subjects were divided into three comparison groups showing high, medium, and no participation in religious programs offered by the facility. Although no significant differences were shown, this study does add to the limited literature that exists on spirituality and females who are incarcerated.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The number of females entering the United States prisons and jails has more than doubled since the 1990's. The women are primarily ethnic minorities, have low socioeconomic status, they are undereducated, single mothers, and suffer from childhood and adult physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Studies show the women leaving the criminal justice system lack coping skills and support needed to accomplish positive lifestyle changes and that the present system actually helps create a revolving door.

The theories and treatment of those who deviate from societal norms are vast and varied, and although religious practices have been a historical part of the prison system, little research into the impact of spirituality within the confines of the jails and prisons has been conducted. This study examined the effects of the spiritual component of rehabilitation on female inmates in the jail system, and how it relates to recidivism.

The research examined the body of evidence pointing to the beneficial effects of religious practices on, not only deviant behavior, but also medical, mental health, and social outcomes. Previous findings have shown that those who

measured high in religious practices were shown to suffered less from hypertension, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, had lower rates of suicide, non-marital child-bearing, less delinquency, and lived longer.

Missing from much of the criminal justice literature is the impact of spirituality or religion, as a life changing approach for women returning to the community, even though spiritual programs and correctional facilities have a long history of co-existing within the institution. According to Johnson, Larson, and Pitts (1997), "[T]his reluctance had been fueled by a broader historical skepticism about the relevance of religion held by many in higher education, and at best by university researchers' ambivalence in studying spirituality or religion" (p.2). The few studies which have been conducted in the area of spirituality focused on male inmates and have shown positive results when examining high participation in religious programs and lower recidivism rates.

Most study's do not have a clear definition of the terms spirituality and religion and they are often used interchangeably although, persons who attend religious services may or may not have an intrinsic spirituality, and those with an intrinsic spirituality may not attend religious services. Also the use of the term African

American and Blacks is used throughout this research just as it was found in the literature or classified in the data collected.

The research for this study was limited in terms of using quantitative data on the practice of religious attendance in Judeo-Christian church services, and females in the Larry D. Smith Correctional Facility (LDSCF). LDSCF is a medium security facility in Banning, California, which houses 128 female inmates who have been sentenced to a year or less, or who are awaiting adjudication. This study examined quantitative data collected on those inmates who had attended church services during their incarceration with the comparison group who had not attended any services.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the 1960's, there has been an increase in the number of persons incarcerated in the United States. The Beck (2001) report for the Bureau of Justice Statistics states that in 2001 there were 1,965,495 incarcerated in either prisons or jails. While men account for 1,318 per 100,000, women account for 113 per 100,000. Since 1990 the female prison population has more than doubled, rising 114% compared to 80% for men. As of June 2001, 94,336 women were serving a sentence of one year or more with California second only to Texas in having the highest female population serving a one-year sentence. Like their male counterparts, most female inmates are Black, non-Hispanic, and were three times more likely than Hispanics and five and a half times more likely than White females to be incarcerated (2001).

A study conducted by Hughes, T.A., Wilson, D.J. & Beck, A.J. (2001), for the Bureau of Justice Statistics, on trends in female offenders on state parole, showed that violent female offenders served 45 months of their sentence prior to discretionary release, while drug offenders they served 24 months. Females released on state parole rose from 8% in 1990 to 10% in 1999, which translates to an increase from

27,600 to 42,000 released. Of the women released, 35% were convicted for property crimes, 42% for drug offences, and 16% for violent crimes. The largest population of female parolees were Hispanic, which accounted for 43%, Blacks accounted for 39%, and Whites for 21%. The research also rated California as having the highest rate of female violators while on parole. The statistics showed that 42.3% had at least one prior incarceration and only 47.7% of female parolees were successful in completing parole. The data used for this report was collected from the National Correction Reporting Program, the Annual Parole Survey, the National Prisoners Statistics and a survey of inmates (Hughes, et al. 2001).

Demographics

The demographics of women who enter the criminal justice system show that they are primarily women of color who are young mothers, drug addicted, and economically marginalized. Many have been in the juvenile detention facilities for status offences like running away from a home where they experienced sexual, physical and emotional abuse (Hackstaff, K.B., 2000).

A study by Singer(1995) was conducted at the Cleveland House of Correction (CHC) and focused on the need to reshape

current policies and develop services for women. The research found that the CHC facility was operating at nearly double capacity for both men and women awaiting adjudication for misdemeanors. The study looked at a random sample of all new female inmates. Two hundred and one inmates agreed to participate and were given a \$10 voucher on their commissary for a 45-60 minute interview. In addition to being screened for their drug use, the women were asked about their social support.

The Singer (1995) research found that the majority of women were African American, 21% were White, 5% Hispanic and 1.5 other. One hundred and forty seven were mothers and 85% were not married. Of the 378 children they produced 38.8% had custody of the children who were with grandparent or kinship relations and 38 of the children were placed with social services. Twenty-eight of the women studies were currently pregnant and 71.4% of those had not had any prenatal care before being incarcerated. Half of the women had reported that they had been in a drug or alcohol treatment program in the past and 23.5% were on psychotropic medication.

In Singer's (1995) study, the women had been previously incarcerated on an average of 3.9 times and 21 of the women had previously been in state or federal prison. Half of the

women surveyed were in for prostitution and 13% for drug related crimes and perceived this as a way to react to negative life events, a response to a crisis or prolonged disadvantage. A large number reported they had been victims of violence over the previous year and many had been sexually abused as children. Of the 201 women, 183 stated they needed help upon release.

Many women lack the kinship support to successfully transition back into society after being incarcerated. This lack of support can lead them to connect with former negative associates, returning to familiar places and resuming old ways of coping with the stressors in their lives. The research showed that even if incarcerated women decide they want to make life style changes, without the skills and education to obtain a job, provide for transportation, childcare, and the emotional support needed, they find these obstacles overwhelming (Singer, 1995).

The study concluded that the present methods of incarceration are not effective or cost efficient and that the system itself creates a revolving door, which locks up non-violent offenders whom society sees as bad, evil and unable to change. The current policy concept is that these women need to pay their debt to society and that they will learn their lesson. They concluded that this policy does

nothing to break the cycle and that policymakers need to look for meaningful alternatives that are gender-specific (Singer, 1995).

Employment

In a study by Leukefeld, Staton, Mateyoke-Scriver, Smiley, Webster, and Hiller (2002) data collected from drug courts found most women, prior to convictions, were less likely than their male counterparts to be employed. Furthermore, for those women who were employed research showed that they made less than half as much as men. The major concerns of these women included childcare, transportation, education, and job skills.

The study interviewed 124 women and found that 21% had been arrested as juveniles and had been incarcerated 3.2 times as an adult. The mean age for the women was 25, and they had spent 7.8 months of their lifetime incarcerated. This study was based on self-reporting and the stated limitations were that data was collected from volunteers in two-drug courts rather than random selection (Leukefeld et al., 2002).

Denton and O'Malley (1999) looked into why women enter the criminal world and found that many are considered to be entrepreneurs in illegal business, because it was easier to

start than legal businesses. They had few obstacles to overcome and their feminine traits in social kinship and family relationships were considered to be useful.

The study of 60 women drug dealers in a Melbourne prison found that these women sold drugs in exchange for drugs, goods, and services. The women's income, from the drug sales, ranged from \$500.00 a week to \$3 million in an 8-week period, and the women who developed a reputation for being trusted not to snitch were assured a job when they were released from jail.

If the women lacked family members' support, they would partner with former inmates and many relied on male support to help them when things turned violent. The research showed that women who were from the inner cities experienced more violence and those who used their own product were considered to be more vulnerable to coercion and intimidation by police (Denton and O'Malley, 1999).

Mental Health Issues

A study by Teplin's (1997) was conducted in Chicago to look specifically at women's mental health issues. The researcher found that, although women were suppose to have the equivalent services as men, they were actually being underserved. The participants who were under the Department

of Correction in Chicago were paid \$15 for their interviews and the composition of this population of women was similar to other findings. The majority were African American, they were mothers, and had not completed high school. Of the 955 women who were screened for mental health services, 116 received services while in jail and detainees with one or no priors were more likely to receive services (Teplin, 1997).

Even though the stated limitations noted for this study were that many of the women might not have reported any mental health symptoms, the findings concluded that correctional officers needed more training in order to refer women to mental health services. He also found that poor women were less likely to be able to seek continued mental health services after they were released from jail or prison (Teplin, 1997).

Bradley (2002) also studied mental health issues of 65 women incarcerated in the southeast. The women were housed in a medium security prison for those with mental illness or physical health problems. The study used qualitative and quantitative self-report surveys to measure the women's perception of safety within the institution. The researcher looked at pre-prison interpersonal violence and compared it to the level of safety women felt in prison. Of the 65 women, 40 were African American and 25 were White. Their

participation in the study came from referrals by the mental health staff, random sampling, and some requested to be involved.

The researcher used questioners on childhood abuse, the conflict tactics scale, safety inventory, sexual assault history screening and open-ended questions on abuse. Over 86% of the women reported having been sexually abused and 56.9 % physically abused as children, and over half reported that the abuse took place under the age of 9. Over half also reported having been sexually and physically assaulted as adults.

What was ascertained from this study revealed 38% of the women who had reported three types of abuse felt safer in prison and "talked about the opportunity prison had given them to reflect on their experiences or make plans to be different and better off when they left prison" (p.11). An additional 27% stated, that although they did not feel safer they could understand why some women would. Also the women who experienced four types of interpersonal violence did not feel safer and it was theorized that it might be because these women would not feel safe in any environment (Bradley 2002).

Bradley (2002) suggested that further studies in the area of the feeling of safety while incarcerated are needed,

particularly because, "the structure of correctional institutions often incorporates abusive dynamics (including documented assault of women prisoners by male guards), the finding are socially and politically important" (p.12). The study also revealed that perceived levels of safety could be studied but there was a need for more valid measurements and, although the sample size was limited by diversity and number of participants who have physical and mental illness, it did add to the literature showing gender specific programs are needed to address interpersonal violence in an environment where women, even if it is perceived, feel safer (Bradley 2002). This research may show that if women feel safer in a prison environment they may feel safer to participate in programs and religious services that are available.

A study by Chamberlain and Moore (2002) on chronic female offenders in the juvenile justice system was significant because the findings proved to be similar to the studies conducted on adult females. The research revealed that young females suffer from family fragmentation, physical and sexual trauma, and mental health problems. In the male-dominated system, girls were considered to be difficult to work with because of their emotional needs,

therefore treatment for female offenders tended to be overlooked or not gender specific.

Females as Juveniles

The researchers developed a pilot Treatment Foster Care (TFC) program with funding from the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA). It was found that, prior to the early 1980's, Oregon did not have a specific therapeutic treatment for chronic female offenders. The study looked at 88 referrals from the juvenile justice system of whom 51 were males and 37 were females. Males were found to have committed offenses leading to arrests at a younger age, had more felonies, and had an average arrest rate of 10.8, as compared to the females who had an average of 8.43. Females were found to have more prior out-of-home placements than males; they ran away more often, and were more likely to attempt suicide.

The juveniles in this program remained in the foster care families as opposed to group or residential programs. The outcomes showed that the girls did as well as the boys and committed fewer crimes. Foster parents reported that, while boys entered the program having higher rates of problems at home, problems decreased over time. Girls on the other hand were reported by foster parents to have fewer

problems in the beginning and problems increased over time (Chamberlain & Moore, 2002).

The study also noted that more help was needed in the area of helping the girls to deal with and maintain positive relationships with the adults that were attempting to help them and that females were consistently more difficult to deal with than were their male counterparts (Chamberlain & Moore, 2002).

The fact that none of the above studies included a spiritual or religious component to them reveals the need for more research into this area. Perhaps it has been that this subject has been considered politically incorrect until recent changes in public policy were made to include "charitable choice" or faith-based institutions. Sider (2000) states that since the Charitable Choice provisions (Section 104) of the 1996 Welfare Bill, the last few years has seen a revival where for, "decades serious religious faith was dismissed or marginalized in the academic world, the media and policy circles. Religious faith was deemed irrelevant-or harmful-for mental, physical and societal well-being" (p.71).

This holistic approach, which was embraced by both Democratic and Republican candidates in the last presidential election, was seen as somewhat of a pressure

release valve on unsuccessful government programs, which proved unable to curb poverty and social decay (Sider, 2000).

Theoretical Framework

There are many differing theories on the reasons for criminal behaviors and most post modern theorist focus on males and do not take into consideration the female experience. Most theorists also do not consider the role of religion directly into the human experience. Even so, Aker's (2000) Social Learning Theory may gives credence to the human experience in general, and may account for why women continually go back to the same habits where,

it is obvious that association, reinforcement of conforming or deviant behavior, deviant or conforming modeling, and exposure to definitions favorable or unfavorable to deviance occurs within the family prior to the onset of delinquency (p.80).

The social learning theory is considered to be a broadening of, and not in conflict with Sutherland's theory of differential association. Sutherland explanation of why persons engage in criminal behavior looked at nine elements of the learning process involving interaction and

communication with intimate personal groups involving favorable or unfavorable legal codes and cultural conflicts. This is enhanced by frequency, duration, priority and intensity, and involves an expression of a way to get general needs met (1974).

Akers (2000) cited biological theorist Lee Ellis, who looked in to genetic factors of deviance and the possible relationship to religion. The findings showed that Ellis, hypothesized that the susceptible individual inherits an autonomic nervous system (ANS) that is slower to be aroused or to react to stimuli. Those who inherit slow arousal potential learn to control aggressive or anti-social behavior slowly or not at all. Thus, they stand at greater risk of becoming law violator...In addition to positing the link between arousal levels and deviance, Ellis uses the theory to explain the well-know negative relationship between religiosity and delinquency. He hypothesizes that those with a biological tendency toward low arousal avoid church because they find it boring while gravitation toward delinquency because it provides excitement. (Akers, 2000 p.52).

This would of course suggest that all church services are boring, which is not always the case.

When addressing the Feminist theory Akers (2000) looked at theorist Freda Adler and Rita Simon who examined the social changes that occurred from the women's liberation movement, and the relationship with criminality. Their explanation for the changes showed that even though women gained greater equality, changes in traditional sex roles, and increased employment, there was a 'darker side' "Like her sisters in legitimate fields, the female criminal is fighting for her niche in the hierarchy [of Crime]" p.227.

Hackstaff (2000) called this, 'equality with a vengeance' where women who are incarcerated are treated the same as men. She concluded that, "[w]hether women avail themselves of the tool of difference or sameness depends on the circumstances in which they find themselves. Sometimes it will be more just to recognize gender differences and other times more just to insist on sameness" (p.143).

The Role of Spirituality

Beckford (2001) looked into the research involving opportunities that exist in exercising spiritual activities in prison and jails. Institutions have a long history of conducting regular services; they have chaplains who still

hold formal positions and special rooms that are exclusively reserved for religious activities. Beckford (2001) looked at 130 prisoners and 14 different prisons in England and Wales. He found that as the level of public participation and research into religion decreased religious practices in prisons increased. The reason for this may be that, "the practice of religion has been protected against some of the effects of secularization" (p.374).

The study compared prisons in England and Wales with Federal and State prisons in the United States. The United States was found to be more likely experience legal battles over the opposition from prison administrators to practice religious freedom, mostly over religions other than Christianity. The research pointed out that prisoners and prison staff were more likely to be aware of religious activity on the inside than they were on the outside, even if they did not attend services, they were exposed to the fact that religious activities were going on.

In the prison, different faiths competed for the same space, in contrast to having different houses of worship on the outside, which meant that prisoners came in constant contact with other faiths. This contact was shown more likely to produce tension rather than tolerance. The conclusion of the research was that the United States

provided for equal access for different faiths while England and Wales were unequal.

In a study by Baier and Wright (2001) the researchers conducted a meta analysis on 60 previous studies on the effects that religion had on crime. They were trying to determine why the studies varied in their outcomes, which ranged from religion having any impact to having a dominant impact on crime, and what was the direction and magnitude of the effect. The researchers looked at several theories to establish a base for why the outcomes varied. The first theory they considered was Hirschi's Social Control Theory, which could, "instill normative beliefs and foster individual attachment, commitment, and involvement with the larger society" (p.4).

Rational Choice Theory was shown to have an effect on those who had a, "religious based social network"(p.4) where fear of informal punishment resulting in shame and embarrassment when committing deviant acts would be enacted. The Sociobiological perspective looked at neurological stimulation and that religion would be boring to those in that theory.

Differential Association Theory found that, "[w]ith socialization, religious peer influence alters individuals' religious commitment through positive reinforcement, thus

further deterring crime”(p.5). Reference Group Theory looked at the comparison of behaviors and attitudes and moral group behavior and the connection to group adherence to those moral religious codes.

The researchers looked at three reasons why the findings varied. The first hypothesis was moral community as a deterrent for crimes and that the more secular regions, like the pacific region would show lower religious deterrence (p.6). The second was to examine if the studies were predominately church members and if religion was more of a deterrent for non-victim crimes. Lastly, they looked at variations on effects of family structure and design methodologies and population samples.

Of the 60 studies examined, 54 were journals or books and four were dissertations or presentations. The dependent variable was the effect of religion on crime and the study characteristics were the independent variables (p.13). Although many of the studies did not significantly vary in their findings neither did the results showing non-significance.

What was found was that,

[t]he studies used both behavioral and attitudinal measures of religion. Behavioral measures included church attendance, prayer,

family discussions of religious issues, listening to religious broadcasts on the radio, and watching religious programming on the television. Attitudinal measures included belief in God, belief in Jesus, belief in the Devil, belief in the Bible, belief in supernatural sanctions, strength of religious beliefs, importance of religion in daily life and how religious subjects considered themselves to be (p.13).

The researchers findings concluded that there is, "confidence that religion does indeed have some deterrent effects" (p.16).

Missing from much of the literature in criminal justice is the effects of spirituality as a life changing approach to re-socializing women back into the community. Most programs focused on getting a job, the effects of interpersonal violence, or stopping the drug and alcohol use. Yet, lives are multi-dimensional and a study of a transitional living home in San Diego, California may serve as a model for helping women overcome obstacles in a holistic environment. Parsons and Warner-Robbins (2002) researched

Welcome Home Ministries (WHM), which was developed to meet not only the physical and emotional needs of women released from jail or prison, but also the spiritual needs. This holistic approach is key to faith-based organizations. In Hodge (2000) the definition of faith-based providers was, "those organizations where faith is the defining dimension, which informs all other organization dimensions. In other word, faith is not just an important organizational component, but rather animates all aspects of the organization, from treatment to staffing" (p. 152).

The research in this qualitative study of 27 women revealed that the women interviewed were born in poverty, they were victims of childhood abuse and neglect, or domestic violence. They also reported that they were drug addicts and felt like they had 'no exit,' which lead them to feel helpless and hopeless.

The women in WHM ranged in age from 18-60 years with a mean age of 36.4 years. They were given a \$10.00 grocery voucher for interviews. The researchers found an unintended benefit of the interviews was, that the women interviewed had a chance to have a voice and acknowledge their accomplishments (Parsons and Warner-Robbins, 2002).

The population studied consisted of 67% White, 22% Hispanic and 11% African American. Nearly 60% of the women

had less than 12 years of education, 85% were mothers and 74% of them were working. Although there were no specific questions asked about God, 96% talked about their relationship with God. This was the main theme that dominated the interviews and the belief in God or a Higher Power was noted as their main source of strength and peace.

When the women acknowledged that they wanted to quit using drugs they said they began to feel more hopeful. Strength also came from their 'sisters' who were there to back them up as well as the support of the nurse/chaplain who had come to the jail and offered hope through God. Also being surrounded with positive people and having significant role models, or other successful women who had transitioned from their former life styles, gave them courage to continue on a positive life path (Parsons & Warner-Robbins, 2002).

The women also expressed feelings of personal empowerment and wanted to stop their self-destructive behaviors. Employment became a high priority, and they knew they needed a career in order to avoid feeling like an outcast. After that was a desire to help others, who are incarcerated, make a change in their lives, and lastly was learning to deal with feelings and past issues by talking about them (Parsons and Warner-Robbins, 2002).

Prison Fellowship

Although Akers (2000) wrote that religious beliefs are not to be considered theory at all, calling it, "ivory tower or arm-chair speculations"(p.2), social learning theory could be applicable to what (Johnson, Spenser and Larsonnet, 2000) would call organic religion. Johnson et al. (2000) defined organic religion as the influence of religion on the way people who were raised in a religious atmosphere live their lives. The researchers considered the findings on organic religion to have, "an impressive body of empirical evidence that too often goes unnoticed by the academy, [and] public policy experts..."(p.8).

This body of evidence points to the beneficial effects of religious practices on everything from medical, mental health, and social outcomes. Those who measured high on organic religion suffered less from hypertension, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, lower rates of suicide, non-marital child-bearing, less delinquency and lived longer.

If this were true for those who had been raised and practiced religion from a young age, the researchers wanted to know if it could be true for those who began to practice intentional religion. Johnson et al. (2000) defined intentional religion as,

the exposure to religion one receives at a particular time in life for a particular purpose.... A prisoner participates in a voluntary Christian-based prison program that emphasizes prayer, bible study and spiritual transformation over merely serving time. Here religion, in an intentional way, 'enters the system' if you will, in order to meet a particular need at a particular time in a person's life (p.8).

In his previous research (Johnson, Larson, and Pitts, 1997) stated that, "nearly one inmate in three is involved in religious programs" (p.2). He then sampled 201 inmates from four prisons who were involved in a Prison Fellowship (PF) program and compared it to a closely matched non PF group (Johnson et al. 1997).

Prison Fellowship was founded by the former Nixon aide, Charles Colson who was in prison for his involvement in the Watergate scandal of the 1970's. This scandal resulted in the convictions of several high government officials as well as the resignation of the then President of the United States, Richard Nixon. After making a commitment to serve the Jesus of the Bible, Colson started a worldwide ministry known as Prison Fellowship. In his book, *Against the Night*,

Colson states that,

I spent the first half of my professional life in politics and public service. When I was in the White House, I was a complete secularist and confirmed conservative; and though I didn't know it at the time, I was also a social utopian. I really believed that people could be changed by government being changed. I never looked beyond the structures and the institutions and the legislation into the hearts of people(p.1).

The Johnson et al. (1997) study followed inmates from eight New York prisons for one year. Researchers noted that this time frame was not optimal for follow up but that according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics most recidivism occurred within the first year. The inmates were divided into three categories of program attendance. First was no attendance, second was 1-9 attendance's and High was 10 and above Bible studies over a year. The findings showed that those in the first two categories showed no significant difference than those in the matched non-PF groups. Only those in the high attendance group showed significant difference of 14% recidivism as compared to 41% in the non PF group.

A second study by Johnson, Spenser and Larson (2000) compared two Brazilian prisons. One prison (Braganca) was based on vocational training and the use of prison industry to better prepare inmates for release. The second prison (Humaita) "was a faith-based facility run by local church volunteers who use religious programs to 'kill the criminal and save the person'" (p.19). The study compared recidivism rates over a three-year period and showed, even when controlling for high and low risk prisoners, the Humaita prisoners had a significantly lower recidivism rate (Johnson et al. 2000).

Teen Challenge

Petersen (2001) looked into the internationally known organization Teen Challenge. Teen Challenge has 178 ministry centers, working with male and female ex-offenders, who have drug addictions. The researcher of this faith-based program realizes, that although spiritual transformation based on the grace of God is not understood by the secular world, it is the main focus of transformation in this program and comes from what is known as the 'Jesus Factor'. The research set out to measure the outcomes from this program and found that the 'Jesus Factor', "is not a path of escapism... but rather a spiritual encounter that produces in the convert a

sense of dignity, self-worth, hope and personal empowerment. The change in the student's life is observable, real and often dramatic" (Peterson, 2001).

Teen Challenge is also known for its holistic approach as it offers the components used in other drug programs such as vocational, life and job training, opportunity to obtain a G.E.D. and formal and informal support groups. Most important to the program is re-entry into the community by providing the students a connectedness with a church where they can continue to have healthy personal relationships with non-addicts (p.13).

In his doctoral dissertation, Dr. Aaron Bickness (2001) compared publicly funded Short-Term Inpatient (STI) programs and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) with the nonprofit, privately funded program Teen Challenge. The comparison groups showed somewhat less use of illicit drug and alcohol but higher uses of tranquilizers, painkillers, and barbiturates. They were also likely to have more education, be less criminal, generally older, and less ethnic (Bicknese, 1999). The study showed that, although the Teen Challenge group were far more addicted than the comparison group, they had higher recovery rates.

One of the reasons for the higher success rate was the support the Teen Challenge group receives. Once again this

employed one to two years after graduating the program. This was compared to the STI group, where only 41% were employed. Over 31% of the STI group had returned to treatment where none of the Teen Challenge group had returned in the six months prior to the survey interviews (Becknese, 1999). The limitations of this study were that, it looked solely at males in the program, though the outcomes should be significant, further research into females is warranted.

Religion and Psychiatric Disorders

Kendler, Liu, Gardner, McCullough, Larson, & Prescott (2003) conducted a study, which looked into many dimensions of religiosity and its effect on psychiatric disorders and substance abuse. They used a 78 item survey, "to assess broadly religiosity, spirituality, and related attitudes, including forgiveness and gratitude" (p.497). Of the 7,230 questionnaires sent to twin pairs, which were obtained from the Virginia Twin Registry, they received 2,621 back.

The researchers looked into several dimensions of religiosity. The first was entitled general religiosity, which included daily spiritual experiences and religious coping. Secondly was social religiosity reflecting church attendance and interaction with other religious individuals. Thirdly was involved God, which was a belief in a deity who

is actively and positively involved in human affairs. Forth was forgiveness and, "consisted of seven items reflecting a caring, loving and forgiving approach to the world" (p.498). Fifth was God as judge, which emphasized the judgmental and punitive nature of the divinity. Six was termed unvengefulness and consisted of attitudes toward personal retaliation rather than forgiveness. Lastly was thankfulness, which looked at feelings of thankfulness versus anger toward life and God (Kendler, et al. 2003).

The study reported a significant difference between males and females for six of the seven factors. Women had higher levels on all but God as judge. In response to lifetime psychiatric and substance use disorders the researchers divided the seven factors into two groups. The first group of five internalized disorders consisted of major depression, generalized anxiety disorder, phobia, panic disorder, and bulimia nervosa. The second was externalizing disorders, and consisted of nicotine dependence, alcohol dependence, drug abuse or dependence and adult antisocial behavior (Kendler et al. 2003).

The outcomes of this research showed those who practiced general religiosity, involved God, forgiveness, and God as judge were found to have reduced risk for externalizing disorders. Social religiosity and thankfulness

were related to low lifetime risk for both internalizing and externalizing disorders and unvengefulness was associated with internalized but not externalizing disorders. (Kendler et al. 2003).

Race, Religion, and Depression

Adding to the body of research on spirituality is a study on race, religious involvement, and depressive symptomatology, which explored empirical data on 2,956 participants (Ellison, 1995). This study looked at African Americans' spirituality and depression, and is seen as relevant because the majority of inmates are overwhelming African American and they experience depression over traumatic life events.

The findings revealed that among African Americans, frequency of church attendance and private devotional activities, such as prayer, had a positive effect on the mental health of those studied. Other findings showed church activity promoted pro-social behaviors, emotional aid, tangible assistance, and reciprocity. Regular devotional activities lead to a, "belief that a loving, omnipotent deity seeks to engage each individual in a direct, personal relationship may contribute to feelings of self-worth and empowerment" (p.1562). This involvement was also seen as an

opportunity to experience elevated social status, which is not available in the white-dominated society (Ellison, 1995).

The study used the Piedmont Health Survey to collect interview data in the five sites. The dependent variable was depressive symptoms and the independent variable was religious involvement. The data collected involved only non-Hispanic Whites and African Americans. African Americans reported higher levels of depressive symptoms and stressful life events while Whites expressed higher levels of chronic illness. Although the study suggested that further research was warranted they concluded that historical and ethnographic research along with more current surveys showed a positive well being for those who participate in religious activities.

The research suggested that the findings may show the reason for persons to turn to religious activity is because of traumatic life situations that result in depression. This could also be substantiated by the (Johnson et al., 1997) study on the coping literature, which suggested that inmates might turn to religion because of their life situations and the need to be forgiven, to start over, and to receive another chance.

Religion and Breast Cancer Patients.

A study conducted by Sherman, Simonton, Adams, Latif, Plante, Burns and Poling (2001) on females with breast cancer showed that there was a significant correlation between women who were diagnosed with breast cancer and intrinsic religiousness and optimism. The researchers evaluated 95 breast cancer patients and compared them to 53 healthy young adults. The patients, who had been recently diagnosed with cancer, displayed a strong correlation with measures of intrinsic religiosity and moderate correlations with organizational religiosity and comfort from religion.

The study also showed that inner faith was more important than social support and that, "[A]mong cancer patients, scores were significantly associated with optimism... but not with openness of family communication about cancer or perceived social support" (p.436).

Although the researchers acknowledged that there were a number of limitations in their project and a need for more longitudinal studies was warranted, it did add to a body of growing evidence that, "faith appears to be less strongly tied to the quality of social relationships than to more internal, personal resources" (p.441).

Forgiveness and Aggression

Adding to the literature on religion is a component on forgiveness. McCullough, Bellah, Kilpatrick and Johnson (2001) looked at variables such as religiousness as a means of reinforcing a view that shows forgiveness as a normative means for resolving interpersonal transgressions. The researchers conducted several studies on the effect of forgiveness and found that,

[W]hen an offended person forgives, his or her basic motivations to (a) seek revenge and (b) avoid contact with the offender are lessened ... These motivational changes occur even though in most cases the victim continues to appraise the harmful actions of the offender as having been unjust. (p.601).

Unforgiveness was shown to be a factor in vengefulness (revenge seeking). Vengefulness correlated with less forgiving and greater rumination of events, higher negative affect, lower life satisfaction, less agreeableness and higher neuroticism. Vengeance was cited as motives for destructive and aggressive interpersonal behaviors, homicide, arson, shoplifting, sexual infidelity, and interpersonal violence. The justifications used for revenge were restoring moral balance (get even), moral instruction

(teach the offender a lesson), and changing the belief-attitude structure of the offender (saving face).

McCullough et al. (2001) conducted two studies. The first looked at 91 volunteers from an introductory psychology course at a medium-size public university. There were 36 men and 55 women who volunteered for the first study in which the participants reported having been offended less than two months prior to the study. Several scales were used to measure satisfaction with life, positive and negative affect, impact of the event, and the transgression-related interpersonal motivations inventory (TRIM) to measure forgiveness, as it relates to revenge and avoidance. The study showed there were no gender differences on any of the major variables and those who scored high on vengefulness ruminated more, were less forgiving, had higher negative affect, and less satisfied with life.

The second study by McCullough et al. (2001) surveyed 192 undergraduate students from Iowa State University, who were given a small amount of course credit for participating. The students used self-reporting instruments to measure vengefulness and personality factors. The results showed vengeful people were less agreeable and score high on neuroticism. The researchers found,

evidence that vengefulness played an important

role in forgiving. Vengeful people are not only less forgiving and more ruminative cross-sectionally but also maintain their motivations to seek revenge against their offender over time to a greater extent than do people who are less vengeful (p. 609).

Research Problem and Hypothesis

The correctional setting has a long history of providing religious programs for inmates and the Larry D. Smith Correctional facility (LDSCF) is no exception. LDSCF is a Riverside County medium custody jail located in Banning, California. Inmates in this facility are either awaiting adjudication or are serving a year or less sentence for felony or misdemeanor crimes. The facility holds approximately 700 inmates and 128 of the general population are females.

Assigned to this facility is one part time paid Chaplain who visits the women's barracks three times a week, offering free Bibles and religious materials. He makes himself available to speak to individuals and groups and oversees approximately 45 volunteers who conduct religious services and AA meetings through out the week. The Chaplain

is also on call to handle emergencies such as death notifications to inmates.

The prisoners incarcerated at this facility may be classified to either work details or programs. The programs available to the females include office skills, GED, A.A., parenting, substance abuse, and religious services. This study focused on the females in the general population. Most of the women in custody are of low socio economic status, suffer from childhood or adult trauma, have not completed high school, and are single mothers who have a history of substance abuse.

This study examined whether intentional religion, as defined in the literature, played a role in recidivism. The inmates were divided into three groups with those practicing high intentional religion attending 11 or more services during their incarceration, medium was 1-10 services and low was the comparison group who did not attendance any services during their stay.

Hypothesis

The higher the inmates' practice of intentional religion while in custody may show that, inmates who attend more services recidivate less.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The subjects for this research were female inmates assigned to the general population at Larry D. Smith Correctional Facility (LDSCF) during the year 2002. Data on church attendance, recidivism, and demographics was collected in April of 2004, therefore follow up was, at the very least, one year after the inmate had been released. LDSCF is a medium Riverside County jail facility located in Banning, California. The barracks style facility houses 128 women who are either awaiting adjudication or sentenced for both felonies and misdemeanors. The barracks are divided into three units, with barracks five housing 64 women, and barracks six and seven housing 32 women each. Their crimes range from drug, property, domestic violence, fraud, and assault with a deadly weapon other than a firearm.

The women housed at LDSCF are classified as medium risk offenders and the facility offers classes consisting of GED and office skills, along with groups for substance abuse, parenting, alcoholics anonymous, and church services. All classes, groups, and services are voluntarily attended and are offered to sentenced and un-sentenced inmates. The volunteers who conduct church services at LDSCF are solely

from Judeo-Christian denominations or ministries, and the data for those who attended the church services was collected from the sign-in roster given at each service held by volunteer church ministers. These rosters are turned in to custodial staff after each service and they are in turn given to the jail Chaplain. The Chaplain then retains these records for two years. This study looked solely at the women who during 2002 attended church services and whether there was a correlation between those in the high, medium, and no services and the recidivism rates.

Data Preparation

Data was collected on 73 females inmates who were incarcerated in 2002. The information on those who attended services came from names and booking numbers collected from the inmate attendance roster used for church services. The information gathered for the comparison group was compiled through archived data on inmates who had been incarcerated during 2002, but never attended church service during their incarceration.

The data revealed that the larger barracks five, which housed 64 women, had received 12-15 services a month and the smaller two barracks, housing 32 women each, received eight to ten services a month. This was well over the number of

services used for high attendance and showed that even if an inmate were sick, had visiting, or simply wanted to watch television, they would still have had ample opportunity to attend services.

Each inmate was coded and information was placed into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The information from this study was aggregated and strict adherence and compliance was maintained with respect to confidentiality and privacy of each inmate. Demographic information such as age, ethnicity, length of stay, criminal charges, and re-arrest came from official records through the Riverside County Jail Information Management System (JIMS). Additional information was derived from public information available on-line to access public records through the Riverside County Superior Court. The court minute orders were used to confirm and access additional information, which may have been missing in the JIMS system.

The information on church attendance came from records kept by the jail chaplain. The researcher then looked for correlations between church attendance and recidivism and variables within age, ethnicity groups, length of incarceration, and criminal charges.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and internal reliability of this study was limited in that information could only be tracked through (JIMS) and the Riverside County Superior Court public records. Therefore subsequent out-of-county arrests were not able to be obtained. Also some archived information like marital status and in-custody behavior was in screens that could not be accessed.

Other problems with reliability, in non-participation of services, may be due to the facility not having volunteers from an inmates particular denomination or faith. The likeability of the volunteer who is performing the service could also play a role in attendance as well as custodial staffs cooperation in allowing inmates to attend, as well as limiting the number of those attending.

This study may not be generalizable to other detention facilities because of the small population of inmates and other factors such as attendance in other programs available to inmates that were not examined in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The results from the data collected revealed the age range of the inmates was 20 to 51, with a mean age of 33.38, and just over 83% had been convicted of a felony. Property crimes accounted for 46.6% of the offenses, while drug charges represented 45.2%. The remaining approximately eight percent consisted of domestic violence, assault, and fraud.

As Riverside County jails rarely houses sentenced offenders for more than a county year, which works out to eight months and twenty days actual time, it was not unusually to find that the majority of those studied served under five months in the jail. Thirty-six percent of those studied spent under 2 months in custody while 33.3% were in for three to five months and the remaining 30% remained in custody for six to eight months.

When broken down to age categories of 20-29, the younger women had the highest re-offense rate of 41.4% and 21% attended 11 or more services. Those in the 30-39 age range had a re-offend rate of 38.5% and 20% attended 11 or more services during their stay. The 41-51 age range had the lowest re-offend rate of 27.8% and had the highest attendance of 44% for 11 or more services.

The study showed that of the 73 women, 44 were White, 19 were Hispanic, 8 were Black and 2 were listed as Other. Furthermore the results showed that, although there were only 8 Blacks, the results in table 1 shows that 50% of them spent more time in custody than the other ethnicities where 31.6% of Hispanics and 25% of Whites were shown to have spent more time in custody.

Table 1. Length of Sentence and Ethnicity

			LENGTH OF SENTENCE			Total
			1-2 MONTHS	3-5 MONTHS	6-8 MONTHS	
ETHNIC	WHITE	Count	19	14	11	44
		% within ETHNIC	43.2%	31.8%	25.0%	100.0%
	BLACK	Count	2	2	4	8
		% within ETHNIC	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	HISPANIC	Count	6	7	6	19
		% within ETHNIC	31.6%	36.8%	31.6%	100.0%
	OTHER	Count		1	1	2
		% within ETHNIC		50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	27	24	22	73
		% within ETHNIC	37.0%	32.9%	30.1%	100.0%

Table 2 was used to crosstabulate offenses and number of services attended, and was then compared with re-offending. The highest rate of re-offenders, who had not attended any services, were the drug offenders with a 62.5% return rate, followed by 25% of those committing property crimes, and the one domestic violence offender did not return. In the 1-10 category drug offenders remained the highest with 50% and property crimes at 38.9% for returning. In the 11 or higher, drugs offenders accounted for 33.3% and property for 12.5%. The two domestic violence and assault offenders did not re-offend and the one fraud did.

Table 2. Offenses and Number of Services Attended with
Re-offending

number of services				RE-OFFENDED		Total
				YES	NO	
0	OFFENSE	DRUG	Count	5	3	8
			% within OFFENSE	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
	PROPERTY	Count	2	6	8	
		% within OFFENSE	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%	
	DOMESTIC	Count		1	1	
	% within OFFENSE		100.0%	100.0%		
	Total	Count	7	10	17	
		% within OFFENSE	41.2%	58.8%	100.0%	
1	OFFENSE	DRUG	Count	8	8	16
			% within OFFENSE	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	PROPERTY	Count	7	11	18	
		% within OFFENSE	38.9%	61.1%	100.0%	
	DOMESTIC	Count		1	1	
		% within OFFENSE		100.0%	100.0%	
ASSAULT	Count		1	1		
	% within OFFENSE		100.0%	100.0%		
	FRAUD	Count	1		1	
		% within OFFENSE	100.0%		100.0%	
	Total	Count	16	21	37	
		% within OFFENSE	43.2%	56.8%	100.0%	
2	OFFENSE	DRUG	Count	3	6	9
			% within OFFENSE	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
	PROPERTY	Count	1	7	8	
		% within OFFENSE	12.5%	87.5%	100.0%	
ASSAULT	Count		2	2		
	% within OFFENSE		100.0%	100.0%		
	Total	Count	4	15	19	
		% within OFFENSE	21.1%	78.9%	100.0%	

Table 3 describes the breakdown in ethnicity and number of services attended with re-offending. What was found was of those who did not attend services, 66.7% of Blacks, 50% of the Hispanics, and 33.3% of Whites re-offended. Those who attended 1-10 services showed that 53.8% of Hispanics and 47.4% of Whites returned and those who attended 11 or more services had 25% of Hispanics and 23.1% of Whites return. Of those who attended at least one or more services during their incarceration the seven Blacks and two Others did not return.

Table 3. Ethnicity and Number of Services Attended
with Re-offending

number of services attended	ETHNIC	ETHNIC	Statistics	RE-OFFENDED			
				RE-OFFENDED		Total	
				YES	NO		
0	ETHNIC	WHITE	Count	4	8	12	
			% within ETHNIC	33.3%	66.7%	100%	
		BLACK	Count	2	1	3	
			% within ETHNIC	66.7%	33.3%	100%	
		HISPANIC	Count	1	1	2	
			% within ETHNIC	50.0%	50.0%	100%	
		Total		Count	7	10	17
				% within ETHNIC	41.2%	58.8%	100%
1-10	ETHNIC	WHITE	Count	9	10	19	
			% within ETHNIC	47.4%	52.6%	100%	
		BLACK	Count		4	4	
			% within ETHNIC		100%	100%	
		HISPANIC	Count	7	6	13	
			% within ETHNIC	53.8%	46.2%	100%	
		OTHER	Count		1	1	
			% within ETHNIC		100%	100%	
		Total		Count	16	21	37
				% within ETHNIC	43.2%	56.8%	100%
11+	ETHNIC	WHITE	Count	3	10	13	
			% within ETHNIC	23.1%	76.9%	100%	
		BLACK	Count		1	1	
			% within ETHNIC		100%	100%	
		HISPANIC	Count	1	3	4	
			% within ETHNIC	25.0%	75.0%	100%	
		OTHER	Count		1	1	
			% within ETHNIC		100%	100%	
		Total		Count	4	15	19
				% within ETHNIC	21.1%	78.9%	100%

Table 4, shows that the highest rate of re-offenders were those who had actually attended 1-10 services during their incarceration, where 43.2% returned. The control group who attended no services while incarcerated returned at a slightly less rate of 41.2% and those who attended 11 or more services during their stay returned 21.1%, although there was no statistical significance seen in the chi square $X^2 (2, N=73)=2.819, p=.244$.

These findings were similar to the study conducted on male inmates by Prison Fellowship, which also showed no significant differences, where the first two categories had a similar 41% recidivism rate return, and a 14% return in the higher category.

Table 4. Number of Services Attended and Re-offending

			RE-OFFENDED		Total
			YES	NO	
number of services attended	0	Count	7	10	17
		% within number of services attended	41.2%	58.8%	100.0%
	1-10	Count	16	21	37
		% within number of services attended	43.2%	56.8%	100.0%
	11+	Count	4	15	19
		% within number of services attended	21.1%	78.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	27	46	73
		% within number of services attended	37.0%	63.0%	100.0%

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The results of this study showed there were no significant differences between the number of services attended and recidivism by the women at the LDSCF. When examining the rate of attendance with length of stay, the conclusion also showed that there was no significant relationship to the outcome. Although the research does add to the literature on religion and female offenders, further research into the area of religion and its impact on women is warranted.

This study had many limitations due to the archiving of additional data that may have been relevant, like in-custody behavior and access to mental and medical health issues. Future research involving qualitative as well as quantitative measured should be looked at.

The relatively low number of women attending services at LDSCF may be due to the limited time of stay for inmates in this medium security jail. Although as the literature points out, jail for some of these women may be the safest place they have been in years, might account for the fact that they attending services at all. The availability of services, which are held where they are housed, may also be

a reason why some women attend, as well as familiarity with the other women who are attending the services may account for their attending while on the inside, but not on the out.

The low rate of minority groups attending services may show that there are not faiths performing services that they are culturally accustomed to and they may feel uncomfortable attending another service, even though they may not attend services on the outside.

Another factor for the rate of attendance may be peer pressure to attend or not attend and because the services are voluntary there was no way to check for selection bias. Also attending services may be seen as a sign of weakness for some inmates, while others may see it as a sign of strength. Then there is the issue of hypocrisy, where inmates may conduct themselves one way in the services and another while in the barracks, causing others to not want to appear hypocritical also.

Correctional deputies who are in charge of letting inmates out for services could also be a variable as to whether an inmate may want to step out for services. Some deputies who may think inmates do not deserve to be coddled may strongly resent not only inmates attending services but the volunteers who perform the meetings. They may limit the number of those who are stepping out or hold back someone

because of a prior negative encounter between them and the inmate.

While this study found that there was no statically significance between, number of services attended and re-offending the long range effects of one life changed because of a religious commitment to God may go on to effect future generations and family members who may be following in their footsteps. In the Living Bible, Malachi chapter four verse two says, "[B]ut for you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in His wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture (p.731).

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