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The Role of the Black Church in Addressing Collateral Damage From the U.S. War on Drugs

Donald L. Perryman
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The Role of the Black Church in Addressing Collateral Damage

From the U.S. War on Drugs

Donald L. Perryman

ORCID Scholar ID # 0000-0002-1630-5373

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Dissertation Committee

- Laura Morgan Roberts, PhD, Committee Chair

- Philomena Essed , PhD, Committee Member

- R. Drew Smith, PhD, Committee Member

- Harold Dean Trulear, PhD, Committee Member

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Dedication

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Abstract

This research is a qualitative examination of African American pastors from urban communities who address the needs of congregants and/or local communities affected directly, or indirectly by mass incarceration. The Black Church, because of its unique sociocultural location and historic role as resource for Black social and economic problems, must help supply the answers to the devastating collateral damage of mass incarceration that primarily affect children and families. The study sets out to understand urban pastors' perceptions of the role of the Church in the post mass incarceration era. Specifically, the study examines the unique contributions of the African American religious experience via strategies, practices and experiences of urban pastors that directly and indirectly address the harms and collateral damage of mass incarceration on individuals, children, families and communities of color. This dissertation is available in open access at AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive, http://aura.antioch.edu/ and Ohiolink ETD Center, https://etd.ohiolink.edu/

Keywords: Black Church, Ethical Leadership, Mass Incarceration, Servant Leadership War on Drugs

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Chapter I: Introduction

This research is born from the intersection of mass incarceration, Black Church studies, and ethical leadership. The era of racialized mass incarceration, termed "The New Jim Crow" by Alexander (2010, 2011), forms the backdrop for the study.

The United States has a long and conflicted history of race, class, and space. Early in the nation's history, its policy of forced intercontinental relocation brought Africans to a "new world", stripped them of their language, culture, religion, kin, and assigned them to a life of involuntary labor without wages or pay. For more than four hundred years, these "exiles" have been treated as outsiders or second-class citizens through various political tools of systemic social and cultural control including segregation, discrimination and debasement. Today, inner cities throughout the nation are plagued by persistent joblessness, physical decay, concentrated poverty, extreme segregation and the erosion of Black families and Black institutions, while nearly one-third of Black non-college men can expect to spend time in prison at some point in their lives (Western & Pettit, 2002).

The Black Church, Pollard and Duncan (2016) stated,

is analytical shorthand for the vast network of racial-ethnic communities of Christian faith, worship, and life born out of, and informed by, the historic and present-day experiences of people of African descent, whatever the tradition and wherever they are found. (p. 6)

I use the term in this dissertation, as does Wiley, as quoted in Pollard and Duncan (2016) to include both "the historically Black denominations but also local Black congregations within predominately White denominations" (Western & Pettit, p. 173).

Not insignificantly, the Church's greatest challenge may be questions of its relevance by those who feel that it has become a space for entertainment or escapism rather than a resource to address the day-to-day social problems that plague the Black community (Brogdon, 2013).

Yet, the Church and its African American leadership have impacted the U.S. political system through activism, social justice engagement, and civil rights activity from the U.S. antebellum and Reconstruction periods through the Civil Rights and Black Power movements and even to the present post-Civil Rights and mass incarceration era.

As a child of the Civil Rights Movement, nurtured in the activist Church of that era, I write, however, as a leader of the post-Civil-Rights, post-soul-Church, an era where the main influence on contemporary Black secular culture comes from hip hop culture and not the soul culture of the Church as in previous generations. I am facing a Church context situated in an advanced stage of modernity in its development and an increasingly secular community that requires Church leadership to not only address their spiritual needs, but also address their basic social and economic necessities. In addition, the Church faces increased competition for socio-political advocacy or interventions from other social institutions, a diminishing reputation, and rising challenges about its relevance from outside the religious community. My primary leadership challenge is to negotiate between the powers of change and tradition in this climate of negative perceptions about this historic cultural institution.

Statement of the Problem

The following sections outline the broad picture of racialized mass incarceration in the United States, explores the origin and underlying causes of this tragedy, examines the nature of a prison industrial complex, and describes briefly collateral damages associated with mass incarceration.

Racialized mass incarceration. Between 1977 and 2007 the U.S. prison population grew from 300,000 to more than 2 million, a fivefold increase (Alexander, 2011). The number of people incarcerated in prisons and jails finally peaked in 2008 at 2.3 million and has trended down

to close to 2.2 million in 2016 (Pettit and Gutierrez, 2018; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018;). The current United States rate of 716 per every 100,000 is the highest rate of incarceration in the world. Besides, more than a million people in the U.S. earn their primary source of income through employment by the criminal justice system.

Ironically, the aforementioned dramatic rise in incarceration occurred at a time when crime rates were at historical lows and shown to be independent of rates of drug use. In fact, according to Alexander (2011), between 1985 and 2000, drug convictions alone accounted for nearly two- thirds of the increase in the federal system and more than half of the increase in the state prison population despite declining drug crime.

Drug convictions have increased more than 1000 percent since the implementation of the War on Drugs political policy began, an increase that bears no relationship to patterns of drug use or sales. The drug war has been waged almost exclusively in poor communities of color even though studies consistently show that people of all races use and sell drugs at nearly identical rates (Alexander, 2011, pp. 12–13)

Most significantly, U.S. mass incarceration has concentrated primarily on young, African American males (Pattillo, Western, & Weiman 2004). In some communities such as Washington, DC, three out of four young Black men can expect to spend time in prison. African Americans are seven times more likely than Whites to be in prison, and 30 percent of Black non-college men will go to prison at some time in their lives (Western & Pettit, 2002).

Racialized mass incarceration brings with it collateral damages, including the shift of economic and health activity away from Black communities to government and corporations. This expropriation of resources ultimately destroys the lives of Black individuals, families and communities.

Until very recently, there had been no noticeable widespread challenge or response to racialized mass incarceration from the Church. However, communities of faith with moral courage such as the Samuel Dewitt Proctor conference, have now begun to speak truth to power and strategize to influence public policies at all levels in order that Black families and poor communities might reap the benefits of positive social change. In this research, I use the terms Black or African American, interchangeably (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990).

Origins and underlying causes of mass incarceration. Is mass incarceration an intentional system used to impose legalized discrimination on African Americans? While sufficient attention must also be paid to individual and family microsystemic factors such as personal agency or violence, as Forman (2012) articulates, there are distinct linkages between the simultaneous evolution of widespread deindustrialization of urban areas and prison expansion and between the militarization of police forces and the exponential rise in Black youth incarceration, all of which began immediately following the end of the Civil Rights Movement. These correlations, some believe, are akin to the tools of social control implemented in previous repressive generations.

In *The New Jim Crow,* Alexander (2010, 2011), posits that the current system of mass incarceration was developed from contrived racial discourse about law and order in order to appeal to poor and working class Whites resentful of Blacks because of the gains achieved by the Civil Rights Movement. Specifically, Alexander points to strategy originating with H.R. Haldeman, former Chief of Staff to President Richard M. Nixon, for the birth of what she calls the New Jim Crow: "The whole problem is really the Blacks. The key is to devise a system that recognizes this while not appearing to" (Haldeman, as quoted in Alexander, 2010, pp. 43–44).

Khalil Gibran Muhammad (2010), however, in what he terms the "biography of the idea of Black criminality in the making of modern urban America" (p. 1), pointedly focuses on the

Progressive era and the census of 1890, as giving birth to the modern racialization of crime. Muhammad demonstrated that academics, journalists, politicians, and public figures used the 1890 census to focus public attention for the first time on the disproportionate number of Blacks in U.S. prisons, particularly Northern institutions, to justify discriminatory laws that targeted Blacks and treated them more harshly than Whites. These analyses, Muhammad asserts, also claimed that Blacks were from an inferior culture so scarred by centuries of slavery that government intervention would be of no help until Blacks exercised personal moral responsibility. On the other hand, White criminality was not regarded as coming from deviance, but rather, seen sympathetically compared to the "pathological and self-destructive" nature attributed to Blacks. These same public figures portrayed White criminals as urban immigrants and victims of industrialization whose condition could be ameliorated through interventions such as greater public and private investment in education, social services, social programs, and public infrastructure.

Echoing Alexander (2010), Wacquant (2012), theorizes that the exponential growth in incarceration rates is a result, not of "criminal insecurity, which has not changed in scale and physiognomy, but to the social insecurity caused by the casualization of wage labour and the disruption of ethnic hierarchy between Blacks and Whites in the US" (p. 38). Wacquant also posits that restrictive "workfare" policies that require recipients of public aid to be involved in meaningless work and the expansion of "prisonfare" are two sides of the same punitive coin. Thus, the carceral state, Wacquant concludes, was created to serve three purposes that have little or nothing to do with crime reduction:

> To bend the reticent fractions of the post-industrial working class to precarious wage-work; to warehouse their most disruptive or superfluous elements; and to patrol the boundaries of the deserving citizenry while reasserting the authority of the state in the restricted domain it now assigns itself. (p. 38).

The prison industrial complex. The Republican Party campaigns in the late 1960s and early 1970s, according to Alexander (2010, 2011), exploited White resentment by appealing to their willing belief that Blacks were the root of all societal problems including criminal behavior, and portrayed Black subculture as pathological. African Americans were portrayed as the cause and labeled as irresponsible baby-makers, welfare cheats, and held responsible for a breakdown of law and order. All of this served as a "race-neutral justification for Whites to express their hostility towards Blacks and Black progress without being exposed to the charge of racism" (Alexander, 2010, p. 53). According to Alexander, Presidents George Bush Sr. and Bill Clinton, who escalated the War on Drugs and paved the way for disparate incarceration of Blacks, also used this new tool of "color-blind" justice. Notably, although the "preserving law and order" meme has historically been a Republican mainstay, the largest federal and state increases of inmates of any president in American history took place during the "tough on crime" policies passed during Clinton's tenure (Feldman, 2001).

Meanwhile, racial discourse and other media-generated narratives, which promulgated racial stereotypes while celebrating law and order, made mass incarceration palatable to the public and helped to sustain the increase in incarceration rates. Politicians, using aggressive political rhetoric and their bully pulpits (Unah & Coggins, 2011), perpetuated "fear of crime" (which became shorthand for racism) and "tough on crime" strategies in order to win votes and began solidifying relationships with corporate developers to privatize and build more prisons. As money accelerated into the hands of politicians and private prison-building corporations, more people were being locked up and more people hired to supervise them. Thus, the evolution of the prison industrial complex.

As Fraser and Freeman (2012) note, many U.S. States began selling off prisons to private corporations as a part of fiscal policy to deal with declining tax revenues and federal dollars. Hidden in the fine print were agreements that required state governments to keep the prisons stocked with prisoners at high levels of capacity. Moreover, as Fraser and Freeman revealed, these privatized prisons became sources of subminimum-wage labor employees for various Fortune 500 corporations like Chevron, Bank of America, AT&T, and IBM. Fraser and Freeman also pointed out that "nearly a million prisoners are now making office furniture, working in call centers, fabricating body armor, taking hotel reservations, working in slaughterhouses, or manufacturing textiles, shoes, and clothing, while getting paid somewhere between 93 cents and $4.73 per day" (p. 2). As a result, the prison sector became a new industrial sector "employing more people than any Fortune 500 corporation and operating in 37 states" (p. 10). The bottom line? Alexander concluded that African American males found themselves to be an excess and disposable commodity for the mainstream economy and became disproportionately represented in a contemporary form of enslavement.

Nevertheless, given the extreme growth of the penal system and the pervasiveness of incarceration among poor Black males, the topic is not without broader social implications affecting the families and communities of prisoners and returning ex-offenders.

Collateral damage—children and families. Of the 1.4 million male prisoners sentenced and under state and federal jurisdiction at the end of 2011, 555,300 were Black compared to 465,100 White and 331,500 Hispanic (Carson & Mulako-Wangota, 2011). The astronomical level of Black incarceration can be explained by strategic street-level enforcement of drug laws, which target Black neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are geographically concentrated in racially segregated and economically disadvantaged areas, thus harmful collateral damage occurs which

impairs the children and families of the prisoners as well as the community's social, economic, and political frameworks (Roberts, 2004). Specifically, mass incarceration extracts valuable resources from these neighborhoods, which places extreme stress on the community infrastructure.

Clear (2008) found that mass incarceration removes large numbers of Black males from their neighborhoods resulting in a large ratio of women to men, leaving communities where female-headed, single-parent families become the norm. Incarceration leads, as Clear further points out, to family breakup and economic strain, both of which are risk factors for later delinquency. H. C. West and Sabol (2008) indicate that 1.1 million incarcerated persons were parents to an estimated 2.3 million children at the end of 2008, with an additional 7 million children having a parent under community control of parole or probation. Parental incarceration is linked to school failure, illegal drug use, and underemployment among children, who are also two and a half times more likely to develop a severe mental disorder.

Family functioning is also thrown into disarray in other ways, according to Clear (2008). Families of the incarcerated find themselves suffering various forms of financial hardship due to the loss of income compounded by the collateral costs of incarceration. These include the cost of prison visits, mail, telephone calls, and sending money to the incarcerated person. Often this hardship strains the extended networks of kin and friends who have to pitch in to fill the financial gap left by the incarcerated person, providing not only cash but also companionship and childcare or substitute parenting.

Another element of collateral damage is the breakdown of social assets such as churches, social clubs, and neighborhood associations, which have traditionally served to enforce social norms (Roberts, 2004). The social controls that these historic institutions provided in the Black

community have been weakened in recent years due to the difficulty in reaching "consensus on common values and on avenues for solving common problems" (Roberts, 2004, p. 1285).

The New Integration

With the U.S. criminal justice system focused on a punitive and profit-making model rather than a paradigm of rehabilitation and restorative justice, formerly incarcerated persons returning to the community experience many difficulties that are directly related to high rates of recidivism. With 2.2 million people in prisons or jails and an additional 1.8 million on probation or parole, the United States is the world's leader, incarcerating 25 percent of the world's prisoners. Alexander (2010, 2011), as previously noted, terms the current U.S. practice of mass warehousing in prisons as "The New Jim Crow."

One seldom-discussed implication is that all prisoners, except for those who die in prison, will eventually return to the community. Nearly 600,000 prisoners are released annually from state and federal prisons (not including local jails) and show up on the doorsteps of communities of color. Alexander (2010) further asserts that once these returning citizens arrive home, they are labeled as "felons," and become trapped in a second-class status that they find difficult to escape. The greatest challenge for these returning citizens then, having been cast as outsiders even before going to prison, is how to become integrated into flourishing networks of family, congregation, workforce and neighborhood (Trulear, 2010).

Yet the barriers to re-integration are formidable. Jenkins (2013) stated:

Young men of color, when they come back home, face a whole domain different from when they went to prison and one that is likely to be unfamiliar. They have to deal with employment, housing, transportation, physical and mental health and other issues. They may also have relationship issues. Statistics indicate that 1.1 million incarcerated persons are parents to nearly 2.3 million children and there are over 7 million children with a parent under some form of correctional supervision. So, these citizens may have left a child that was a baby and who is grown up when they return. They may have had a wife and several girl friends at the same time and have to negotiate that drama along with child

support. All of these things have to be dealt with or else can leave the reentering person as an outsider at home in his or her own community. (p. 1)

Not only does mass incarceration disrupt Black families, but also dramatically constrains the participation of Black men and individuals in the mainstream political economy. Once incarcerated, individuals may be ineligible for basic citizenship rights as food stamps, health and welfare benefits, public housing and federal educational assistance. Their driver's license might be automatically suspended, or they can be barred from voting while in prison, on probation or parole.

Incarceration also erects powerful barriers to employment as a criminal record further discourages prospective employers (who may already be hesitant to hire Blacks) from offering employment opportunities. Returning ex-offenders not only are stigmatized but also typically lack the education and job skills needed to compete in the labor market and thus find that their earning potential has been ruined. With these vast numbers of men missing from communities, the pool of mentors and role models is reduced as well, cutting off the networks or links necessary to obtain access to jobs and other social or economic skills. In addition, there are few resources or supports available to help provide a successful transition for the approximately 600,000 formerly incarcerated returning annually from federal and state prisons to the distressed local communities following their release.

Finally, as Roberts (2004) has theorized, without access to economic and civic life, a negative view of the criminal justice system is likely to develop in the community that reinforces isolation, leads to political ineffectiveness and often results in the formerly incarcerated returning to prison. She concludes: "As these communities disengage from the national political economy, the rest of society stigmatizes them as criminal, deprives them of social supports, and treats their members as noncitizens" (p. 1295).

Significance of the Study

There is abundant evidence that the War on Drugs and War on Crime are over, although imprisonment rates and law enforcement power are at their peak (Frampton, López, & Simon, 2008). As nearly 600,000 former prisoners of the War on Drugs return annually to poor communities, there is a need to determine solutions to transform the lives of affected individuals, children and families, rebuild the community and to strategize how to re-communalize the disenfranchised.

There is also a need to re-think the role of the Church in the mass incarceration era, and small congregations in particular. Chaves (2004) reports that the regular adult attendance of seventy-one percent of American congregations is less than one hundred persons per week. While most of the nation's 300,000 congregations are small, however, most churchgoers attend a relatively small percentage of large congregations or mega-churches, Chaves concludes. Therefore, the pressure to survive and still accomplish their mission is felt severely in smaller congregations who find themselves at a disadvantage compared to the larger-resourced mega-church model.

Advocates of reform, including prisoners and academics, suggest such remedies as transformative justice, new community/law enforcement coalitions, and implementation of various reconstruction models such as re-entry and Ban the Box (omission of questions about felonies on job applications) projects. However, we have yet to hear the voices of pastors or Church clergy leaders of small to medium congregations who operate at ground zero of the aftermath of the devastation caused by racialized mass incarceration. "Throughout American history," Fluker (1998) notes, "the Black Church has provided the pool of leadership that led to the creation of social institutions and organizations that have prophetically challenged the nation to move toward

a 'beloved community,'" (p. 7). This great institution has historically played a critical role in shaping the moral decisions of the nation. The Church is also uniquely situated as a strategic resource for the rebuilding of a post-incarceration society. And, finally, by including the voices of those who are directly involved in Church praxis in this dissertation, I have been able to provide real-world research and possibly help, in the words of Lewis Baldwin, to "bridge the chasm between theological education in the academy and what African Americans believe and affirm in the context of the Black Church" (as quoted in Pollard & Duncan, 2016, p. 46).

Research Questions

The applied research approach evolved from my interest in learning about how holistic ministry can be practiced effectively, as the mass incarceration era comes to an end. Since the end of the Civil Rights era, the Church has become increasingly perceived as insular and isolated from the needs of the urban poor (R. D. Smith, 2001). This study seeks to explore the holistic ministries and perceptions of urban pastors who demonstrate a strong commitment to addressing the collateral damage of mass incarceration.

Building upon the earlier work and insights of Fluker (1998) and Colon (2003), my primary research question is: How is the Church addressing the lives of Black and/or poor individuals, families, children and communities in the aftermath of the War on Drugs? A closely related question is: what strategies, methods and tasks are utilized by clergy leaders to directly address the collateral damage of mass incarceration in urban settings? The answers could help to inform public policy as well as provide insights for the practice of relevant, holistic ministry in urban settings devastated by the effects of the war on crime/drugs.

I pursued these questions by speaking with the Church leaders who operate in the neighborhoods from which the overwhelming majority of the incarcerated come and to which they

return. Without question, American policies leading to mass incarceration have damaged social networks and family stability, distorted social norms, and destroyed social citizenship in Black communities in the United States. For many, this is a moral issue that requires the same intervention by the African American Church, as did the past racial repression of slavery and Jim Crow segregation.

With young, Black, and poor people bearing the brunt of the collateral damage from mass incarceration, the question becomes: Who is acting and what is being done to address the destruction of Black life and Black community? With the issue not yet a national priority, it is perhaps fitting that we look to the Church for the answers.

Positionality

My interest in ethical leadership and the Church as a social resource is rooted in my practice of faith-based community leadership both as pastor/founder of Center of Hope Community Baptist Church and president/founder of United Pastors for Social Empowerment.

Center of Hope Community Baptist Church. The vision for Center of Hope (COH), according to its website and founding document, is "to restore hope to the community by becoming a center for change that reconnects holistic Christ-centered ministry in social, economic, and all facets of contemporary life to the spiritual and cultural foundations of individuals." COH's founding resolution document also alludes to the following societal conditions out of which the church was birthed:

- A growing disillusionment among youth;
- Absence of positive role models in schools, churches, in the home as well as a negative portrayal of the image of African American males and females;
- Devaluation of human life;

- Abnormally high crime rates, violence, and substance abuse in the African American community;

- Lack of equal opportunity and access to educational, employment, and financial resources.

As a result, my ministerial focus has been to bring the light of the gospel upon the issues of diversity, liberation, inclusiveness, empowerment, and social justice.

Center of Hope Family Services. Center of Hope Family Services (CHFS) is an affiliated but separate 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, which was formed to carry out faith-based social service programming. CHFS strives to prepare individuals for responsible citizenship by contributing holistically to their personal growth, assisting in the development of resilience and ability to address life challenges with greater competencies, equipping individuals with life skills to build a strong self-concept and will to achieve.

United Pastors for Social Empowerment. United Pastors for Social Empowerment (UPSE), according to their website, is a collaboration of pastors, institutions and community members that come together to address the issues that disproportionately affect urban individuals and groups who are marginalized politically, socially and economically.

Building upon the collaborative strengths of community institutions, human services organizations and the faith-based community and utilizing a solution-centered approach the group attempts to obtain positive outcomes in the following focus areas: Community Health, Community Education (education equity, success, and retention), Community Development (closing the wealth gap), and Community Justice.

The group's stated mission is as follows:

The United Pastors for Social Empowerment is an independent ecumenical group of senior pastors working in collaboration with community leaders and institutions to challenge the

crises and disparities affecting the poor, marginalized, and communities of color through public policy advocacy, community development and through political empowerment and coalition building. (United Pastors for Social Empowerment, n.d., para. 6)

As both a student and practitioner of Leadership and Change, it is important for me to understand what is known about how Black Church leaders go about bringing change to individuals and communities. Also, the dialogue about the effectiveness of faith-based programming seems to "outpace the actual data available" (R. Fischer, 2008 p. 1) and underscores the need for additional research.

Conclusion

This research examines the role and tasks of the Black Church in its urban context by seeking answers from religious leaders in community-based churches on how to challenge the desolation and destruction left behind in the aftermath of the War on Drugs and resultant mass incarceration.

Racialized mass incarceration brings with it collateral damages, including the shift of economic and health activity away from Black communities to government and corporations. This expropriation of resources ultimately destroys the lives of Black children, individuals and families. The primary problem may be a perceived failure of the Church to advocate around issues of public policy and to provide relevant interventions. This sentiment has created a wide gulf between the institution and a disappointed Black community, including a contemporary generation of youth.

There is minimal research attention focused on the socio-political role of the Black Church around the collateral damage from mass incarceration (Moore, Adedoyin, Robinson & Boamah, 2015). Likewise, there is very little literature in current leadership theory from the Black Church perspective. By exploring urban clergy leaders whose effective work to transform individuals and communities devastated by mass incarceration flies under the radar, I hope to uncover insights

that may help to inform public policy and strategies for the practice of relevant, holistic ministry in urban settings.

With approval of Antioch's Institutional Review Board (IRB), the experiences and perspectives of 17 pastors were studied. This number provides a unit of analysis that allowed for in-depth interviewing of those leaders who have been described by national faith-based advocacy groups with a focus on mass incarceration as providing exemplary strategic and ethical leadership in combating mass incarceration in their ministries. This investigation uses a critical ethnographic approach as a qualitative research method. Critical ethnography is best used to serve the needs of vulnerable people(s), cultural experience and when the political process can alter society in significant ways (Gitlin, Siegal, & Boru, 1989). Unlike conventional ethnography, critical ethnography has a political purpose (J. Thomas, 1993). Historically, the microculture of the Black Church and its leaders have been instrumental in shaping the cultural beliefs and practices of people living in the Black community, especially those involved with the Church. Therefore, this study is informed by the cultural ethnographic approach of McCurdy, Spradley, and Shandy (2005). For these authors, culture is knowledge shared by a social group and used to generate behavior and interpret experience.

The study was limited to urban U.S. pastors and leaders of small churches (mainly under 1,500 members) who perform ministry in the public square in addition to the pastoral duties within their congregations. The intent was to gather thick, cultural data from those who share the cultural experience of working with a specific focused approach to addressing the consequences of mass incarceration.

Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The thick data were analyzed by deep immersion, grouping according to overarching themes. I analyzed each of the interviews

individually before exploring patterns across the group of interviewees. Using an iterative process of reflection, I then surveyed the entire set of interviews as a whole, coding by themes and searching for patterns across the group.

In sum, this study addressed the perceived notion that the Black Church is "dead" or at best, has lived beyond its intended purpose. The research attempted to highlight a few of the many churches that have and are addressing the collateral damage to the Black community by the U.S. War on Drugs. This study emanated from the researcher's desire to explore a practical agenda for the Black Church in the post-mass incarceration era. Increased understanding of the contemporary role of the Black Church and how it can respond to the present day political, economic and social issues of a post-U.S.-drug-war era has the potential to inform public policy as well as help urban clergy leaders to meet the Black community's demand for a Black Church that is relevant to the needs of marginalized youth and urban poor.

Summary of Chapters to Follow

In Chapter II, I discuss the concept of Black Church Studies and its intersection with ethical leadership and racialized mass incarceration. A particular focus is placed on ethical leadership from the Black perspective. I first discuss the origin of Black Church Studies and Black Church leadership in its millennial context. The chapter concludes with a discussion of ethical leadership from the Black Church perspective followed by an application of other leadership theories to the Black Church context.

In Chapter III, I describe the strategy, genre, and rationale for a critical ethnographic approach using narrative analysis, my selected method of inquiry. I also describe how the chosen methodology addresses the research questions. A description of the participants, as well as an explanation of the selection criteria, follows. I also provide an explanation of my role as researcher,

the importance of this role as a primary research tool, and the ethical considerations that accompany the role. This chapter concludes with details of data collection, management, and analysis that guided the research process and ensured the continuity and integrity of the data, along with a discussion of the trustworthiness of the findings and the accountability of the researcher.

Chapter IV presents the study's results, including participant demographic information and portraits of their ministries, including detailed strategies to: impact lives positively through ministries for the incarcerated (and the recently released); address the collateral damage of mass incarceration; and raise consciousness in congregations and communities. The chapter also examines the barriers encountered to implement and expand their ministries to encompass the aforementioned aims.

Chapter V summarizes and interprets the entire study, discusses implications for theory, practice and research followed by presentation of the study limitations. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the contributions this study makes to research on ethical leadership as well as next steps in future research.

Limitations and Delimitations

The scope of this study has intentional boundaries, delimited by unit of analysis and by methodology. The research focuses on individual narratives of urban pastors of small to medium churches with specific ministries addressing the collateral damage of mass incarceration. This leaves the study of the clergy leaders of larger churches for future research and also precludes the experience of those religious leaders who focus on other holistic Church ministries. The methodology employed in any research process is driven by the research question. The research question in this study calls for a qualitative approach, which provides richness of narrative and individual expression rather than statistical descriptions and correlations.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This is a critical cultural study that attempts to address the questions of how the Black Church (referred to in this dissertation simple as "Church"), through its leadership, is addressing (or could potentially address) the collateral damage of racialized mass incarceration in urban settings. In particular, I sought to identify methods, strategies and tasks being used to positively affect individuals, children, families and communities in the aftermath of the War on Drugs which decimated Black lives and communities.

The research, with its focus on liberation, culture and community, aligns itself with the theoretical school of Karenga (2005). Karenga's framework, particularly that of *Kawaida,* a philosophy which emphasizes the recovery and reconstruction of African culture and history, builds on the thinking of such scholars as Sekou Toure, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, W.E.B. Du Bois, Malcom X, Frantz Fanon, and others. This project also contextualizes ethical leadership within the framework of Black Church Studies. Black Church Studies evolved from foundational sources that included its African influence, Black Studies and Black theology.

Drawing on these foundational sources, I will first discuss the cultural heritage of Black Church Studies and contributions of researchers to the body of works in the field. Next, I turn to the concept of ethical leadership situated within the larger body of Leadership theory. Finally, this section considers ethical leadership from the Black Church perspective and concludes with a presentation of the literature on ethical leadership applied to the Black Church context. Figure 2.1 portrays the intersection of these topics that will be reviewed in this chapter and which are foundational to this research.
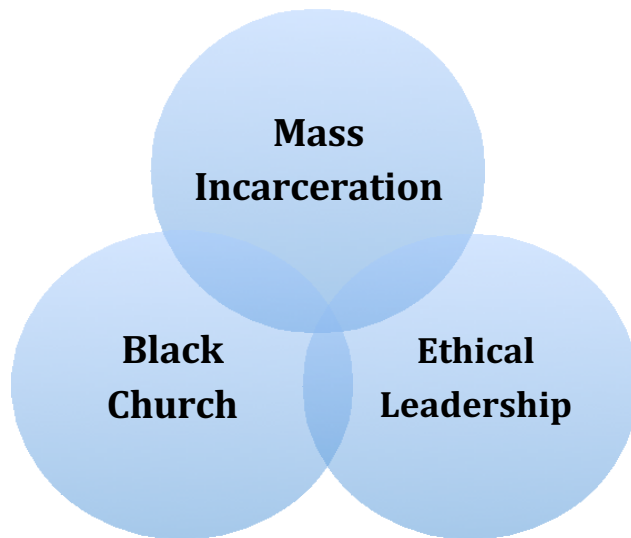
Figure 2.1. Key topics for literature review in this study.

Black Church Studies

Black Church Studies have been described as "the academic study of the religious traditions and experiences of Americans of African descent" (Baldwin, 2016 p. 31). Wilmore, more precisely, defined Black or African American Religious Studies as:

> The investigation, analysis, and ordering of a wide variety of data related to the religions of persons of African descent for the purpose of authenticating and enriching, personal faith and preparing both clergy and laity for a ministry in the Black Church and community, understood in terms of competent and faithful leadership in worship, nurture, education, and corporate action in behalf of God's mission of liberation for all people. (1989, xii, xiii)

The "Black" dimension of Black Church Studies emerges from its cultural and historical foundations. Before discussing Black Church Studies as an academic initiative, it is appropriate to explore its historical background and foundational sources, which I turn to now.

Foundational Aspects of Black Church Studies

African influences. Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) and Hale (1982), both influenced by the classic works of Herskovits (1941), Blassingame (1972), and Raboteau (1980), asserted that the religious worldview of African Americans or what is termed the "Black sacred cosmos" (Lincoln

& Mamiya, 1990, p. 7) is derived from their rich African heritage. Further, in contrast to Frazier

(1974), this Black culture,

> neither began nor ended with the experience of slavery. Even though the acculturation process and the slavery experience may have altered the African culture that was transmitted, enough mechanisms of retention and transmission existed for survivals to have been possible. (Hale, 1982 p. 18)

Some aspects of Black culture with roots in Africa include: funerals, dance, motor habits, ways of dressing, etiquette (i.e. respect for ancestors, concept of time), cooperation and sharing, child-rearing practices, informal system of adoption of children, child-naming practices, audience and performer styles (call and response), and religious or spiritual expressive styles with highly emotional overtones.

Paris (2004) also argued that the Africans who came to America's shores did not arrive "as a tabula rasa" (p. ix) or blank slate. Rather, he posited, that Africans brought along their religious, moral and aesthetic values, which were preserved despite an oppressive American existence but gradually shaped into a new African consciousness. It is these common spiritual or moral values, which unite people of the African diaspora.

The paramount goal in this African cultural ethos, for Paris (2004), whose view of the cultural specificity of African American ethics aligned his work closely with the Aristotelian ethics tradition, is the preservation and promotion of community. Other distinctive basic values that are implicit in both African and African American culture according to Paris are:

- Beneficence or facilitation of the well-being of others;

- Forbearance, described as "deliberation about possible responses to a miserable situation" (p. 32).

- Practical wisdom, pertaining to cognitive discernment necessary for determining good action.

- Improvisation, a creative moral virtue that reaches its zenith in musical or oratorical performance and is the ability to exhibit novel expression within common patterns without being constrained by prescribed forms.

- Forgiveness, the refusal to become consumed by hatred despite bearing centuries of racial oppression including slavery, segregation, colonialism, and apartheid.

- Justice—the supreme African and African American moral virtue, according to Paris (2004), because it is the sum of all virtues, it is concerned primarily with an individual's obligations to the community through how its members deal with each other, and the community's obligations to its members and itself.

Insight about these group commonalities and the influence of the African heritage in the African American experience also comes from Colon (2007). African core values that were brought to America, he posited, include the search for freedom, which is the central theme and core value in Black history (Harding, 1981; Thorpe, 1969). Other African core values that appear in the African American experience, according to Colon, are

- spirituality;

- valuing education;

- the importance of identity—who am I, whose am I, where did I come from, and where am I going;

- self-determination, as opposed to being defined or spoken for by others, and although suffering deterioration in recent years.;

- commonality/inter-dependency, which is the realization that we are all together in the same boat.

Freedom, as stated earlier, is a primary African/American value. The approaches to freedom are various and include integrationist, autonomous development, which is Black nationalism, or the Black only separatism promoted by Marcus Garvey, and societal transformation which involves the re-distribution of wealth so all can live better (Colon, 2007).

The African influence on the African American experience is the primary foundation from which Black Church studies evolved. Contemporary cries for freedom and liberation, according to Colon (2003, 2007), can be seen in African American needs for political emancipation, economic well-being ('can't be free depending on others'), social-cultural integrity, physical and mental health, fundamental human rights (police brutality, etc.), and finally, spiritual salvation. Therefore, we turn to the second foundation, Black Studies, which developed from the contemporary calls for freedom and liberation, the primary African value.

Black/Africana studies. Also tracing its roots to "the homelands from which the Africans enslaved in the Americas were taken" (Colon, 2003, p. 145), is the Black Studies or Africana Studies academic tradition. Described as the "critical and systematic study of the thought and practice of African people in their current and historical unfolding" (Karenga, 2005, p. 148), it is "rooted in and builds upon the ancient and ongoing activist intellectual tradition of African culture" (p. 148), a tradition that included moral, social and intellectual purpose.

The birth of Black Studies took place amidst the social, intellectual and political unrest emanating from the Black Church-based Civil Rights Movement (1955–1975), the Black Power Movement (1968–1975) and the related Black Consciousness and Black Arts movements. Black Studies was also linked to the anti-Vietnam War and Free Speech movements, which occurred concurrently.

The first Black Studies program began in 1966 at what is now known as San Francisco State University. Exponential increases of African American and Latino students, many from inner-cities, began flooding onto college campuses as a result of the effectiveness of the social movements. However, upon arrival, the students viewed the campus environment as an extension of the White supremacist and European status-quo of existing society. With an emphasis on academic excellence and social responsibility (Karenga, 2005), as a result of the rising enrollment of activist students arriving from oppressed social groups, these college campuses became an intellectual battleground. They provided a scholarly corrective "to substitute facts and their analyses and application for the prevailing miseducation and destructive myths, misrepresentations and misunderstandings about Black people" (Colon, 2003, p. 51). They also worked from a community prescriptive to provide remedies for the problems of the Black community (Colon, 2007).

A major development in the field of Black Studies includes *Afrocentricity,* a conceptual framework within Black Studies, advocated by Molefi Asante, founder of the first doctoral program in African Studies at Temple University. Asante's Afrocentric theory of social change places Africans and African interests at the center of any approach that attempts to solve Black problems (Asante, 1980). In order for African Americans to achieve their psychological potential, he asserted, they must "find congruence between who they are and what their environment says they ought to be" (Asante, 2003, p. 51). Other important developments emanating from Black Studies include Black Women's studies, Multicultural studies, Classical African studies and Black theology. We turn now to briefly discuss Black theology, a third foundational source of Black Church Studies.

Black theology. Also rooted in African culture and emanating from the fruits of the Black Power and Civil Rights movements is Black theology. Led by James Cone (1997) and Gayraud Wilmore (1989, 1998, 2000), Black theology provided a systematic theology of empowerment based upon the African experience in contrast to White Christianity, which was viewed by early proponents as collaboration with imperialism (Ross, 2012). While many looked upon Cone's perspective as narrowly focused on racism and Black power (e.g., D. E. Thomas, 2005), his view of the authentic Gospel was one that is rooted in Black suffering and empowers marginalized members in an oppressive society. Cone also boasts that Black theology, unlike Euro-American Christianity, is anchored in academia.

In addition to Cone and Wilmore, the foundational scholars of Black theology include Albert Cleage, J. Deotis Roberts, Cecil Cone, and Charles Long. The second generation of Black theology scholars in this academic vein include Delores S. Williams and Jacqueline Grant—who add the religious experience of African American women, known as womanist theology and ethics; Lee H. Butler Jr., James H. Harris, and Edward P. Wimberly and Anne Streaty Wimberly—who bring a focus on pastoral theology; Dwight Hopkins, Cain Hope Felder, Brian K. Blount, and systematic theologist James H. Evans Jr. round out the second generation of Black theologians (Hopkins, 2004).

In the future, Black theology needs to hear more African American women voices such as Coleman (2008), in order to build upon the womanist scholarship from the second generation. International voices, and gay and lesbian voices furthering the work of R. L. Hill (1993) and Griffin (2006) will also help the study of Black theology evolve into a third generation.

The field of Black theology is also currently lacking in partnerships with faith organizations, community groups and governmental initiatives (Hopkins, 2004). And, finally,

Black theology has been conspicuously absent in scholarship on the topic of racialized mass incarceration or the War on Drugs.

Black Church Studies as academic initiative. Black Church studies as an academic initiative was born out of the turbulence of the 1960s Civil Rights, Black Power and Black Consciousness social movements and was developed as an outgrowth of the Black Studies and Black theology movements (Baldwin, 2016). Frustrated with the prevalence of a pervasive Eurocentric theological approach, even among historically Black divinity schools, the first Black Church Studies program began, according to Baldwin, at Colgate Rochester Divinity School and the Crozer Theological Seminaries, in response to the demands of Black students who had occupied the main administration building of this predominately White divinity school. Henry H. Mitchell, scholar and Baptist clergyman, helped to conceive and develop the program. Several other programs in Black Church studies around the country followed shortly thereafter to accommodate the rapidly rising enrollment of Black students and their increasing demands for more inclusiveness.

African American religious life has since been studied in several diverse disciplines, including humanities, social science and theology. Specifically, Black Church studies have been approached from various perspectives, including the Church as spiritual springboard, the Church as a refuge, and the Church as a social resource (R. D. Smith, 2014). This study is a post-Civil-Rights Afrocentric approach to Black Church studies and aims to explore the Church as social resource with a focus on the social ethics of the Black Church. Unlike the sociology of the Black Church, whose aim is principally to describe, Floyd-Thomas, Floyd-Thomas, Duncan, Ray, and Westfield (2007) noted, African American Christian social ethics,

> draw upon Black theologies to envision practices and perspectives that are liberative
> and to suggest how the Black church can embrace them more wholeheartedly. Thus,

African American Christian social ethics is both a constructive endeavor that focuses on the moral formation and social transformation of Black people on an individual and communal basis, as well as a resistance movement that continues the liberating agenda to correct American society's oppressive tendencies and its continued efforts to dictate the moral rules and ethical practices of Black people. (p. 122)

As the War on Drugs winds down there is a paucity of research on the post-War-on-Drugs era from the Black Church perspective. However, I am also approaching this research with an eye toward ethical leadership and its application to my contextual practice. Traditional leadership theories and concepts, for the most part, have omitted African American religious leaders operating among the urban poor, creating color and context gaps that limit our capacity to comprehend the full complexity of leadership.

A History of Black Church Sociopolitical Response

This section of the literature review details the historical and contemporary responses and resistance by the Black Church. I begin with a brief history of Black Church activism. Following this, I describe the areas in which the Black Church has responded historically and in the post-Civil-Rights era. This review includes mass incarceration, a policy area left unresolved by the Civil Rights or Black Power movements.

Lincoln and Mamiya's (1990) classic, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, is the definitive contemporary study on the Black Church. Here, the Black Church is defined as congregations with a predominately African American membership.

The Slave era: Liberation and survival. The people that arrived in America from West Africa as chattel under the political/economic system designed to maintain racial caste in the 17th and 18th centuries brought with them sophisticated moral traditions that included a holistic worldview that made no separation in everyday affairs between the religious and nonreligious. This religion, with its inseparable connection with God, the community and all of life, served as a survival

strategy for dealing with their everyday, dehumanizing experiences with the conditions of slavery (Wilmore, 2000).

In addition, as Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) point out, Black religious groups and individuals were involved in Black-oriented sociopolitical change from the earliest days of the Atlantic slave trade, which first brought Africans to America. Many Black clergy and churches were involved in the activist Underground Railroad effort, working with White abolitionists to help enslaved individuals escape to freedom. The three largest slavery revolts in American history were planned and led by Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey, and Nat Turner, all enslaved preachers. During slavery, church meetings were the only permissible gatherings for subjugated Blacks and thus revolts were often planned during worship services or bible study sessions. The focus of Black Church sociopolitical activism during the slave period was on liberation and by necessity, survival. The system of slavery was finally destroyed by the blood-soaked Civil War or War Between the States, the grisliest conflict in American history in terms of the number of lives lost to the total American population.

Reconstruction period: Racial uplift. The period of Reconstruction (1865–1877) followed the Civil War and attempted to heal the wounds of the nation following its internecine conflict. The aim of Reconstruction was to politically subdue the southern U.S. states (the South) in order to prevent future rebellion and to reintegrate the region into the economy (Colon, 2007). Simultaneously, the recently enfranchised would also need to be integrated into society in order to prevent possible re-enslavement. African Americans were allowed to participate in electoral politics until this participation was curtailed by the Compromise of 1877, which removed federal troops from the Southern states in exchange for Southern electoral votes in a deadlocked presidential contest (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). The removal of federal troops opened the door to

violence, economic discrimination, and electoral obstacles such as poll taxes leading to the complete disenfranchisement of Black voters in the South.

Thus, with the demise of slavery, a new system of control of Blacks was implemented to maintain the racial order. This new system of oppression, during which America experienced its first prison boom and "the prisoners were disproportionately Black" (Alexander, 2010, p. 32), was ratified and legitimated by the Supreme Court of the United States. Therefore, despite the ambitious aims of Reconstruction, Blacks became, once again, locked into marginalized economic situations and the neo-slavery of legalized Southern Jim Crow segregation.

The Jim Crow Era: Equality. However, the Black Church continued to evolve further as a response to Black social needs as the Emancipation Proclamation and the Civil War had released millions of individuals formerly held in captivity, from White supervision and direct authority over their morals and family life (Frazier, 1974). The Church, noted Frazier, became an agent of social control that undertook to censure unconventional and immoral sexual behavior and functioned to elevate Blacks in order to enable them to operate in this new social environment.

During this period, the Church also facilitated economic cooperation among Blacks by pooling their resources and buying land, constructing church buildings, and creating mutual aid societies to meet crises such as sickness and death. From these, the Church, particularly in the North, became involved in extra-worship activities as attention focused on racial advancement in addition to survival. The elevation strategy expanded the Black middle class as well as Black-owned banks, hotels, grocery stores and newspapers. Added to the effort of economic development by the Church was the support of schools. Education was encouraged, and schools were started with a religious and moral outlook.

During Reconstruction and the years following, the Church was active in the social order of Blacks. Many Blacks during this period became leaders in politics. Many political leaders were also preachers, such as Henry M. Turner of the African Methodist Episcopal Church who was active in the Georgia legislature; Bishop James W. Hood of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, who worked for the Internal Revenue Service and the State of North Carolina; and Hiram Revels, a United States Senator from Mississippi.

The newly freed status of formerly confined Blacks and the Great Awakening revival period combined to foster the exponential growth of Black churches. With this growth, clergy became consumed by ecclesiastical duties and secular organizations and activities, which began under Church influence, and later became autonomous. Simultaneously, a growing Black educated class, anxious for upward mobility, freed themselves of ecclesiastical control and became interested in a new secularized motif of legal, political, and economic liberation and equality.

The influence of a now bureaucratic Church, the Great Depression of 1929 and the period between World War I and World War II saw the Church become even more politically and socially conservative. Many Blacks began gravitating towards assimilation to the White mainstream, denying their Black heritage and culture, and withdrew from political and social involvement in the Black community. This era was termed the "de-radicalization of the Black Church" by Wilmore (1998, p. 187).

Civil Rights and Black Power movements: Holistic ministry. Beginning in 1955, however, as Wilmore (2000) noted, with Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s emergence on the American political scene, the Church's holistic influence began to resurge. King's visibility was used to wed together social, political, economic, cultural, and religious elements and make them inseparable from the Black Church. In addition to nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience

to promote social change, many Black churches developed various social service programming. These activities included job training, basic education and educational enrichment, and health-care programs (Pinn, 2002). The historical Black motifs of survival, elevation, and liberation were balanced within the African notion of holistic religion and became the core elements of the Civil Rights movement (Wilmore, 1998).

A major threat to the faith-based activism of the Church, according to some, came from the concurrent Black Power movement. Disillusioned with King's nonviolent direct action strategy, members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) embraced more radical approaches to social change, which embraced self-determination, inflammatory rhetoric, and detachment from White collaboration. Ideological differences between the Church and the Black Power movement seemed to discourage many Black congregations and by the end of the 1960s, only a relatively few maintained their commitment to social activism.

The Civil Rights Movement (1955–1975) depended heavily upon a multicultural, diverse socioeconomic and nonviolent protest along with the activist church model to break down legalized segregation and to increase voters and voting rights. The Black Power movement (1968–1975) was not content with the gradualism of the results achieved by the Civil Rights Movement. Its theme was "before a group can enter open society, it must first close ranks" (as quoted in Skolnik, 1969, p. 120); the declaration was that power does not integrate with powerlessness.

Black Power did not ultimately achieve its goal to empower the Black community. As a result of its confrontational and often violent tactics, the U.S. government destroyed, disrupted, and discredited Black Power organizations and their leaders. In addition, the movement became more of a "slogan in search of a program" beset by conflicting agendas and internal fighting (Colon, 2007). However, Black Power did provide the Black community with a legacy that

included the positive sense of self, improved Black images and an increase in Black studies at major universities and colleges (Colon, 2007).

While the Civil Rights Movement accomplished its mission of increased voting potential for Black Americans, the Movement's scope was primarily limited to the South and did not address the array of problems occurring outside its southern geography including such social problems as high unemployment, inferior education, health and health care disparities, and mass incarceration. Although the Civil Rights Movement has been transcended philosophically today, its legacy is the activist church model. This model has been a vehicle of political engagement and activism which has operated since forced immigration brought Blacks to America, forced their labor under inhumane conditions, and continues within contemporary systems to maintain economic, class and cultural dominance over Blacks and poor people. What is clear is that, "In each generation, new tactics have been used for achieving the same goals—goals shared by the Founding Fathers. Denying African Americans citizenship was deemed essential to the formation of the original union" (Alexander, 2010, p. 1).

As the efforts to maintain the second-class citizenship of Blacks and other people of color shift or are redesigned, the need also grows for a new response from the African American Church. As Alexander (2010, 2011) argued, a new movement must be organized in a way that is specific to the prevailing racial practices that exist in our society. The Church, then, has an opportunity to extend its activist reach into policy areas that were left unresolved by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. While many of these issues—including immigrant rights, gay rights, health care entitlements, and school equality—have received attention in varying degrees from the Black Church, the issue of mass incarceration may be least likely to be on the radar screen of Black Church activists.

Yet, African American faith-based organizations operating in an urban context are endowed with a unique legacy, mission, and purpose. According to R. S. Jackson and Reddick (1999), the Church is considered to be the most important institution within the African American community, and is the primary one that is led, administered, and funded exclusively by the Black community. Moreover, as McRoberts (2001) has stated,

> Black churches, which once gave birth to countless other institutions, in many instances, now tend to be the only viable institutions left in depressed Black locales and are often the only civic spaces where people meet regularly to share experiences, hopes, plans. (para. 4)

This section has demonstrated that from the slave era onward, Blacks have openly organized religious and quasi-religious mutual aid societies from which "sprang countless African American social, economic, and political institutions, including schools, insurance companies, banks and social service organizations" (McRoberts, 2001, para. 4). So, the Black Church, historically, has met the educational, physical, and social needs of its members, families and friends in addition to their spiritual needs.

In addition, the Church, has been described by Eng, Hatch, and Callan (1985), as "both the setter of norms and enforcer of the community's more positive values" (p. 81). It functions as both a source of social support and a focal point for social networks. Black Americans rely strongly on the Church for sustenance and emotional support and have received tangible assistance during periods of economic or social instability.

Today, many Black congregations are located in geographic areas hurt by the effects of economic transformation resulting from a shift from manufacturing to a service economy and globalization of the economy. This shift has helped to increase income inequality, raise poverty rates and produce a social and economic plague in communities of color and among low-skilled, low-wage persons. More notably, as a coping mechanism, young people living in these areas have adopted behaviors portrayed in the movies, television and videos rather than the utilizing the

strengths from their own cultural history (Freeman & Logan, 2004). As a result, a growing

number of congregations, either working alone or in collaboration with other larger and

established human services institutions, are not only providing social service programming, but are

also involved in intergenerational cultural transmission tasks in order to reorient, socialize and

equip youth with a healthy value system based on their own cultural heritage (Colon, 2003).

However, the Church's sociopolitical involvement in the contemporary struggle around mass

incarceration has seemingly yet to gain widespread traction among Black churches. There are a

couple of plausible explanations.

The Black Church is currently experiencing a mass exodus by many who feel that it has

become a space for entertainment or escapism rather than a resource to address the relevant

day-to-day social problems that plague the Black community (Brogdon, 2013). Although African

Americans, according to the Pew Forum on Religion, are "markedly more religious in a variety of

measures than the U.S. population as a whole," the number of persons such as young Black men

who have had no contact with church or Sunday School, has doubled within a generation (Pond,

Smith, & Clement, 2010).

Others, such as Glaude go even farther and claim that, like icon Martin Luther King Jr. and

the Civil Rights Movement, the Church is dead. "The idea of this venerable institution as central

to Black life and as a repository for the social and moral conscience of the nation has all but

disappeared" (Glaude, 2010, para. 1). Yet, despite the alienation of the Black middle-class church

from the everyday issues of the mass of Black people, the Church, according to some, remains the

most powerful, respected, visible, and viable institution in the Black community. This sentiment is

captured by Pinn (2002):

> Many of those who entered Black churches for the first time during the past three
> decades and others who returned from a long absence did so in the hope that the Black

Church would prove itself the Black community's strength. While this appeal to the Church's socioeconomic and political potential has been important, many also point to the value of worship as well. For them, the vibrancy of the Church is tied to the experience of worship that frames activism by building a strong sense of self—the individual in connection to community and God. (p. 36)

Yet, African American churches and their activist clergy have always mobilized communities for change as well as prepared their congregants for battle by providing the "spiritual food" necessary to sustain the fight. In the past, the methodology of the struggle has been reactive, consisting of marches, boycotts and other acts of civil disobedience. Twenty-first century tactics, in contrast, have been concerted proactive measures and have taken the primary form of either social welfare service provision or efforts to influence social welfare policies. In the next section, I discuss some of the sociopolitical activities of Black churches in the post-Civil-Rights era.

The post-Civil-Rights Black Church: Social interventions. As noted previously, the Church is an institution with power and influence in the Black community. In 2018, not only are Black churches and their leaders providing traditional civil rights and political activism in various urban contexts (R. D. Smith, 2003; R. D. Smith & Harris, 2005), but a growing number of Black churches are involved in public policy practices in areas such as school reform, reproductive health, healthcare and welfare reform. They also provide tutoring or literary programs (Barnes, 2015) and have community development corporations that provide housing and workforce development programs (Shipp & Branch, 2006). Billingsley, whose premise is "during periods of severe and sustained crisis" that the Church's tradition of social activism is catalyzed where there are sufficient resources and leadership (1999, p.11) also noted that contemporary congregations respond with community outreach programming that address such issues as juvenile crime and violence, HIV/AIDS, unemployment and lack of quality, affordable housing.

Others also note that social service provision has been part of the cultural tradition of the Church and remains at the center of who congregations are and what congregations do. Chavis

(2004) reports that 57 percent of all congregations are involved in some kind of social service engagement. However, approximately 90 percent of those congregations engaged are performing short-term emergency programs that are low intensive such as food or clothing distribution. The more intensive engagements such as health, education mentoring, job-training or substance abuse are undertaken by a typically small number of congregations (10 percent of congregations) and then usually in collaboration with government or secular social service agencies.

Yet, opportunities for the Church to respond to other Post-Civil Rights social issues abound. The Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI) Act of 2001 and the 1996 Charitable Choice provision of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, on which it expanded, were created to provide faith-based and community organizations (FBCO) increased capacity to compete with larger and secular agencies for federal funding to provide human and social service programming. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of FBCOs taking advantage of these new opportunities.

The impetus for the FBCI Act arises from the unique qualities inherent to FBCOs, which render them ideally suited to deliver effective programming (R. Fischer, 2008). Many FBCOs or Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), such as African American congregations are located in inner city neighborhoods or high poverty areas and are credible to residents residing in the communities they serve. Churches have direct and consistent contact with those who need their services most, are seen as expert providers and are by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recognized as being "'uniquely situated' to serve 'families in poverty, prisoners re-entering the community and their families, children of prisoners, homeless families, and at-risk youth'" (quoted in R. Fischer, 2008, p. 180).

However, there is increased scrutiny over the use of public funds and policy-makers and the public are demanding accountability, evidence-based practice and effective interventions in human services. Therefore, subsequently, a rising interest in the impact and effectiveness of the programming and services provided by FBCOs has occurred. This indicates a need for additional empirical research and dialogue on outcomes of FBCO-sponsored programs in general and African American FBCOs in particular.

In addition, despite the prevalence of social problems in African American communities such as disproportionately higher incarceration rates and persistent disparities in health and mental health, high school dropout and college retention rates and unemployment, African American churches appear to have been either left out of the funding equation or have otherwise been slow to respond to the FBCI Act through seeking federal and state grants (Lewis & Trulear, 2008).

Historically, African American clergy such as Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Walter Fauntroy, Andrew Young, Martin Luther King Jr. and countless unnamed pastors, have worked with government to impact policy and social welfare service provision in order to improve the well-being of the poor and people of color. More recently however, according to Lewis and Trulear (2008), many churches have retreated from the public square and focused inwardly and as a result, social work has become more secularized.

However, new and emerging opportunities for faith-based congregations and agencies have opened up. Yet, until the social work profession acknowledges the unique context for action of church agencies and congregations, the profession risks losing its relevance. The challenge is to find ways for the profession and the faith community to forge mutual cooperation and relationships (Wineburg, 1996).

Meanwhile, African American churches and their leaders, have the potential to more effectively influence services, policies and ultimately outcomes by addressing the social problems plaguing their communities. This perhaps requires shifting thinking from electoral activities (putting the right person in office) or protest politics to developing research and strategic partnerships as primary policy tools (Lewis & Trulear, 2008).

The Post-Civil Rights Black Church: Programming Impact and Effectiveness

This section explores the ways that African American FBOs address the social problems plaguing their community. In addition to exposing gaps in the literature, this may inform faith-based public policy with many possible directions for the future.

Defining "faith-based" programming. There is definitional ambiguity among researchers and policymakers around the discussion of faith-based programming. A consensus on how to characterize faith-based programs has not been reached and often the expression "faith-based" is used without offering any definition. One type of characterization of faith-based programming refers to the provision of secular services by churches or coalitions of churches. Additionally, faith-based providers can also include what S. R. D. Smith and Sosin (2001) term faith-related service agencies. These organizations include large traditional service providers, mission shelters, interfaith religious entities and many other organizations loosely bound to denominational authority or even those with no existing formal ties at all. The term faith-based can also refer to the specific content utilized in the intervention or programming. Although programs may be operated by churches or religious entities, they may or may not have an obvious faith focus or use faith as a programming component.

Finally, faith content does not always have to contain overt elements such as worship, prayer, bible studies, or religious seminars or retreats. Faith is sometimes a "salient factor"

which is made manifest in the faith-based staff who work with the participants. For example, S. R. D. Smith and Sosin (2001) also concluded that the role of faith can be understood as "the extent of coupling of the agency to resources, authorities, and cultures that represent relevant faiths" (p. 655). R. Fischer (2004) added:

> In the terminology of the outcomes measurement field, faith could be considered alternatively as a programmatic factor (for example, use of prayer services as one element of the program) of the process whereby desired outcomes are produced for clients or as a contextual factor (for example, overall faith-based environment) influencing the program, or a combination of the two. Though an understanding of this theoretical and structural distinction is critical to advancing such research, its application remains situation-specific, tailored to the context of individual programs and FBOs. At their core, FBO social service programs contain many of the same elements as their secular counterparts. (p. 30)

These conceptual variations can present methodological challenges that make it difficult to generalize across diverse faith-based organizations and programming, particularly about the topic of effectiveness. Additionally, it is important to distinguish between two different but not necessarily mutually exclusive kinds of research. *Organic religion* examines the influence or impact of religion on various social outcomes while *intentional religion* assesses the effectiveness of faith –based organizations. For B. R. Johnson (2004) and thus for this review, organic religion represents the influence of religion practiced over time. On the other hand, intentional religion is "the exposure to religion one receives at a particular time in life for a particular purpose (B. R. Johnson, 2004, p. 8). Also, organic religion has resulted in a substantial amount of scientific evidence and looks at religious activities, practices, beliefs, and involvement and their association with various health measures or influence with diverse descriptions of pro-social well-being. Intentional religion, in contrast, according to B. R. Johnson, has been relatively neglected by researchers and by quantitative researchers in particular.

This section will explore linkages between intentional religion and positive behavioral outcomes or well-being. Studies of intentional religion examine particular religious interventions for

a specific contextual purpose such as matching at-risk youth with faith-based mentors, as opposed to measuring the behavioral or health outcomes of children who were raised or nurtured in religious homes or institutions. I limited the focus of the review to faith or secular social services provided in or by church congregations or coalitions of congregations. Large traditional or most commonly known service providers, mission shelters, interfaith religious entities and the myriad of other organizations loosely bound to denominational authority or lacking formal ties are not considered for the purposes of this literature review.

Faith-based interventions linked to positive behavioral outcomes. The overwhelming majority of social service programming and interventions in churches that are associated with positive effects are health related. Useful faith-based health programs are being performed in churches in the areas of general health, cardiovascular health, cancer, diabetes and nutrition (Boltri et al., 2006; DeHaven, Hunter, Wilder, Walton, & Berry, 2004; Hart et al., 2009). Also, interventions in Black churches show significant promise for improving physical activity participation and associated health outcomes (Bopp, Peterson, & Webb, 2012).

To a lesser degree, Church-based health promotion programs are also being used as a strategy to address racial disparities in mental health care (Hankerson & Weissman, 2012), HIV/AIDS prevention (Francis & Liverpool, 2009; Aaron, Yates, & Criniti, 2011), Faith-based alternative youth education programming (Sinha, 2006) and workforce development (Harrison, Wubbenhorst, Waits, & Hurt, 2006).

Faith-based interventions and mass incarceration. There are studies which evaluate faith-based re-entry programming and reducing recidivism for ex-offenders (K. D. Dodson, Cabage, & Klenowski, 2011; Moore et al., 2015). One such effective program is "The Healing Communities." Its core concept embraces reintegration of returning citizens into the body of the

family, congregation, workforce and neighborhood, so that community acceptance becomes the norm (Lewis & Trulear, 2008). While, the Healing Communities model "enables congregations to work with families affected by collateral sanctions in employment, housing, citizenship and other areas, and to develop activities or organized ministries of policy advocacy based on seeing the real consequences of policies that work against successful reintegration" (p. 16), there were no noted studies in this review of literature which focus on Black Church initiatives designed to address the collateral damage of mass incarceration that affect those other than former prisoners.

Black Church Leadership in Its Millennial Context

If the problem of the 20th century was the problem of the color line, as Du Bois (1903/2007) argued, then it is the malignant mutations of race in America, which have resulted in a multitude of contemporary interrelated complex social and economic issues that represent the formidable challenge of the second decade of the 21st century. Du Bois insightfully concluded that one cannot talk about the color line without including the related issue of economic inequality, the consequence of a problematic distribution of wealth and power. His insights also illumine the current practical need for racial transformation and empowerment. Today, those living in the inner-city of Toledo, Ohio—where I live and work—and in other urban areas consisting mostly of poor and people of color, have seen industrial and manufacturing jobs virtually disappear and, with these, the opportunity for employment at decent wages. This has led to what Wilson (1999) described as a widening gap in wages between skilled and unskilled workers, heavily influenced by low levels of education, and a number of devastating consequences such as crime, family dissolution, violence and socialization in urban areas, which can be directly attributed to the disappearance of jobs.

Exacerbating this socio-economic crisis for the mostly poor and African American urban residents, is the nation's involvement in costly foreign wars, an economic/fiscal crisis precipitated by unscrupulous ethical practices on Wall Street, and a presidential campaign and election cycle beset by "character assassination based on race, religion, and unresolved cultural wars" (Fluker, 2009, p. vii). Concurrent with America's deindustrialization and fiscal crisis, has been the rise of a market of Hollywood celebrity and media-generated obsession with prosperity. Black conspicuous consumption and a "ghetto fabulous" aesthetic and the flaunting of markers of economic success by the poor, has made its way into contemporary Black culture via film and advertising. As a result, the troubling mainstream behavior patterns of a contemporary "pimps, g-strings, and bling" culture which includes violence, sexual irresponsibility, and other self-destructive masculinity and femininity norms, have permeated the inner city as a coping mechanism for young, Black and poor youth shut out of labor markets (Royster, 2007), and as a desperate attempt to grasp the American dream or achieve class transcendence.

Linking Black Church Practice in Context with Leadership Theory

Many young people growing up in the second decade of the 21st century are unfamiliar with Black Church cultural norms, values, or traditions and bring their own perspective into the church where they come seeking relevant solutions to their experience. They come from homes rife with violence, addiction, crime, and often where there is only one parent present or parents who are unemployed or underemployed. Many of these parents themselves lack parenting skills or work long hours and are unable to provide the supervision and guidance necessary for adequate child development to take place.

The cumulative effect of these social and economic conditions, which adversely affect the poor and people of color disproportionately, results in the loss of love of self and others, and the

collapse of meaning in life or what West (1993) termed "nihilism" (p. 14). Historically, the function of the Black Church has been to promote racial transformation and to empower the disempowered during periods of crisis. The challenge of the contemporary context requires the Church and its leadership to replace the market-driven values of pleasure, power, and obsession with acquiring costly possessions with the core values of the Black Church in order to enable Black youth to overcome the self-contempt and self-hatred perpetrated by U.S. capitalism and ideology of individualism (C. West, 1993). Therefore, in the next section, I am primarily concerned with the process of leadership and the implications for practice, and to a lesser degree, the content of leadership or what leaders need to know to lead.

Leadership, A Theoretical Perspective

This section explores the following questions:

- In what ways, if any, do current leadership models inform the practice of African American religious leaders who minister in urban areas where marginalized Black youth and society's vulnerable come, lacking love and healthy, meaningful, committed relationships; needing protection from the dangers within a society that is indifferent to eliminating injustice and inequality?

- What do current leadership theories have to say to those who seek to provide more effective leadership to those who look to the Church for relevant solutions to their poverty but who lack the firm, spiritual discipline to mature and thrive in a world hostile to them, and are in need of emotional healing and instruction in healthy relationships and righteous living?

- How do current leadership models and theories help us to understand the nature of African American urban religious leadership in the post-industrial era of the early 21st century?

The present period has been described using such terms as post-Civil Rights, post-secular, and post-industrial due to the worsening social and economic status of African Americans relative to Whites since the end of the Civil Rights Movement in the late 1970s. However, contrary to widespread claims, American society clearly has shown that it is not yet "post-racial." As Ashby (2003) noted, resentment, as evidenced by recent adverse legislative and government fiscal budgetary actions, has replaced sympathy for the plight of African Americans whereas they were once the poster children for civil rights and social justice.

Unprecedented joblessness and the disappearance of work from most inner-city neighborhoods, partly related to global economic restructuring and a growing wage inequality concentrated primarily among low-skilled workers, has resulted in a "new urban poverty" (Wilson, 1999, p. 480) and the post-traumatic effects of internalized pain.

African Americans experience higher death rates from heart disease, cancer, and many other illnesses. Black men and women are also dying in epidemic proportions from homicide and HIV/AIDS, particularly among young Blacks aged 15 to 34 (Ashby, 2003). And yet, despite a long history of producing a multitude of ethical leaders, the moral voice of the Black Church has been absent in public discourse that calls out society for the scant attention given to the "masses of disinherited and dispossessed groups within the power configurations of this culture" (Fluker, 1998, p. 7). This failure to acknowledge the plight of historically oppressed poor and people of color, Fluker posited, has empowered ideology to dominate national understanding, leaving "their resulting analyses and recommendations bereft of meaningful and substantive measures that speak

to the lifeworlds of the least, the lost, and the left behind" (p. 7). Since individual organizations (as systems) reflect characteristics of the larger system in which they are embedded (Heifetz, Linsky & Grashow, 2009), the African American community finds itself in the midst of a period of complex change (both internal and external). This community change resulting from societal change is also transforming the Black Church.

The challenge for the Church's leaders is to develop a new vision of leadership that enables them to implement a flexible framework, or what Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) termed the "dialectical model" (p. 2) of the Black Church. This model conceives of Black churches as "operating among a continuum of six major dialectical polarities held in dynamic tension" such as other-worldly/this-worldly, universalism/particularism, communal/privatistic, charismatic/bureaucratic, resistance/accommodation, and between priestly and prophetic functions (p. 17).

The Church's priestly function involves worship and maintaining the spiritual life of the members whereas the prophetic function, like the biblical notion of proclaiming the word of God's judgment, is represented by the Church's involvement in the political concerns and activities of the broader community. In an era where the needs of the historically oppressed have been marginalized or ignored, where are the leaders who can renew the Church's role in shaping public policies that liberate and empower the masses of oppressed and disinherited groups while serving and incorporating those same masses who come to the Church looking for solutions to their struggles into the Church's internal organizational rituals, traditions, and norms?

Traditional leadership theories have been historically viewed from a biased monocultural North American or western European cultural lens which elevates individualistic, hierarchical, rational, linear, masculine, and material phenomena (Massey, as cited in Best, 1998). With White

males representing the standard social identity referent in current leadership research, the experiences of marginalized populations and people of color are altogether omitted from power or leadership dynamics. Or else their leadership experiences are treated as a special case rather than an important social context, which can provide meaningful insights to the field of leadership studies (Tillman, 2004). This omission of African American religious leaders operating among the urban poor has created color and context gaps, which limit our capacity to comprehend the full complexity of leadership and demands corrective insight.

In addition, current corporate financial and other organizational scandals, along with gross structural wealth inequity, where the top one percent of Americans own 43 percent of the nation's financial wealth (Dunn, 2012), have precipitated mainstream social unrest and degeneration of cultural values or deviant behavior on the part of the poor and politically/economically disadvantaged. Also, many of the approaches to conceptualizing leadership have been focused on the leader or follower. Absent, until very recently, has been a view of leadership that looks beyond the behavior to the heart of the leadership, what B. Jackson and Parry (2011) called "leadership with a higher purpose" (p. 112). Thus, in order to address some of the shortcomings of popular new leadership theories such as transformational or charismatic leadership, this section will examine the concept of purpose in order to determine how or whether spirituality, ethics, and authenticity can provide a practical model for urban Black Church leaders to address the everyday needs of their community and make practical decisions to enable them to faithfully carry out their dialectical dual role of priest and prophet of the socially disinherited.

Looking first at the contemporary socio-political and socio-economic realities of my current context, I then discuss and analyze the current mainstream theoretical themes and leadership concepts that share a common concern for a dimension of leadership from a higher

purpose (ethical, spiritual, and authentic). I understand that theories, concepts, and themes may marginalize some groups while positioning others as the norm. I then discuss the gaps in the popular literature. Finally, I review additional relevant models to the Church that have not been included in the current leadership theories.

Leadership with a higher purpose. Leadership theories which emphasize visionary and inspirational leadership for the purpose of transforming organizations, have been classified as "new leadership" theories (B. Jackson & Parry, 2011). Although no longer new, discussion of theories —such as transformational and charismatic leadership—have dominated research since the 1980s and is where conventional leadership analysis normally concludes. While a part of the task of the African American religious leader includes racial transformation, B. Jackson and Parry have argued, "the ways in which we study leadership must involve much more than just how one person gets other people to follow their lead" (p. 112). Although providing important insights, much of the research approach to the "new leadership" has emphasized universal application, when in reality it has little to say to the majority of leaders that would make the theories more useful. The underlying influence processes of the more popularized transformational and charismatic leadership are not clearly described and "[are] a matter of speculation" (Yukl, 2002, p. 301). In addition, most of the world is run by leaders who are not at all charismatic, yet diligent and inconspicuous, according to Badaracco (2002). Leaders who are "leading quietly"[1] in Badaracco's words, are those who make things work rather in contrast to their bold, loud, forceful and charismatic counterparts who receive the most attention. In a current era, rife with large-scale scandal and ethical failures by visionary charismatic business as well as religious leaders, this

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[1] The title of Badarocco's (2002) book.

dissertation seeks rather, to look past transformativeness or charisma, into the heart, motives, and purpose of a leader as a point of entry.

In addition, research on ethical concepts and methods have seldom included discussion of the Black Church tradition—the chief social locus for the ethical foundations of leadership for the African American community. Neither have the indigenous sources and experiences of African American peoples been taken seriously as a resource to inform and provide insights to the larger society. Therefore, this dissertation relates to the emerging leadership theories that deal directly with moral aspects of leadership and its quest for a higher purpose in an effort to find relevant insights for a contemporary Black Church context. These theories of higher purpose include ethical, authentic, spiritual and servant leadership. I now turn to them for discussion.

Ethical Leadership

For purposes here, ethical leadership has to be considered under several sub-categories: how it is defined, whether and why it is effective, how it is seen specifically from a Black Church perspective, and how it is both similar to and different from several other well-known formulations of leadership, namely, authentic, spiritual, and servant.

Definition and description. The ethical leadership construct emerged as a result of recent high-profile ethics scandals in business, religion, sports, and government. While the current literature is rich from a normative or philosophical perspective that discusses what leaders should do, a gap remains from a descriptive and predictive social scientific approach that might clarify the fundamental question: what is ethical leadership? (Brown & Treviño, 2006).

The normative perspective, which includes what a leader does (the ends), the process of leadership (how a leader does things), and the moral reason of why leaders have been expounded upon for centuries by ancient philosophers such as John Stuart Mill, Aristotle, and Immanuel

Kant. These moral facets are incorporated in Ciulla's (2005) definition of an ethical leader as "someone who does the right thing, the right way, and for the right reasons" (p. 331).

In a more descriptive and social scientific approach, Brown and Treviño (2006) provide what is perhaps the most comprehensive analysis of the emerging concept of ethical leadership. In their attempt to systematically conceptualize and develop an ethical leadership construct from existing literature, Brown and Treviño, define it as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (pp. 595–596). Ethical leadership is therefore characterized by two primary aspects, that of the moral person, and that of the leader as a moral manager. The moral person dimension includes the leader's personal traits, character and altruistic motivations. The research suggests that ethical leaders are those who are perceived as being honest, caring, principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions. The moral manager aspect of ethical leadership represents the leader's "proactive efforts to influence followers' ethical and unethical behavior" (p. 597). An obvious part of the ethical leader's agenda involves communicating with followers about ethics, setting clear ethical standards and the use of rewards and punishments as accountability strategies. Ethical leaders also practice what they preach and thus are proactive role models for ethical conduct.

This "practice what you preach" role modeling aspect of the ethical leader enhances the leader's credibility. There are other aspects from social learning theory that help to explain why and how ethical leaders influence their followers besides the ability of role models to draw attention to their modeled behavior. Also, power and status, nurturant role models who demonstrate care and concern and treat others fairly, and those who are credible and trustworthy are more likely to produce effective leadership outcomes, according to Brown and Treviño (2006).

Ethical leadership and effectiveness. As mentioned earlier, one ethical perspective revolves around the complex question of whether a leader does the right thing, the right way and for the right reason. The major issue thus becomes: what standards do we use for determining the answers to this question? Ciulla (2005) developed a three-part moral assessment of leadership which has the following interlocking categories:

- The ethics of leaders themselves (personal ethics and leader intentions);

- The ethics of how a leader leads (process and leader relationship with those affected by leader actions); and

- The ethics of what a leader does (ends of leadership).

The fact that leaders can be ethical in one respect but not in another makes discussions of ethics complicated and confusing. "Some leaders have good intentions, but bad outcomes. Others have good results but use questionable means to achieve them . . . History often judges leaders by results and not the means or process of getting to them" (Ciulla, 2005, p. 333).

However, the possible results of ethical leadership are often misleading, contributing to misinterpretation in evaluations of effectiveness. Ethical leadership theories say little, if anything, concerning ethical "sins of omission" or the immorality of silence in the face of wrongs or injustice. Nor does the multiplication or dramatic numerical increases in followership or other common measures of success, provide an accurate assessment of moral and ethical excellence. Often, particularly in religious leadership, results are equally a function of followership as they are of leadership. The biblical passage taken from the Gospel of Mark, speaks to this:

> And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, "A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." And he could do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. (Mark 6:4–5, New Revised Standard Version)

So, the relationship between ethics and effectiveness lies at the core of Ciulla's (2005) leadership ethics model. Ciulla's perspective raises additional questions such as how the issue of ethics versus effectiveness is clouded by problems of language and definition, complicated by various descriptive and normative concepts, altruism and self-interest, and causation and history.

In summary, the ethical leadership perspectives of Brown and Treviño (2006), and of Ciulla (2005), speak to my context in true but very general ways. The African American urban religious leader is characterized by the primary aspects of the moral person and is also a moral manager who promotes moral conduct and character development through two-way communication.

Additionally, evaluations of the outcomes from ethical leadership are complex and often misleading or misinterpreted. The need is for an ethical leadership model that helps us understand more clearly the nature of Black urban religious leadership whose followers experience unique social and economic circumstances in the post-industrial era of the early 21st century. We therefore turn to a model from the Black Church perspective.

Ethical leadership from the Black Church perspective. A final ethical perspective in this review comes from Fluker (1998), writing from the Black Church tradition. Although not included in traditional leadership literature, Fluker builds his ethical concept based upon a foundation provided by Burns (1978) who stated:

> The essence of leadership in any polity is the recognition of real need, the uncovering and exploiting of contradictions among values and between values and practice, the realigning of values, the reorganization of institutions where necessary, and the governance of change. Essentially the leader's task is consciousness-raising on a wide plane . . . A congruence between the need and value hierarchies would produce a powerful potential for the exercise of purposeful leadership. (pp. 21–22)

Fluker (1998) also borrowed from the cognitive approach taken by Gardner and Laskin who state that "a leader is an individual (or rarely, a set of individuals) who significantly affects

the thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors of a significant number of individuals" (Gardner & Laskin, 1995, p. 81). From there, Fluker concluded that leaders are "storied creatures" who ascribe their authority to being able to articulate stories "that shape shared identities and socially constructed realities" (p. 11). Hence, ethical leaders are the tellers of the stories that fund ethical insight; yet these insights do not emerge from an historical vacuum. Rather, and more specifically, these shared ethical insights are those values and goals that arise from traditions and cultural narratives. Thus, for Fluker, ethical leadership refers to "the process of morality to the degree that leaders engage with followers on the basis of shared motives and values and goals" (p. 11). In contrast to Western ethical constructs, Fluker describes ethical leadership as "the critical appropriation and embodiment of moral traditions that have historically shaped the character and shared meanings of a people (an ethos)" (p. 11). Also central to Fluker's ethical conception is the role of systems (institutions, traditions, practices) as social architect of individual lives and how moral agents might counter unjust systemic practices that promote unhealthy and self-destructive practices in the community.

Fluker's (2011) conceptual model (Figure 2.2) is depicted as a triangle incorporating "three dynamically interrelated dimensions of human existence," which form his basis of community within persons, society, and the universe: self, social, and spiritual. Self further connects with character, civility is aligned with the social/societal, and community is a component of the spirit/spiritual. Ethical leaders, posited Fluker (2009), must remain vigilant and attentive to both their internal and external worlds in order to handle the dangers at the places where such worlds inherently intersect. Critical engagement with leaders' ethical centers is necessary to prevent such threats as self-destructive behaviors, poor decision making, diminished life skills, arrested development in emotional intelligence, faulty communication

skills, severe limitations in conduct, and the absence of trust, duty and responsibility to others and the universe.
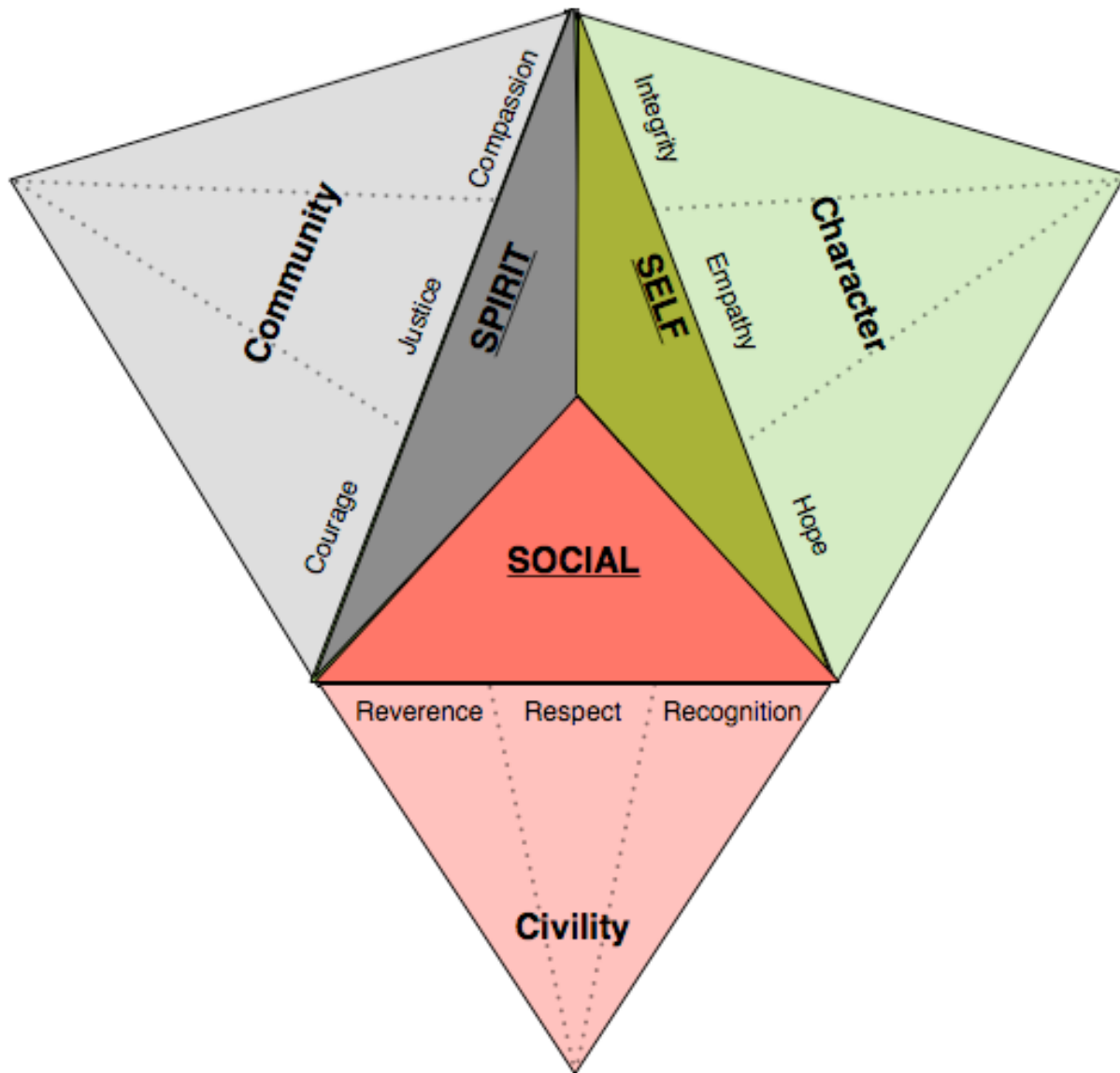
Figure 2.2. Fluker's (2011) ethical model of leadership. From W. E. Fluker, "Preparing students for ethical complexity at the intersection where worlds collide: The quest for character, civility, and community," 2011, *Liberal Education, 97*(3/4). Copyright 2011 Association of American Colleges and Universities. Used with permission.

Finally, this model distinguishes between morality and ethics. Morality, for Fluker, consists of commonly accepted rules of conduct, patterns of behavior approved by a social

group, and beliefs about what is good and right held by a community with a shared history. By contrast, ethics in the normative sense, is the critical analysis of morality identified by four perspectives of human nature and moral agency:

- Rationalist or rules-based ethics;

- Realist or reality-based ethics;

- Relationist or relations-based, and

- The storyteller or narrative-based ethics.

The relationist perspective provides the basic foundation of Fluker's ethical leadership model. Also, and perhaps most importantly, Fluker stressed that ethics, although highly conceptual, is not merely something to be theorized and thought about: at its essence, it is something that has to be put into practice to be mastered.

To summarize, Fluker's (2009) concept of ethical leadership is most relevant for contemporary Black Church leadership. These leaders, as in other ethical concepts, are also managers of moral meaning. Yet their moral insights emerge from traditions, cultural narratives, and shared history. Fluker's ethical leadership also involves communication of moral meaning to systems and institutions whose unjust policies promote self-destructive behaviors among marginalized populations. Also, for Fluker, there is a tension between the internal and external ethical worlds. The leader's personal ethics and for the Black Church, the character development of the leader and congregation, intersects with the ethical leader's engagement with systems and institutions. In other words, it is critical for the leader to handle the dangers at the intersection of the Black religious leader's priestly and prophetic functions. These issues are more specifically addressed under the following subtopic onethical leadership as process and practice, to which I now turn.

The process and practice of ethical leadership. Moral management, as previously

mentioned, is an important dimension of ethical leadership, representing the leader's efforts to

influence the ethical behavior of followers. Moral managers communicate values by talking about

ethics, setting ethical standards, using rewards and punishments to reinforce the message but also

by practicing what they preach and serving as role models or exemplars of their ethical message.

Brown, Treviño, and Harrison (2005) highlight this moral management dimension of the leader's

practice:

> Moral managers make ethics an explicit part of their leadership agenda by communicating
> an ethics and values message, by visibly and intentionally role modeling ethical behavior,
> by using the reward system (rewards and discipline) to hold followers accountable for
> ethical conduct by the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal
> actions and interpersonal relations, and by the promotion of such conduct to followers
> through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making. (p. 120)

Additionally, when leaders carry out nurturant models, demonstrating care and concern and

treating others fairly, model effectiveness and credibility is enhanced (Brown & Treviño, 2006).

The second decade of the 21st century is a period where no consistent, comprehensive,

coordinated commitment to formally and appropriately educate and socialize the masses of African

Americans exists (Colon, 2003). The Black Church is the only institution which controls the

processes by which its members are informed, educated and socialized. The Church is therefore

poised to carry out its responsibility to intergenerational cultural transmission especially in a

society where the public (and even sometimes the church through a misguided theology of

prosperity) is being informally socialized through movies, videos, audios, advertising, and

television.

The practical challenge for leadership with a higher purpose is to discover how to

effectively provide alternative approaches to education and socialization in a way that provides

group liberation "in a social climate that emphasizes individual success as a prime value and is,

therefore, antagonistic to a group liberation and value system" (Colon, 2003, p. 153). An additional question of challenge, according to Colon, asks how do we effect group empowerment or liberation in an increasingly multicultural world? Colon's question for the Black Church context then becomes what methods can we learn to shape and transmit what needs to be learned and lived for freedom and the development or transformation of the widely diverse African American community?

So, for Fluker (2009, 2011), whose concept of ethical leadership is most relevant to the context of Black Church, the challenge of ethical leadership ultimately requires identification and retrieval of the moral discourse and practices of the Black Church tradition —and to reinterpret these for the contemporary community crisis. This means that first, from a priestly perspective, there is a need to communicate moral wisdom and language about the meaning and destiny of individuals within the African American community and apply this to intra-group problems such as the lack of ethical guidance, the failure to reach Black youth, and the gender and class fractionalization. A second and concurrent challenge, from a prophetic perspective, is to reengage in the national policy debate in order to hold the nation morally and ethically accountable on public policy issues that confront Black life and culture.

It is in the remembering, retelling, and reliving of these stories that the process or methodology of ethical leadership takes place. It is best articulated in the context of the Black community and Black Church:

> The values of the Black church tradition are those moral and ethical values that sustained the African American community throughout its journey in the Americas, and whose administrative locus was the Black church . . . The Black church tradition, as opposed to church tradition or White church tradition, was born out of an effort to interpret the ethical and moral mission of African Americans in terms that would meet the challenges they face in this world as oppressed and dispossessed people—the values they used to maintain their dignity, their humanity, and their faith in God during a time when they were not respected and treated as human in the larger society. . . . The morals and values

of this tradition shaped generations of African Americans, and the leaders who became representative of these values are exemplary. These leaders— King, Thurman, Watson, Du Bois, Washington, Bethune, and others— were able to advance this tradition of values and draw on it in their time of need. It was not only a code to live by but also a balm for the racist restrictions they faced in the larger society. There is much to be learned from the transformative and healing possibilities of such a tradition. It saved a people from destruction. It taught them the values of community love and Godly purpose, of individual respect and accountability, the value of an honored life of principle and good character rather than a famed life of good fortune. The instructive and transformative possibilities of lives guided by such a tradition are great, and we should be eager to appropriate the lessons of these ways of living in our contemporary lives. (Denard, 1998, pp. 82–83)

As Fluker (1998) informed us, throughout its history, the majority of African American leadership has been influenced by a Black Church, distinctive in its tradition of incorporating biblical narrative, civic responsibility and expressive individuality into a moral language about the meaning of its existence and destiny. To retrieve the sources and functions of moral wisdom from this tradition and reinterpret it for the crisis faced by the present generation is pivotal for Black religious leadership. Thus, the practice and process of ethical leadership is one that emphasizes primarily moral and character development within communities and their distinctive role as bearers of stories of their respective traditions.

Before concluding reflections and practical implications for ministry, I discuss some similarities and differences between ethical leadership and the closely related concepts of authentic, spiritual and servant leadership. Then I introduce other concepts more directly applicable to African American religious leadership context such as the parenting and African American family models of leadership.

Ethical leadership compared with similar leadership models. Several popular formulations of leadership bear considerable resemblance to what I have been discussing as ethical leadership. These are authentic leadership, spiritual leadership, and servant leadership, which are now considered comparatively.

Authentic leadership. The idea of *authentic leadership* emerged in the 1990s as a possible solution to the seemingly commonplace appearances of influential but superficial, self-interested, and exploitative leaders in business, politics, and religion (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). This theoretical approach also emerged as a critique of charismatic and transformational leadership. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) concluded that only those leaders whose character, agenda, and means of interacting with others are grounded in moral and ethical foundations were truly authentic. Bass and Steidlmeier termed as "pseudo-transformational" (p. 184) those charismatic and influential leaders who lacked moral character or ethical values.

Authentic leadership is generally defined as having clear and certain knowledge about oneself in all regards (e.g. beliefs preferences, strengths, weaknesses) and behaving consistently with that self-knowledge (Gardner et al. 2005). Sources of authentic leadership revolve around environmental factors such as facilitative support, a positive organizational context, role models and direct training (B. Jackson & Parry, 2011). Individual differences such as personal history and personal meaning systems are also factors in creating authentic leadership. Major practical benefits that often arise from authentic leadership include greater identification with the leader and the organization, improved communication between parties, and the imitation of positive role models (Gardner et al., 2005).

The core characteristics of authentic leadership are self-awareness, openness, transparency and consistency (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Authentic leaders model hope, optimism, resiliency and concern for others and also align decisions with their moral values. While authentic leadership overlaps with ethical leadership in terms of individual moral and values characteristics, it contains several elements which are not part of the ethical construct such as the "being true to oneself"

authenticity perspective and self-awareness. Care and concern for others is paramount in ethical leaders rather than self-awareness (Table 2.1).

Spiritual leadership. Also overlapping with ethical leadership is the concept of *spiritual leadership*. The predominant theory of spiritual leadership is built upon intrinsic motivation to fulfill followers' needs for spiritual survival (Fry, 2003). It is comprised of "the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership" (p. 711) and is "inclusive of the religious and ethics and values-based approaches to leadership" (p. 693). Spiritual leadership is also demonstrated through individual behavior as well as ethical, compassionate, and respectful treatment of others. Spiritual leaders are motivated by service to a higher deity or to humanity and view their leadership as a "calling" and thus it emphasizes integrity and altruism consistent with authentic leadership (Table 2.1).

From a practical standpoint, spiritual leadership theory does not address the limitations of the spiritual need for survival, the calling of higher purpose, and other intrinsic motivations. These are often erratic sources of motivation, vulnerable to competing commitments and what Stone, Orr and Worgs (2006) call the gravitational pull of attention shift. They conclude that the appeal of a worthy purpose is subject to displacement because people are often drawn to deal with their immediate circumstances. Intrinsic motivations, therefore, "need to be considered in conjunction with the character and strength of supports" (p. 541). Networks, which provide vital communication and enhanced visibility are needed to counter attention shifts such as changed personal circumstances, which derail commitment motivated by spirituality.

Table 2.1.

Similarities of Other Leadership Models to Ethical Leadership. Based on Brown & Treviño, 2006.

Leadership Style	Similarities with Ethical Leadership	Difference from Ethical Leadership
Authentic Leadership	Concern for others (Altruism)	Ethical leaders emphasize moral management (more transactional) and "other" awareness
	Ethical Decision Making	Authentic leaders emphasize authenticity and self-awareness
	Integrity	
	Role Modeling	
Spiritual Leadership	Concern for others (Altruism)	Ethical leaders emphasize moral management
	Integrity	Spiritual leaders emphasize visioning hope/faith; words as vocation
	Role Modeling	
Transformational Leadership	Concern for others (Altruism)	Ethical leaders emphasize moral management (more transactional)
	Ethical Decision Making	Transformational Leaders emphasize vision, values and intellectual decision-making
	Integrity Role Modeling	

Servant Leadership. Often treated synonymously with spiritual leadership is the theory of servant leadership. The term *servant leadership* came from Greenleaf (1970) in his seminal work *The Servant as Leader*. To Greenleaf, going beyond one's self-interest, is the core characteristic of servant leadership. The four underlying precepts of servant leadership are service before self; listening as a means of affirmation; creating trust; and nourishing followers to become whole (Daft, 1999).

In his conceptual model for servant leadership, van Dierendonck (2011) identifies six key

characteristics of servant-leader behavior as experienced by followers. Servant-leaders empower

and develop people; they show humility, are authentic, accept people for who they are, provide

direction, and are stewards who work for the good of the whole. Servant leadership overlaps with

authentic leadership in the above listed characteristics of authenticity and humility. Van

Dierendonck describes humility as,

> the ability to put one's own accomplishments and talents in a proper perspective.
> Servant-leaders dare to admit that they can benefit from the expertise of others. They
> actively seek the contributions of others. Humility shows in the extent in which a leader
> puts the interest of others first, facilitates their performance, and provides them with
> essential support. It includes a sense of responsibility for persons in one's charge. Humility
> is also about modesty; a servant-leader retreats into the background when a task has been
> successfully accomplished. (p. 1233)

Van Dierendonck's model of servant leadership is shown in Figure 2.3.
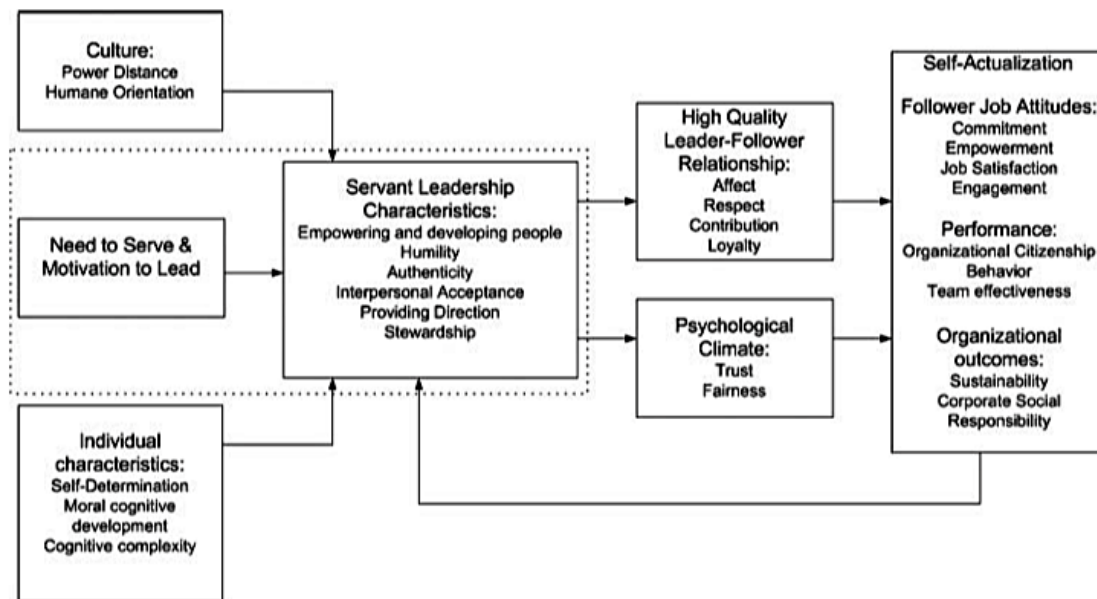
Figure 2.3. Van Dierendonck's conceptual model of servant leadership. From van Dierendonck,
D. Servant Leadership: A Review and Synthesis. *Journal of Management*, *37*(4), pp. 1228–1261.
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Servant leadership also shares similarities with ethical leadership. Making fair decisions,

showing ethical behavior, listening and having the best interest of employees in mind apply to both

leadership constructs. The strongest overlap occurs with the servant leadership characteristics of empowering and developing people, humility, and stewardship. Authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, and providing direction are relatively unimportant in ethical leadership according to van Dierendonck (2011).

Servant leadership, however, has limitations not usually dealt with in the literature. Putting the interest of others without any self-interest at all can have a negative effect on those being served. The vision of service alone can create a culture of dependency rather than build community and empowerment. Over-reliance on the servant leader teaches people that their value lies in their deficiencies or inadequacies rather than their capacities and displaces the capacity of people to solve their own problems (McKnight, 1989).

To summarize, ethical leadership and the related frameworks of authentic, spiritual, and servant leadership are centered on morals and values. Northouse (2011), drawing extensively upon scholars such as Heifetz, Burns, and Greenleaf, combines all of these concepts around the common themes of respect, service, justice, honesty and community. Ethical or higher purpose leaders serve others by being altruistic, are concerned about the common good to the extent that they place the welfare of others ahead of their own, and situate fairness at core of their decision making. Individually, however, all of these leadership concepts have limitations, and none have direct application to African American religious leadership or include insights from African American scholars.

Other Models Missing from or Seldom Included in Traditional Leadership Theories

Leadership as parenting. Given the nature of the task for its leadership and the unique circumstances faced by its followers, a more representative model for the urban African American Church context is the parenting model of leadership. Scant attention is given to this model outside

of B. Jackson and Parry (2011) who theorize that just as the responsibility exists for parents to develop children from a state of complete dependency through graduated and increasing levels of independence and autonomy, ultimately resulting in fully independent and self-reliant states of adulthood, leaders are needed to help their followers grow and develop. Training, education, character development, information and resources must be provided in a nurturing, healthy, and safe environment for those who are attempting to make sense of the chaotic and confusing signals sent by an often exploitative and contradictory world. Positive role modeling is required as well as protection from violence and harassment.

The limitation of this concept is that a model of parenting, when used to describe adult followers may seem to be paternalistic, particularly to those of marginalized populations.

African American family leadership model. Also missing from traditional leadership approaches are those utilizing an Afrocentric theoretical framework. As noted earlier, Afrocentricity positions African heritage and African American history and culture at the center of a theoretical approach. The understanding of the cultural dynamics and worldview, language, spirituality, etc. of African Americans can be useful in assessing the political, economic, and social freedom of African American families and communities (Borum, 2007).

Another model, then, but one that is culturally and historically specific to the Black experience, is that of the African American Family. This model comes from the disciplines of sociology, psychology, and family and child studies. One of the most enduring and strongest traditions in the Black community (Freeman & Logan, 2004), the family framework, shares common links to the African American Church and leadership contexts.

Yet, research continues to be dominated by flawed stereotypical portrayals of Black family life. Ever since the controversial 1965 Moynihan report, *The Negro Family: The Case for*

National Action (Moynihan, 1965)—which questionably assigned causality of the disadvantaged position of Blacks to the rise in Black single-parent families—the conceptual foundations of much research has proceeded upon the faulty assimilationist or cultural ethnocentric school, which portrays Black family life as dysfunctional, pathological and problematic (J. E. Dodson, 2004).

These misguided distortions are a result of the tendency to analyze and interpret from a Eurocentric or White middle-class norm rather than through the lenses provided by African Americans' unique circumstances and experiences. Studies of African Americans involved questions and methods that were irrelevant or destructive (Freeman & Logan, 1999). However, when viewed in a larger context, Black family patterns and outcomes present a more accurate strengths-based reality rather than the traditional deficit perspective (Figure 2.3). Thus, this analysis explores the African American family from a cultural-variant or cultural-relativist perspective (Billingsley, 1999; R. B. Hill, 1999; Nobles, 1974; Young, 1970) a culturally meaningful paradigm, which views the Black family as unique, yet functional, as opposed to being abnormal and not ideal.

African American family structure. The Western ideal family structural model is nuclear, being made up of a man, a woman, and children living in the same home. However, this structure does not mirror reality for many, suggesting the need for a paradigm shift rooted in traditional African foundations of "family functioning." For Blacks, the high incidence of single parenthood and children residing without parents is not new. Despite systematic structural barriers, Africans in America have "created family in a fashion that functioned, though not according to any norm of White society" (J. E. Dodson, 2004, p. 59). Moreover, Frazier (1974), in linking the role of the Negro Church with the concept of extended Black family, observed that during slavery, the family was usually gathered together around the mother on the plantation while the father was a visitor

without any legal or recognized status in family relations. He might disappear, notes Frazier, as the result of being sold or because of his arbitrary or whimsical inclinations. There was no stability or what is known today as the traditional, nuclear family. Following the Civil War, there was a need for a new communal life and ways to integrate the newly emancipated Blacks into new or existing communities. The need for coping mechanisms to survive the changing socioeconomic conditions also required flexible family structure to evolve (Frazier, 1974). Today, high female labor-force requirements and scarce employment opportunities for Black males have also negatively impacted traditional Western ideas of marital stability among Blacks.

Yet, it is the strength of flexible roles and the quality within the African American family that has been more influential than nuclear structure (Mandara & Murray, 2002). In fact, a quantitative study by Williams, Auslander, Houston, Krebill, and Haire-Joshu (2000) indicated that family structure was not related to social or psychosocial well-being. Their results did show a strong correlation between structure and economic well-being for Blacks. Rather, Salem, Zimmerman, and Notaro (1998), found that when spending quality time with a father, even when not living in the home, children are less likely to experience depression, low self-esteem and anxiety and instead experience greater life satisfaction.

Therefore, the authors concluded that family structure is not as critical to psychosocial outcomes as quality time and support and call for a redefinition of Black family structure to accommodate the fluid roles of the father and extended families.

While family structure is not as critical to social or psychosocial well-being as stated above, structure has been shown to be related to economical well-being. Thus to better understand the African American family in context, one needs to understand its need for resources rather than a telescopic focus on family configuration (Cain & Combs-Orme, 2005).

Historically, African Americans have viewed family focused on extended family and fictive kin groups, which originated in the West Africa communities from which Africans were brought to America. These extended family networks have been instrumental to Black survival and advancement. Stewart (2007), pointed out:

> African Americans continue to exist within the context of extended family structure rather than discrete units despite the influence of the larger society. The members are interdependent and may share the responsibilities of childrearing and household funding across or among nuclear family units. What appears to be a "single parent family" from a Western European perspective, may in actuality be a part of a larger extended family system. It is not unusual for young mothers and their children to be incorporated without stigma into the kin network. In this way, both mother and child are cared for while the young mother matures enough to accept full responsibility for her child or until the kin network determines that she is unable to do so. This acceptance is not meant to imply that "early childbearing" is encouraged or that it does not cause emotional and economic stress to the family unit. (p. 165)

Accurate conceptual depictions also must view African American family values, behaviors and styles through an approach that "unravels the effects of sociocultural and economic-ecological context" (Allen, 1995, p. 579). For this research, I have relied on Allen's (1995) Black family ecological context model (see his Figure 3, p. 585), and applied it to African American Leadership. Allen refers to this as a "gross approximation of complex linkages, direct and indirect relationships, situational factors, and interpersonal exchanges that form the experiential bases of Black family life" (p. 584). It suggests that societal institutions influence community settings. These community settings further influence kinship networks, which in turn influence family units. These family units directly produce individual outcomes. Therefore, for Black families in particular, the model posits the expectation for community settings to mediate societal institution effects, which in turn are mediated by the dual levels of the family system (kinship network and family unity). I now turn to a definition of the African American family before discussing its strengths.

I adopt here R. B. Hill's (1999) definition of African American families:

Operationally, we define Black families as networks of households related by blood, marriage, or function that provide basic instrumental and expressive functions of the family to the members of those networks. Such family networks also include "fictive kin," that is, unrelated persons who perform important family functions. In short, we define the African American family as equivalent to the "extended family," that is, networks of functionally-related individuals who reside in different households (p. 40).

Strengths of Black families. While most of the studies on Black families have,

"mistakenly portrayed the positive as negative, the patterned as chaotic, and the normative as

deviant" (Allen, p. 579), R. B. Hill (1999) identifies strengths, the direct influences of the African

cultural heritage on contemporary Black family life. R. B. Hill describes these strengths as the

"cultural assets that are transmitted through socialization from generation to generation and are not

merely adaptations or coping responses to contemporary racial or economic oppression (p. 41).

R. B. Hill (1999) indicated that African and African American societies tend to be:

- Collectivist and communal rather than individual emanating from the African

  philosophy of Ubuntu or I am because We are. "Ubuntu," a collective spirit not

  limited to African people, has been defined as the sense of solidarity or brotherhood

  which arises among people within marginalized or disadvantaged groups (Swartz &

  Davies, 1997);

- child-centered, placing a special value on children because they represent the

  continuity of life;

- strong achievement oriented despite low teacher expectations which has played a major

  role in the decline in academic motivation of Black youth as they enter higher grades;

- resilient;

- oriented to a strong work ethic despite the discouragement resulting from systematic

  exclusion from the official labor force;

- flexible in family roles with mothers often performing many traditional roles of fathers, fathers assuming customary female roles, and children performing many parental functions for younger siblings;

- equipped with strong kinship bonds reflecting a high value placed on children, the existence of strong, protective mothers and emphasis on strict discipline and respect for elders; These kinship networks continue to provide short-term child care services, services to unwed mothers, formal and informal adoption and foster care; and

- strong in religious orientation and commitment.

Mass incarceration as a threat to family and community. Mass incarceration is perhaps the greatest threat to what has been a history of major challenges to the strengths of the African American family. The economic and social capital needed to raise children successfully is diminished as mass incarceration damages social networks, distorts social norms and destroys social citizenship, all, which ultimately destabilizes communities and weakens extended family networks. Yet, the formal and informal systems of support that comprise Black extended families have always stepped in to provide help in the time of need since the days of slavery (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Churches, schools, and community leaders have helped to fill cultural gaps by helping to maintain cultural values and traditions as well as provide intergeneration skills transmission (Freeman & Logan, 2004). Often this intervention includes surrogate family functions such as providing for the socialization of children including parental supervision, role modeling and other support in the childhood socialization process. The Church also serves to re-establish pro-social norms, values, and beliefs in children of the incarcerated or absent parents (Roberts, 2004).

To summarize, Black family structure is defined more by extended family rather than by nuclear structure. Quality nurturing and resources lead to positive outcomes. Also, the Black extended family mirrors the Black Church, which, as stated above, has historically served as surrogate family for Blacks since arriving as enslaved people upon this continent.

Whereas the omission of African American religious leaders operating among the urban poor has created color and context gaps which limit our capacity to comprehend the full complexity of leadership, the African American family model is highly relevant to Black religious leadership because of its historical link to Black culture. I turn now to discuss the Black Church as a surrogate family.

The Black Church as surrogate family model. Mills (2011) explored the Church as a surrogate model. The model emerged as a response to needs, concerns and life issues of children of youth who turned to the Church for solutions. The Church focused on encouragement, support and nurturing of youth, many who had parents who were not able to attend church or attempting to cope with a lack of resources, difficulties or other hardships. The Surrogate Family Model is rooted in the Pastoral Care Black theology of Edward Wimberly (Wimberly, Wimberly, & Chingonzo, 2004). These authors posit that in order for young Black children to flourish, more beyond the nuclear family is required. The local Church congregation, similar in function to the African small village, serves as a contemporary venue to restore extended family activities and responsibilities, which include mentoring, counseling, cross-generational worship, study, and teaching as well as intergenerational cultural transmission. Mucherera (2010), also utilizes the church as a site for "revillaging" or reclaiming traditional African core values and restoring hope within the context of the village or community.

Boyd-Franklin (2003) also concluded that the Church functions as a surrogate family, by providing relationships, advice, fellowship, spiritual support, social activities and intergenerational relationships. In addition, McAdoo (2007), viewed the extended family and the Church as one and the same with shared functions of "socializing of children, the rearing of unrelated children, and the sharing of resources when times are difficult (p. 98). The Church also, McAdoo noted, is a place that African Americans traditionally can turn to, out of necessity for support in help in rearing their children and provide them with principles and practices of well-being and flourishing (Karenga & Karenga, 2007).

So, is the Black Church relevant in the aftermath of mass incarceration? The Church as Surrogate Family Model suggests that it plays a role in addressing the social issues of a post War on Drugs era.

Conclusion

This review of leadership with a higher purpose as a concept began with a search for models which would help us understand the nature of African American urban religious leadership in the post-industrial era of the early 21st century and how these models might inform this context. This review generated the following principles or insights:

- The experiences of marginalized populations and people of color, as well as the experience of African American religious leaders operating among the urban poor, have been mostly ignored or omitted in traditional leadership concepts. This has created color and context gaps that provide us an incomplete or distorted view of the full complexity of leadership.

- Black religious leaders are both moral persons as well as moral managers. However, morality, character, and ethics are managed most effectively by sharing stories, traditions, and cultural narratives, which arise from a shared experience.

- Moral managing also involves addressing systems that produce unfair policies that contribute to unhealthy and dysfunctional behaviors.

- The African American religious context calls for the provision of training, education, character development, information, and resources in a nurturing, healthy, and safe environment as well as positive role modeling.

- The experiential circumstances of urban poor and people of color require them to be connected into some type of extended family or larger network of nurturing which will allow them to escape the danger of becoming spiritual and relational refugees or social outcasts.

- The Black Church is a type of the historical Black extended family and fictive kin family structure brought to America from West Africa. The African American Family has been portrayed as problematic and pathological. However, accurate conceptual depictions view the African American family through strengths-based historical cultural context in addition to its social-ecological context.

- A grave but subtle danger for African American religious leaders is represented by the intersection of the internal and external environmental realities that shape the challenges and issues that they must confront. Black leaders therefore, must also be intensively aware of the inner environments that shape character, civility, and a sense of community.

While the Church has given priority to racial justice issues such as civil rights, affirmative action, or criminal justice reform and socioeconomic issues such as public welfare and public education, these are perceived to be a continuation of the issues addressed by the Civil Rights movement (Kurosaki, 2012). Meanwhile, the Church has not responded in large measure with issues such as rebuilding the community from the devastation caused by the mass incarceration of young Black males for drug-related offenses (Moore et al., 2015).

In addition, empirical research on faith-based social service interventions for African Americans is sparse. Of the existing literature, a vast majority has to do with health-related interventions representing partnerships between churches and the healthcare industry. There are no studies, outside of re-entry programming, that examine Church interventions to address the collateral damage resulting from drug-related mass incarceration of Blacks. Also, the body of research on ethical leadership often uses a Eurocentric lens and lacks studies that bring in the leadership perspective of Black Church. Yet, the Black Church is a historically prominent and highly respected institution in the Black community, even among youth, the poor, and non-church goes and since slavery has served as a de facto provider of a wide array of social services in the Black community. Because of the Church's location in areas of high poverty and its special relationship with the marginalized and people of color, it is uniquely situated to address the litany of social ills resulting from drug-related mass incarceration. Churches have been shown to be effective in reducing disparities which negatively affect the poor and racial minorities but remain an underutilized resource in solving the problems of the Black community in general and mass incarceration in particular.

Finally, the voice of Black clergy leadership, having been excluded since the Civil Rights Movement from both leadership theories and concepts and the table of public debate regarding the

reshaping of America, must now, itself provide some ethically based strategic direction in the aftermath of the U.S. war on crime and drugs.

The contribution to the scholarship on ethical leadership and understanding solutions to the post-mass-incarceration problems, which disproportionately affect Black families, must be derived from the core values, culture and traditions of African American leaders. Knowing more about their experiences and historical role of responding to racialized oppression provides a unique contribution to the literature. The aim of my dissertation is to hear and comprehend these often-overlooked voices and to fill the color and context gaps that limit our capacity to understand the full capacity of ethical leadership and the collateral damage resulting from drug-related mass incarceration.

Chapter III: Methods

Chapter Overview

     This chapter discusses the strategy, genre, and rationale for the selected method of inquiry and describe how the research approach addresses the research questions. A description of the participants, as well as an explanation of the selection criteria, follows. Next, an explanation of the researcher's role, the importance of this role as a primary research tool, and the ethical considerations that accompany the role will be discussed. This chapter concludes with details of data collection, management, and analysis that guided the research process to ensure the continuity and integrity of the data, along with a discussion on the trustworthiness of the findings and the accountability of the researcher.

A Qualitative Research Design

     The research grew out of the desire to identify ethical leaders in the Black Church and to describe their strategies and experiences as they transform individuals and communities holistically in urban settings beset by the collateral damage of mass incarceration, including violence, unemployment, health, and educational disparities.

     The emphasis was on hearing the voices of urban Black pastors responding to the collateral damage resulting from the U.S. War on Drugs and mass incarceration. Although the Black Church has been a beacon for social and political change and occupies an elevated position of power and influence in the African American community, the voices of its leaders have been conspicuously absent in ethical leadership studies and from the policy debate on mass incarceration (Brown et al., 2005; Moore et al., 2015). Rarely have the voices of Black clergy leadership been heard in the public square since the Civil Rights Movement. Those few prophetic

Black voices that are crying out have yet to influence the shape public values and policies on socio-political issues such as addressing the collateral damage of mass incarceration.

Therefore, it is likely that substantive answers to 21st century social problems related to mass incarceration will come from leaders of a relevant and redefined Church with a new model for transformation situated within the Post-U.S. War on Drugs context. The aim of this research is to delve in depth into the complexities and practices of urban pastors with holistic ministries operating at ground zero of communities suffering from the devastating collateral damage of mass incarceration. These overlooked voices have yet to be heard or comprehended within academic scholarship concerning addressing the consequences of mass incarceration in marginalized communities.

Research Questions

As discussed in Chapter II, Fluker (1998) and Colon (2003) provide relevant ethical leadership perspectives from the Church tradition. Central to Fluker's conception of ethical leadership is the role of systems (institutions, traditions, practices) as social architect of individual lives and how moral agents might counter unjust systemic practices that promote unhealthy and self-destructive practices in Black communities. For Fluker, the ethical leadership role of the Black Church involves the internal development of the Black community as well as a corrective and prescriptive moral voice that speaks to the unjust external social and economic policies that produce vast disparities in the conditions of the poor and people of color.

Colon (2003) laments the lack of consistent, comprehensive, coordinated formal efforts to educate and socialize the masses of African Americans. The Church, according to Colon, is the only institution that controls the processes to inform, educate and socialize its members, those who are being informally influenced through movies, videos, advertising and television. So, the

challenge for Church leadership is to discover how to effectively provide alternative approaches to education and socialization in a way that provides group empowerment or liberation in a world hostile to a group liberation and value system.

The insights of Fluker (1998) and Colon (2003) guided my primary research question: how is the Church transforming Black individuals, families, children and communities in the aftermath of the War on Drugs? A closely related question is: what strategies, methods and tasks are utilized by Church leaders to directly address the collateral damage of mass incarceration in urban settings? The answers could help to inform public policy as well as provide insights for the practice of relevant, holistic ministry in urban settings devastated by the effects of the wars on crime and drugs.

Information Utilized to Conduct the Study

The unit of analysis for this critical ethnographic comprised 17 Black urban religious leaders located in different regions in the United States. The target is urban religious leaders whose holistic ministries focus specifically upon the collateral damages of mass incarceration. In seeking to understand these leaders' perceptions of the role of the contemporary Black Church and the methods, tasks and strategies to address this problem, a set of semi-structured interview questions was used to collect the information needed to answer the research and supplemental questions. The information used to answer the questions were determined by the project's conceptual framework and include:

- Pastors' perceptions about the challenges experienced and methods, strategies and tasks utilized to combat the collateral damages of mass incarceration and about the role of the Church in this effort (perceptual).

- Demographic information of participants, including age, gender, ethnicity, and number of years as clergy leader (demographic).

- Organizational information concerning the pastors' Church such as history, vision, objectives, culture, etc. (contextual).

- Ongoing dialog with the literature in order to gain sufficient theoretical grounding (theoretical).

Strategy, Genre, and Rationale

Research provides a variety of perspectives and vantage points to see things and empirically analyze our findings. Thus, it is imperative for those who perform "real world" research to heed the words of the mindful inquirer: "Prior to beginning your investigations you, should, at the very least, know how your topic would be explained given several different theoretical perspectives" (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 64). So, it is with this mindful inquiry (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998; that I approached this study, one situated at the intersection of the Black Church, ethical leadership and mass incarceration. Mindful inquiry synthesizes four intellectual traditions: phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical social science, and Buddhism. Several of the espoused ideas from these traditions resonated greatly with me. Their 13 precepts included:

2. Tolerating and integrating multiple perspectives is a value . . .

5. All research involves both accepting bias—the bias of one's own situation and context—and trying to transcend it . . .

8. The elimination or diminution of suffering is an important goal of or value accompanying inquiry and often involves critical judgment about how much suffering is required by existing arrangements.

9. Inquiry often involves the critique of existing values, social and personal illusions, and harmful practices and institutions . . .

12. Inquiry may contribute to social action and be part of social action. (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998, pp. 6–7)

In addition, my goals as a researcher-practitioner are, first, to gain answers to questions that helped me do the work I am currently engaged in more effectively and help me to become more capable as a change agent; and, second, to explore ways of knowing that are already embedded in my practice. From a personal standpoint, Bentz and Shapiro's (1998) advice implies that practitioners' ability to see themselves as researchers is critical to performance in the context of their practice.

I chose a qualitative research design for this study. Qualitative methodology is a commitment to seeing the world from the point of view of the actor. Therefore, the close involvement of an "inside view" and a contextual understanding are required to derive meanings employed by a particular group. Qualitative research is also fluid and flexible, allowing space to discover new or unanticipated findings. Additionally, the qualitative approach relies upon unstructured or semi-structured interviews as a vehicle compared to the surveys and questionnaires preferred by quantitative proponents. The chief attraction for the qualitative researcher is the ability to get close to the subject, to see the world from their perspective with the intent to produce "rich" data in great depth in contrast to the "superficial" or "deficient" data of the empiricists (Bryman, 1984).

Also, I chose a blended critical ethnographic/phenomenological approach that utilizes narrative analysis for this study. Phenomenological approaches "seek to explore, describe, and analyze the meaning of individual lived experience . . . [and are based on the assumption that] . . . there is an essence to experience that is shared with others that have also had a similar experience" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 219). Although labor-intensive, the advantage of this approach is that it permits an "explicit focus on the researcher's personal experience combined with those of the interview partners. It focuses on the deep, lived meanings that events have for

individuals, assuming that these meanings guide actions and interactions" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 148). As a pastor and leader of a local small, urban African American Church, I approached this research from the assumption that the participants of the study share a similar experience as I analyzed the "unique expressions of these experiences in order to identify the essence" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 148).

This qualitative study is also informed by narrative inquiry life history analysis. According to Riessman (1993), a primary way that individuals make sense of experience is by casting it in narrative form, allowing culture to speak itself through an individual's story, revealing useful data about social life. I adopted the perspective in Hatch and Wisnieweski's (2002) work that individual and social histories do not occur in isolation, but rather, are shaped by and intertwined with external events occurring within the larger context of society.

Finally, in exploring the accounts of perceptions, methods, tasks and strategies in the life stories of urban African American Church leaders, the aim was to document the experiences, practices, and strategies of those who impact the lives of individuals and communities in order to explore the contemporary role of the Black Church in the post drug war era. A larger aim was to add a qualitative perspective to the research community in order to provide more in-depth understanding of the concerns of urban African Americans about addressing the negative collateral damage resulting from mass incarceration.

Participants, Access, and Selection

As an inside researcher, I chose criterion-based sampling to align with the study's purpose, looking for those who "have had experiences relating to the phenomenon to be researched" (Kruger & Stones, 1981, p. 150). Although for me, there were very few barriers to access this population, due to ethical considerations, I used informed consent and explained the

agreement forms to each participant prior to each interview. In an attempt to obtain triangulation, data was collected from both male and female pastors as well as diverse age and geographic perspectives.

Participants were selected by contacting the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference (SDPC), the Transatlantic Roundtable on Religion and Race (TRRR) and the Healing Communities coalition (discussed below) in order to help facilitate access. Utilizing a funneling approach, a master list of 25 to 30 pastors was developed of those that meet the criteria of implementing ministries centered on the collateral damage of mass incarceration. The master list was then winnowed down to the smaller group (17) of final individuals to allow more focused and in-depth interviewing. This smaller sample size provided an opportunity to collect extensive details about each leader and their work and was sufficient to identify themes and obtain cross-analysis without diluting the level of detail about each individual studied (Creswell, 2012).

I will now briefly describe the organizations from which my sample populations were drawn.

The Samuel Dewitt Proctor Conference (SDPC) is the premier Black Church organization in the U.S. that is addressing mass incarceration. The organization brings together thought leaders and activists from the Church, academy and community to focus on education, advocacy and activism from a national perspective. Iva Carruthers, SDPC executive director, agreed to partner in the research and assist in obtaining a representative sample from pastors across the nation.

The Transatlantic Roundtable on Religion and Race (TRRR) describes itself as a "community of discourse" (Transatlantic Roundtable on Religion and Race, n.d., para. 1) and uses a scholarly approach to dialog with activists, students, civil, and government leaders around Black

social issues from a global standpoint. R. Drew Smith, facilitator of the TRRR agreed to assist in helping to develop a sample.

The Healing Communities is a coalition of partnering groups, based in Philadelphia, whose work revolves around the concept of embracing reintegration of formerly incarcerated persons back into the family, congregation, workforce and neighborhood so that community acceptance becomes the norm. This organization partners with the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC), a social justice convention of congregations. I am a member of PNBC.

Once a master list of potential interviewees was compiled, I sent out introductory emails or made initial contact by phone. Those leaders who responded were surveyed and segmented according to organizational size, region, and experience. I also noted whether any ministries are located in areas that have experienced media scrutiny from recent unarmed deaths of African Americans at the hands of law enforcement such as what occurred in Baltimore, MD; Ferguson, MO; or North Charleston, SC. These areas were recently the catalyst for the Black Lives Matter movement, a popular activist movement closely affiliated with demands for criminal justice reform. A final list was compiled in consultation and partnership with the aforementioned organizations.

Methodology

As previously stated, I employed qualitative research methodology (Cresswell, 2012) with African American urban pastors as the focus of analysis. Specifically, the study was a blended critical ethnographic and phenomenological approach using narrative analysis.

The ethnographic tradition in which I locate myself as a researcher is largely informed by the cultural ethnographic approach of McCurdy et al. (2004). These authors define ethnography as "the process of discovering and describing a culture" (p. 9). The task then, is to discover informants' views of what they are doing by helping them to remember and express their cultural

knowledge. Historically, the microculture of the Black Church context and its leaders has been instrumental in shaping the cultural beliefs and practices of people within the Black community, especially those involved with the church.

Qualitative research allows for deeper exploration of issues that move beyond what a particular group thinks to understanding why and how. Qualitative research also gives greater control to the respondent rather than being set by the researcher prior to the interview and allows the researcher to listen for perspectives on issues and interpretations that may not have been previously anticipated (Andolina, Jenkins, Keeter, & Zukin, 2002).

Researcher's Role

As mentioned before, I approach this study from the perspective of an insider. This view is seen by many as biased and beginning with political aims (O'Reilly, 2009). Others, however, believe that the insider vantage allows researchers to blend in more, participate more easily, and gain the rapport that allows them to penetrate more complex issues and read nonverbal communications. Insiders are able to get to the real, daily, lived, and "back-stage" experiences. Proponents of insider research also note that participants see outsiders as less trustworthy, discerning and lacking commitment to the group.

While both insiders and outsiders have their challenges, O'Reilly (2009) notes that research can enjoy both insider and outsider methodology. The challenge before each is described as follows: "The anthropologist in a foreign culture has to struggle to gain insights; the anthropologist in her own culture must struggle to withdraw from it" (p. 111). As an insider, I am also a key informant and as such, have greater access to people that others might not. Other advantages I might have over traditional ethnographers/phenomenologists is that I know who to

select, the questions to ask, and the capacity to interpret subtle responses in a way that gives an expression (rather than mere description) of lived experience.

Data Collection, Management, and Analysis

The following brief overview looks at the process of interviewing participants, organizing data from the interviews, and then interpreting this data through the lens of narrative analysis.

The study involved a cultural ethnographic/phenomenological approach with in-depth interviewing, using a semi-structured protocol, to gather and examine accounts given by African American pastors operating in urban areas impacted by the collateral damage of mass incarceration.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), the purpose of phenomenological interviewing is to describe the meaning of a concept shared by several individuals. This stepwise inquiry sequentially focuses on past experience, present experience, and a third in-depth interview, which joins the previous two narratives to describe the participant's essential experience. Given the implications of race, gender, and other dynamics for both the researcher and participants, data was collected from sources such as documents and other artifacts that embody cultural meaning. I used journaling, field notes, and taped recordings of the activities, attitudes, and behavior of the participants. I also recorded reflective notes, such as hunches, impressions and feelings and spend time in reflection in order to prevent becoming "over-absorbed" in the data-collection process.

Interviews were audiotaped. I also took notes during the interview and other activities and capture as much verbatim quotation as possible. The interview transcripts were analyzed using "phenomenological reduction" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 148) which meant clustering the data around themes that describe the textures of the experience Structural

synthesis, the final stage, involves the "imaginative exploration of all possible meanings and divergent perspectives and culminates in a description of the essence of the phenomenon and its deep structure" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 148). In other words, I attempted to cluster units of meaning to form themes. In order to guard against unconscious bias and to explore possible alternative understandings, I then debriefed with other knowledgeable researchers, both university professors with expertise in qualitative research methods. These researchers independently coded data and then I then obtained feedback about the logic and clarity of my interpretations and resolve differences of interpretation where these exist.

Once the explication of data was completed, I identified the results, drew and asserted my conclusions, and wrote a composite summary. This conclusion reflected the context from which the themes emerged and attempt to concretize the participants' everyday expressions and experiences into meaningful ideas that provide a more in-depth understanding of the significance of the everyday lived experience of African Americans for issues of leadership and transformation of Black individuals, children, families and communities.

Ethical Considerations

Although the Black Church experience is not monolithic, I approached this study from the perspective of an insider, having been immersed in the context of the Church for a lifetime. The Black religious and social contexts both contain intra-group distinctions based upon social class, access to education and colorism (shades of skin tone). Yet, my insider status was advantageous in obtaining access to the sample. Additionally, my decade of experience as a columnist and interviewer for a local African American publication enabled me to navigate in familiar contexts.

Yet, the utmost care was taken to protect the privacy, names and reputation of the interviewees. Interviews were recorded on digital media and pseudonyms used during the

interviewing process. Interview recordings were sent to a transcriber unaffiliated with the researcher or Antioch University. This research proposal and its ethical dimensions were reviewed and approved by Antioch University's IRB.

Chapter IV: Findings

Research Aim and Question

The aim of this study was to understand the often-overlooked leadership approaches of urban religious leaders as they address the collateral damage from mass incarceration in their communities. The research also sought to fill the color and context gaps that limit our ability to understand the full capacity of ethical leadership. The results of this qualitative research were derived from in-depth interviews I conducted to examine the approaches of 17 religious leaders at small (under 1,500 members) urban congregations in the United States as they address the direct and indirect impact of mass incarceration on individuals, children, families and communities of color. The central research question was: How is the Church responding to the effects of the War on Drugs/mass incarceration on Black and/or poor individuals, families, children and communities? A closely related question was: What are the strategies, practices and experiences of American religious leaders in small churches as they address the harms of mass incarceration?

Results

To answer the question of how the Church is addressing mass incarceration's effects on Black and/or poor individuals, families, children and communities, this study examined the leadership approaches of urban religious leaders of small churches in eleven states and the District of Columbia (Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4, and Figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 provide information on demographics, experiences and denomination of participants). This chapter begins with Leaders' Context for Ministry that provides a portrait of the participants and their ministries. This Context section also discusses leader perceptions of the most pressing concerns, which, in their view, demand a response to the harms of mass incarceration.

Table 4.1

Urban Religious Leaders in This Study: Who They Are

Name	Location	Denom.	Position	Yrs of Experience **	Gender	Age ***	Prison Experience
Cameron	Southeast	PCUSA	Staff		M	53	No
Carin*	Midwest	Non Den.	Staff		F	61	No
Christine	Northeast	Non Den.	Staff		F	71	No
Deron	Midwest	Baptist	Staff		M	55	Yes
Diane	Northeast	Bapt/UMC	Pastor	23	F	60	No
Donald	Southeast	Baptist	Pastor	5	M	41	No
Ernest*	Northeast	AME	Staff		M	57	No
JoAnn	Midwest	Baptist	Staff		F	55	No
Levi	Southeast/ Midwest	Baptist	Pastor	28	M	65	No
Lynnette	Northeast	EC of A	Pastor	5	F	64	No
Matthew	Midwest	Baptist	Pastor	35	M	64	Yes
Mike	Midwest	Non Den.	Pastor	17	M	38	No
Randall	Northeast	UMC	Pastor	11	M	61	No
Rennard	Midwest	Non Den.	Pastor	6	M	56	Yes
Rhonda	Southeast	UCC	Staff		F	55	Yes
Tamara	Midwest	Baptist	Staff		F	38	No
Washington*	Midwest	UCC	Pastor	12	M	57	No

Note: Regional Classifications as determined by American Association of Geographers (n.d.)
*   Previous work experience in the criminal justice system.
**   Median pastoral leadership experience is 12 years.
*** Median age is 57 years.

Table 4.2.

Leader Gender and Position Summary

Position	Male	Female	Total	%
Pastors	7	2	9	53
Staff	3	5	8	47
Total	10	7	17	100

Table 4.3.

Participant Denomination Summary

Denomination	Number	%
Baptist	7	41
Non-Denominational	4	24
United Church of Christ (UCC)	2	11
African Methodist Episcopal	1	6
Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (PCUSA)	1	6
United Methodist Church (UMC)	1	6
Evangelical Churches of America (ECA)	1	6
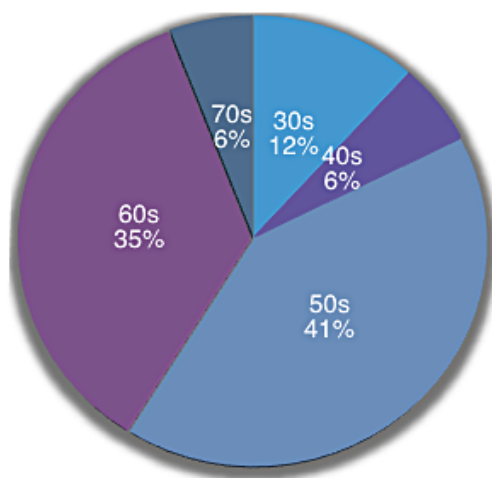
Figure 4.1. Religious Leaders by age group (years).
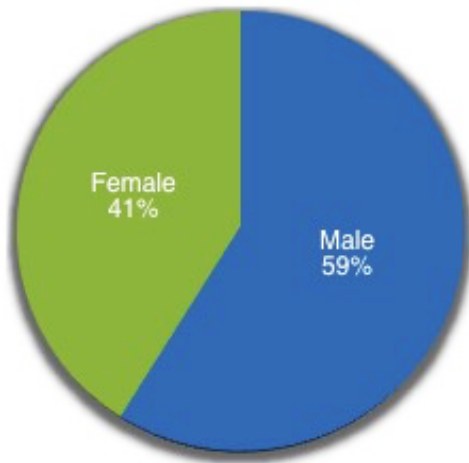
Figure 4.2. Religious leaders by gender.
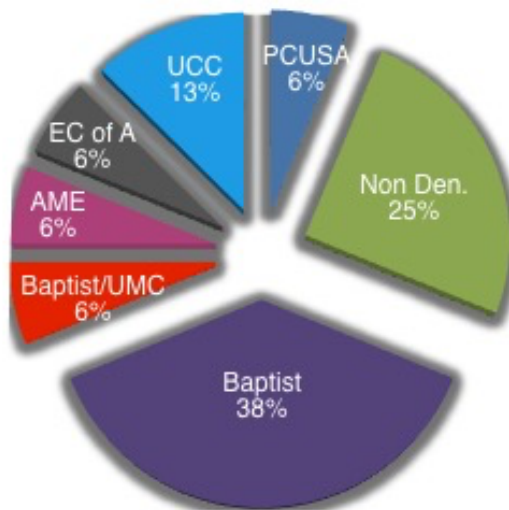
Figure 4.3. Religious leaders by denomination. Acronyms are as given in Table 4.3.

Following the "Leaders' Context" section, I then discuss leadership efforts to impact lives

through ministries that address mass incarceration and its collateral damage. I first outline

participant perceptions of impact, through describing their responses of what change looks like in

their ministries, followed by their perceptions of who is being transformed. To answer the

question of the strategies and methods utilized, I discuss two core foci: the agents or processes of

impact or change and the distinctive tools and tactics used by the leaders. Finally, I will discuss

the barriers to ministry encountered by leaders in their quest to address the harms of mass incarceration.

The Participants

The following are brief sketches of the 17 participants in this study. Pseudonyms have been used.to protect anonymity that was assured in recruitment.

Cameron: Cameron is a 53-year-old staff minister of a 200-member Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) congregation in the Southeastern U.S. region. The congregation is 99 percent African American and working class. Cameron accepted his call to ministry in 2008 after spending 27 years performing operations and project management for a major U.S. corporation. A fulltime employment opportunity at a Historic Black Seminary opened up for him just after his corporate employer downsized and he was reduced to working only 20 hours per week. This "divine intervention" led him into a new field of study - ministry. He describes himself as "an African-centered Christian minister that was raised in the Pentecostal and Baptist tradition that's now practicing in the Presbyterian Church, so I'm at the present Epicostal, and very proud of my 'Afripresepicostalisms'."

Carin: Ordained 4 years ago and in ministry for the past 20 years at a non-denominational predominately African American congregation in the Midwest, Carin is a staff minister in charge of Christian education and has also worked for over 20 years in a correctional facility. Carin had been living in another state and "hated" the job she was then engaged in at a local prison. She transported her ailing mother to the Midwest to be with relatives and ended up staying when someone recommended her for a job in the education field as a school principal. She was extremely surprised when she found out that the school was located in a prison and not a

traditional facility. However, Carin quickly embraced what she came to view as the "hand of God".

Christine: Christine is a 71-year-old staff minister at a historic multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-class church in the Northeast. She is an activist and specialist in Christian education. Christine was asked by a national advocacy group to help prepare a study guide for Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* because of her extensive background in instructional design. The book and project proved to be the catalyst for Christine's ministry in mass incarceration.

Deron: Deron was born into the Black church 56 years ago and for the last 2 years has served as staff pastor in charge of outreach at a 250-member historic church in the Midwest. He began to address mass incarceration when his Senior Pastor, looking around the transient and drug-ridden neighborhood in which the church is located, contacted him and said, "I really need your help. We're not doing something right here."

Diane: A pastor for 23 years with Baptist and UMC roots, Diane's current ministry began by "responding to the heart cry of the people around us," she states. Her work evolved from a bible study and has grown by leveraging charitable choice funds to serve children, teens and adults in the Northeastern United States.

Donald: Five years ago, when Donald became pastor of this small church in the Southeast, the community was still suffering the effects of the Great Recession. There was a double-digit unemployment rate for his county, so he reached out to parishioners and community leaders about not being a church that merely "takes up space." They replied, "let's make this happen" and the ministry to address the harms of mass incarcerated was born out of the desire to help people "get a job, a better job than the one they had, which was part-time, while the one they lost was full-time."

Ernest: Ernest is a 57-year-old staff pastor who has served 12 years at a 500-member Northeastern A.M.E. church that is 96 percent Black and working class. Prior to his ordination 4 years ago, Ernest was a probation officer for several years at both the federal and state levels. Ernest attacks mass incarceration by using his interior knowledge of "how the system works."

JoAnn: JoAnn is an American Baptist who is currently affiliated with a college and small foundation in the Midwest. In addition to her theological experience, she has a strong background in higher education. She was moved to put together a 4-year college start-up as a result of her encounter with an enterprising student who had spent most of his adult life on and off in prison.

Levi: Recently retired, Levi pastored for 13 years in the Midwest and spent another 15 years as pastor in the Southeastern region of the U.S. His passion to minister to the families of the incarcerated started with him "going into a crime-ridden local neighborhood when he began pastoring in 1981."

Lynnette: The 64-year-old pastor of a small new church start has, for the past 5 years, operated a nonprofit organization performing community outreach. Lynnette has been identified with some sort of prison issue for over 35 years. Driven by the experiences of her own relatives, Lynnette had a desire to find out what drives people who spend a lifetime of going in and out of prison and how she could help. "I saw a need," she says, "and just trying to fill that need I found myself navigating toward places that I could work and make a difference." Lynette pastors in the Northeast region.

Matthew: Matthew, now 64, has over 30 years of pastoral experience in the Midwest region and spent 344 days, himself, as an inmate. While much of Black America has benefitted from the Civil Rights Movement, "there is a large underclass of uneducated, under-educated, unskilled and under-skilled. That's where the Black Church now has to focus," he says.

Mike: Mike is a 38-year-old pastor of churches in the Midwest. After conducting the funeral of a cousin who died of neighborhood gun violence related to drug trade, "knew then and there we had to do something fresh and new" and began a ministry "with a focus to heal those who had been touched by loss, the criminal justice system, and poverty." Mike's current mass incarceration ministry bled out of that insightful experience.

Randall: A 61-year-old servant pastor, Randall has led a United Methodist Church for one year. However, prior to being called into the pastoral ministry 4 years ago, Randall served as a lay leader of the church for seven years and has also been a commercial banker and a practicing attorney.   The Northeast congregation, numbered at 125, was formed in 2007, a merger of two churches, one of which had been located in the city since the 1700s. Growing up in poverty, Randall lived in a home with no indoor plumbing. However, at the age of 13 his family moved and he was so excited to move into a housing project that, "we would've thought we went to Beverly Hills," he states. "I've never forgotten that, and I still have family members who are struggling, and just like the gains that I have been blessed with, I firmly believe that if you're not part of the solution you're part of the problem. The Lord has placed me where I am and where I will be held accountable as to what did I do with the position that he had placed me in," he adds.

Rennard: Rennard has led a small congregation and a separate nonprofit in the Midwest since 2010. The 56-year-old pastor began researching mass incarceration when he returned to college after spending time in and out of the prison system. He says:

> As I began to put the pieces together, I saw the pain of the people, the pain of the women and how it was separating the children. I saw very few saying anything about it and I began to spend time with God. I was just in places that I had to speak up and be the voice, and that's how it took off, and now I'm possessed by it.

Rhonda: Rhonda is a 55-year-old staff pastor and the director of the outreach and social justice ministry at a 60-member United Church of Christ (UCC) church in the Southeast region.

She has a passion for social justice issues, including returning citizens and voting rights. Rhonda

previously worked in telecommunications for 25 years and then went into real estate where

"mistakes" caused her to be convicted of a felony, placed under house arrest and receive a 5-year

probation term. She considers herself,

> blessed to find a church that my friends were attending and they loved me up through that whole ordeal, and it probably was one of the catalysts for me to even look at mass incarceration as closely as I did and critique the judicial system because of what I went through. So that whole experience rerouted me away from the direction of corporate America and into the social justice arena. And I felt like it was divine intervention, because it moved me away from that whole focus on money to focus on matters of justice and faith.

Tamara: Tamara is a 38-year-old staff pastor at a small Baptist congregation in the

Midwest. She was motivated to found a separate nonprofit at her church by the enormity of social

problems in the community and in her congregation. "Our ministries really came out of the needs

that we saw in the community concerning children and families and those needs that they felt

were the most pressing," she says. Tamara adds:

> The people coming to the church were in need themselves and you can get only so much impact when you are depending on volunteers. And I'll be honest. I was doing a lot of this work for free. And at some point, I felt like this is our job, and it needs to be treated and respected as such. And that was my motivation for starting a 501(c)(3). These were things that I was already doing. But I felt that we needed to make [the ministry] a legitimate agency and to provide interventions that actually work, not just doing what I think is right or what I think might work or what works for the 50 people in my congregation, but finding out across groups what works and making sure that it's culturally relevant and using the research to meld cultural relevance and evidence-based practice,

Washington: Washington is a 57-year-old pastor who planted his 200-member UCC

church in the Midwest region 13 years ago. He served as a police officer in the decade of the

1990s. A concern for marginalized citizens was instilled in Washington by his African-centered

parents and grandparents while he was a small child.

> One of the stories that influenced my life tremendously," he recounts, "is my grandfather telling me about his grandfather who worked on a plantation, as a slave in Georgia, and

how the White slave owner raped his sister. He grabbed a shotgun, and killed the White slave owner, and was forced to get safely out through the Underground Railroad, and that was my introduction to social justice. So, those types of things—my mother used to take me to the old Salaam Restaurant in Chicago run by the Nation of Islam when they were having these forums, and seminars, and things like that. And we'd hear different speakers talking about our people, and about what we could do to organize Black people, and so my parents were also supporters of Operation Breadbasket and Operation Push. And so, I'm saying that this social justice bent has always been a part of my DNA.

The Urgent Need to Address the Harms of Mass Incarceration

As the following discussion shows, the participants articulated their views on the most pressing needs in terms of the effects of mass incarceration on the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, direct and indirect effects of mass incarceration on children and families, and the effects on the African American community at large. Table 4.4 summarizes results from interviews with Church leaders, breaking down the leaders' view into perceived needs and concerns,

Perceived needs of the incarcerated. Individuals who have experienced incarceration often are released from prison lacking skills to obtain and keep employment, have difficulty maintaining relationships and lack housing or healthcare. In addition, they are often disconnected from family, social, religious and political networks. Eight participants described the Church's most urgent priority as a need to provide support to post-incarcerated individuals in order to help them to make the transition back into society. These "returning citizens" are also often ostracized upon their release from prison and face emotional burdens as a result of stigma, urging religious leaders to give compassion and care, in order to enable healing.

Table 4.4

Perceived Urgent Needs

Affected Group	# of Leaders Addressing Affected Group	Urgent Items Needed or to be Dealt With	Sub-items
Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated	8	• Compassion, care and healing • Restoration of hope • Reconnection to community • Resources and support services	Dehumanization Ostracism
Children and Families	3	• Compassion, care and healing • Family instability • Economic resources	Poverty
African American Community at Large	6	• Injustice • Ending mass incarceration • Awareness and community education • Adjudicating conflict	Racism

Compassion and care. Going through the justice system and the entire process of incarceration can often feel dehumanizing, particularly where there is little or no encouragement or emotional support. As Matthew pointed out, "It's not just re-entry because reentry has to begin the first day they face those charges." He continued:

> So, to have someone assigned to communicate with them while they're incarcerated, before they go away, and then to have a ministry or elders to be able to pay them a visit. Everybody wants to be a prison minister where they sing and preach, and that's fine, but that does not have the same effect as getting on their visitor's list, going to visit that person, or 2 or 3 people sending them 2 or 3 letters a month, just reminding them of their humanity, their dignity and their value in the kingdom as well as reminding them that there can be life after incarceration.

Healing and hope. According to participants, the need for emotional support continues upon the return of the formerly incarcerated to the community as the experience of prison combined with the stigma of incarceration may affect their self-worth. Lynnette emphasized a

need to provide healing and help in restoring hope to citizens returning to their communities following their incarceration:

> I think that the first part is just being welcoming, to be a support, to accompany people and to lift them up and help them understand that they do have worth—because they may have made some poor choices in their life doesn't diminish their humanity.

Reconnection. Participants indicated that upon returning to their communities, the formerly incarcerated often find that social capital like churches or positive family or community networks have changed and/or not accessible to them. So, returning citizens may face many barriers in trying to transition back into society. Cameron stressed the responsibility of the church to enable reconnection to community:

> Those who are or have been incarcerated should not be thought of as outside of the church or exiled from the community. They are part of our community. The need is to provide for them the idea of a connection to the community, but also to remind and keep them supported spiritually, whatever that spiritual consciousness may be. We are Black folk connecting with Black folk, and we understand Black folks' needs and we understand Black folk family dynamics, and so we want to go in and make sure that they understand that our support to them is that we're their brothers and sisters in Christianity if that's what they want to be, but first and foremost, we're their brothers and sisters period because we come from the same taproot.

Resources and support services. A majority of the urban leaders revealed that many former inmates return to their communities from long term stays without the skill development that could make them productive citizens and/or employees. Being socially stigmatized, makes it extremely difficult to find jobs, transitional housing or even the resources to obtain basic critical needs. When an individual has been disconnected from society for a long period of time, upon their return their needs might include everything from healthcare issues because of poor medical attention during incarceration, to difficulty finding employment, locating housing, and difficulty reconnecting with family members and contemporary society, which has changed drastically since the citizen has been away. Lynnette stated:

> Just trying to navigate everyday life itself is a challenge because no familiarity with technology, landscape has changed. Just trying to navigate, so not even thinking about trying to find a job, just trying to figure out how to live.

Both inside and outside of prison, the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated often lack tangible resources to survive. Without basic resources they could reoffend and ultimately be sent back to prison. It is the Church's responsibility to intervene, said Donald, who felt an urgent need to go beyond merely preaching to providing actual resources in order to help current inmates survive and returning citizens become contributing members of society and decrease recidivism rates.

> We need to be visible in those prison systems to make sure that the inmates are getting the support services that they need, so that when they complete their time they can transition into a role where they can become contributing members of society. Also, there is a young man in our church who is serving time, I believe for murder, and he basically reached out to the church for support because his family had disowned him . . . there were basic things that he needed, toiletries and just basic items, and so we sent him some money so that he could have those basic things.

Washington also identified a need for resources within his own congregation, primarily as a result of released former inmates not being able to find employment, an endeavor that is often frustrating:

> We've had a number of people in our congregation who have been incarcerated, who cannot find employment. Just recently in the last couple of months, one of my members had two real nice opportunities for employment. One was at an auto body repair shop with one of the major auto body repair places in the region. And there was another opportunity for him, but both of them turned him down, because he has felony. And it doesn't matter what the felony is for, just the fact that he's got a felony. And the frustrating thing is that there's a lack of opportunity for people to choose from, and out of those, the few opportunities there are, there are not many that will take somebody who has been incarcerated.

Perceived needs of children and families impacted by mass incarceration. Three leaders focused more intensely on the problem that incarceration places significant emotional and financial burdens upon the families of the incarcerated—both during and after the process of incarceration. As a result of the burden families are experiencing, pastors identified the need to

address family instability, for equipping to obtain economic resources and to show compassion and care so that children, individuals and families might be able to lead healthy, stable and sustainable lives.

Some leaders hold that the Church's responsibility is to the family of the incarcerated due to what is perceived as a lack of capacity—expertise, financial capacity and security measures—to minister directly to incarcerated or formerly incarcerated persons. With the lack of capacity, Levi asserted, comes a vulnerability to exploitation of the Church's acts of compassion:

> The church doesn't know Junior well enough. So the family is, I think, the best-equipped mediator between society and the incarcerated person. And so I argue that the church's role is to equip that family that the church knows. That mother then speaks for that church because you've got so many of your members with somebody that's incarcerated. And incarceration impacts the whole family one way or another. Usually before a person gets incarcerated, they have torn a family up. So, the family needs healing. The family needs the church's love, their patience, and their compassion. And they need to be ministered to. They need to be replenished. They need to be revived. They need to be restored. They need to be healed. So, I think that the church has to minister to the family.

Below are the study participants' explanations of the specific family needs they identified.

Compassion and care. While nearly every family in urban communities has been impacted by mass incarceration, the Church itself erects emotional barriers for family members when it often acts as if the phenomenon doesn't exist. "We have amazing ministries for the sick and for the shut-ins," said Diane. She added: "But [the Church] doesn't count the people that are incarcerated or their families in their care network or care strategies."

It is also a quiet ministry for Rhonda, a District of Columbia area minister who has had an encounter in the criminal justice system herself. "Although everyone here from leadership to everybody else in my church has been affected by mass incarceration, they just aren't vocal about it," she says. "I think it's just something that people deal with like a burden and you just don't talk about."

Cameron posits that that when we experience grief or sense of loss we thus "internalize the emotional pain of our shame" rather than acknowledging it and this, in turn, produces further internal struggle in family members of the incarcerated:

> There is a certain degree of violence from the African American pulpit toward individuals who are grieving. We force individuals to forego the grieving process by suggesting that what it means to be a good Christian is not to cry or display emotion when it is the death of a loved one or even the grief is greater than just death. So, when it's the loss of a job, loss of a spouse, divorce, then no crying, mama wouldn't want that, you know, don't do that, the Bible says, so that type of thing. Now, the loss that happens when an individual is taken out of our family or out of our community and goes away to prison has a certain type of grief that goes with it, but again, the violence from the pulpit says, "don't do that!"—so that's problematic on so many levels.

The impact of families' tendency to suppress the pain of having a family member incarcerated may produce shame where one (including the entire family) attempts to anaesthetize the pain by automatically removing themselves from relationship with the family member and fully disconnect. Participants explain that as a result of the dehumanizing stigma attached to having a relative incarcerated, families need compassion and caring from the Church. Family members need to know that they themselves are not going to be ostracized or isolated. Therefore, a support group, a prayer group, a children's ministry or a mentoring program that provides care to the family is very useful.

Need to address family instability. In addition to the need to address emotional strain related to ostracism or stigma, urban religious leaders spoke of being confronted with the need to address issues of family instability resulting from the War on Drugs' mass exportation of potential social and economic capital which handicaps the Black family.

Participants stressed that mass incarceration produces a situation where large numbers of African American men are no longer part of the community. The result is a breakdown of the basic nuclear family unit resulting in a loss of social capital, including positive role models. Joann, a Chicago religious leader, says:

You have almost a missing generation of the guys—and it's really interesting—the gang bangers, they're like—yeah, I remember gang banging out there but there were rules about that. Now, these young boys, there was no one here to teach them even respect or order within the gangster system, right? So, you have that sort of missing generation and then you have these young men or boys, come under them and I agree, where were the role models? It's devastating that you have women raising children alone. Of course, I get the rise in women prisoners, but that forces us into a situation where you have the grandmothers raising children and all of that. Whatever the children could have been or whatever promise they held, it's just lost or gone for most of them.

Economic resources and support services. The family instability produced by mass incarceration is also related to economic hardship and increased strain on family resources. Tamara, Donald and Matthew all emphasized the need for economic resources and support services for those children, families and children directly or indirectly impacted by mass incarceration. Tamara says:

We see a lot of the moms. So, some of the caregiving ends up being put on the grandparents. So, we find a lot of grandparents are in distress and strained. Also, we see some dynamics for those that live with the custodial mom or trying to live with girlfriends and things like that. You'll see family strain there that ultimately impacts everybody. And so those are the issues that you see at the church, and then also those are the issues that impact the schools and the greater community. So, you see the cycle of poverty and the cycle of strain, and it's hard for individuals to get out. And so, our challenge is how to help people extricate themselves from that or to try to improve their quality of living despite those challenges.

Donald recalled:

The incarceration of one of my members impacted his daughter, who now had to move [out of state] because her dad is in prison. His mom, who relied on his support with managing family business, now has to take over responsibility, and it also puts more burden on his siblings to do even more.

Matthew adds:

Often, these are families that are already without resources, and regardless there are limits on resources when you have a family member in the criminal justice system. So, whether the incarcerated person is the primary breadwinner and/or just a member of the family, it's a significant strain. It puts a tremendous strain on the family as far as resources and just going through the process and after the process. All of the things that come with having somebody incarcerated as far as travel for visits, resources for their books, [having] children involved, and the absence of the person's presence produces a strain and a hardship.

Resistance and Movement Building to Address Community Impacts of Mass Incarceration

With Black people representing 13% of the U.S. population but 53% of the 2.3

million-prison population, there is an obvious disparity in what leaders, therefore, perceive to be

an unjust justice system. Six participants stressed an urgent need for resistance, movement

building, advocacy, community accountability and educational enrichment that is culturally

responsive.

Noting the sentencing disparities and disturbed by reoccurring instances of officer

involved shooting of Black unarmed citizens, these six leaders further indicated that mass

incarceration violates human rights and that the criminal justice system is not fair towards African

Americans. The leaders further viewed the issue of mass incarceration as a call to action for the

faith community to be at the forefront in calling for policy changes, particularly for nonviolent

offenses that saddle a disproportionate number of community members with labels that make

them unemployable.

Resistance. Two forms of commitment need to be enacted in organized resistance to the

injustices and effects of mass incarceration: these are, broadly, to human rights and racial justice,

and, specifically, to resources for education.

A Commitment to human rights and racial justice. The U.S. criminal justice system is viewed as

an unjust system that needs to be extensively reformed or abolished. Having personally

experienced time behind prison walls, Matthew stated:

> The church must be engaged in creating a new criminal justice system in America and
> almost abolishing [the present system], because this thing is so far out of control it's
> unbelievable. I was only there 344 days. But once you go on the inside, you see things a
> lot differently. If the average citizen spent a week in jail, they would come out en masse to
> shut the system down, because of the waste of humanity and the waste of taxpayer dollars.
> And the taxpayer dollars don't go on food and shelter for the inmate, I'm talking about the
> waste of the criminal justice system. When you come in there and see why some people
> are in there, and we're spending $30,000 and $40,000 to keep people in jail for some of

the things that they're in there for, just so the occupancy averages can stay high. It's horrific, and honestly, America just doesn't have a clue. And once you've been convicted, there's nothing you can say because they just see you as an angry felon. And the church is blind to this, we don't have a clue.

The U.S. criminal justice system is also an issue of racial justice and human rights and is indicted by biblical principles. Christine, articulated this perception:

> That part of the bible in St. Luke the fourth chapter, where Jesus came into the Roman Empire, where at least a third of the population from the studies that I've looked at were enslaved. Jesus came into that situation, and said he came to set the captives free. So, if we're going to be following Jesus, we should be addressing that issue, the Black churches, particularly as it relates to the Black community. If you look at the figures that are in Michelle Alexander's book, and elsewhere, it's a staggering imbalance and disproportion that affects the Black community, and the Brown community. So, any church that's calling itself a church needs to have somewhere in their program a focus on addressing the injustice of this issue.

Mass incarceration is also a form of slavery and human rights abuse and therefore it is the Black Church's responsibility to counter with a strong response, according to Donald, who also referred to Michelle Alexander's (2011) book:

> The Church has an urgent responsibility to tame the beast of mass incarceration that, according to Michelle Alexander and so many others, is another form of slavery, Jim Crow and Jane Crow. Too many of our young people are being incarcerated for nonviolent offenses, and so we have to call it out for what it is. We also have privatized prisons and are taking resources from our educational system, at this point this mass prison industrial complex or prisons for profit, and we just have to continue to speak   out about the system itself and we've got to continue to support families as pastors, as leaders when there is an injustice. We need to make sure that families have the right   kind of legal support to help them and their loved ones to get justice and to pursue it   all the way as far as we can through the court system and try other nonviolent means, which you are seeing happening today on the streets in Tulsa, Oklahoma and all over   this country, even in Charlotte, North Carolina. Sometimes you have to apply   nonviolent protests as a way of applying pressure on the system to actually do what is right.

Commitment to culturally competent education as prevention and intervention strategies.

Resistance is also seen as an internal strategy to counter injustice. Donald promulgates a need for more after school and tutoring programs as well as a need to advocate more for educational equity. Tamara, also, sees resistance taking place through culturally competent, high quality public

education, mentoring or educational enrichment so that individuals are able to flourish and make their homes, neighborhoods, community and ultimately their world as a better place.

Movement building. Building the movement to counter the impacts of mass incarceration involves three main thrusts: promoting awareness and education; creating and preserving safe spaces for advocacy and activism; and ensuring accountability among those who lead on these issues.

Promoting awareness and issue education. Another effort to counter the impact of mass incarceration is by helping community members "make decisions that decrease their chances of being a part of the mass incarceration complex." Leaders like Deron see a need to raise awareness in the community and "to educate so our people understand exactly what's going on." Pastor Mike, a likeminded leader, says:

> I believe that we need to provide educational resources to help families understand due process, to help families understand how to handle and fight against mass incarceration, because I don't believe we have to accept mass incarceration, but I believe it's up to us to understand policies, how to change policies and how new policies that implemented are affected.

Safe spaces for advocacy and activism. Movement building requires venues and safe spaces to assemble and foster discussions around matters of social justice that are free of infiltration, government surveillance and threats to Black political leaders. Washington says, that because of his social justice ministry, members of the community, who are not necessarily members of his church, will contact him to use his church's physical space where young people or others can meet in a "safe space" to discuss controversial issues such as Black Lives Matter, free from harassment by those opposed to justice.

Community accountability as an alternative to law enforcement intervention. Finally, while many leaders plead for community education, awareness or more political pressure for the

abolition of the criminal justice system, Pastor Washington also saw a need for an alternative justice system, where the actual "residents police the community." He said:

> A large segment of our police department does not live in the community and it really affects the people who are most marginalized when you have people from the surrounding areas making up the majority of the police department, and they don't have the compassion; they don't have the ability to relate to people that they're supposed to be policing. So, I'm looking for another level of not necessarily policing, but people in the community who can help adjudicate conflicts in the community before they get to the police level. And the Black church can play a role in that, because the Black church can be building in the sacred space for community groups, for this type of strategies, this type of organizing to go on in whatever community they can help.

Agents or catalysts to change. The pervasiveness of mass incarceration in urban predominantly African American communities is the first thing that many urban leaders speak of. At least 80 percent or higher of the members of both congregations Levi has served, either had an immediate or extended family member that was incarcerated or was on probation. Similarly, pastors Washington and Diane assert that a majority of the young men they encounter, particularly aged 40 and under, have had some interaction with the criminal justice system so that they are either presently locked up, have been locked up or are on probation or parole.

The result of this widespread phenomenon has left devastating collateral damage on communities of color of which Rhonda surmises:

> The government really can't handle, and not only can the government not handle it, government is affiliated with or complicit in perpetuating the problem. So, to me, the faith community could come in with a more supportive and robust program of activities to help [address the problem].

It is also true that much of the literature on leadership has been written from a Eurocentric or White male perspective. Thus, it is essential that Leadership in the post-mass-incarceration and War on Drugs era then, as participants conclude, come from the perspective of urban religious leaders, themselves, since they are located closest to the problem.

Summary

Participants were those urban religious leaders of small churches that operate in areas severely affected by mass incarceration. These leaders identified urgent needs based on the effects of mass incarceration in three categories: Mass incarceration's effect on the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, children, individuals and families, and the African American community as a whole resulting from an unjust criminal justice system.

Flowing from the effect of mass incarceration on the lives of the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated are needs to address the devaluation of humanity through compassion and healing and resources and support services.

As a result of mass incarceration's effect on children, individuals and families, there exists urgent needs for them to lead healthy, stable and sustainable lives by showing compassion and care; addressing family instability and equipping to obtain economic resources.

The impact of perceived injustice within the criminal justice system has produced a need to end mass incarceration or reform the criminal justice system by resistance and movement building. This resistance takes place by a commitment to culturally competent quality educational enrichment and mentoring as prevention and intervention strategies; providing more community education and awareness; efforts to have the community adjudicate conflict rather than the police; and by providing safe spaces for community dialog to take place.

Finally, participants perceived that the provision of these urgent needs are not likely to come from detached elected or appointed officials but from the strategies of informed and empathetic leaders who, with boots already on the ground, are situated closest to the problem.

Now, having discussed the participants, including a portrait of their ministry, how the participants describe the most pressing needs in addressing the harms of mass incarceration in

their congregations and/or communities, and how they view transformation in terms of agency or who is best situated to provide solutions to the previously described urgent needs, we now turn our attention to these specific ministries.

In the next section, I will discuss outcomes—how leaders are impacting lives through ministries that address mass incarceration and its collateral damage. What does impact look like in their ministries? Who is being impacted? What are the processes, distinctive tools or tactics used by the leaders to bring about change? Finally, the section addresses barriers to ministry.

Ministry Focus

How do these leaders approach the harmful impact of mass incarceration given their particular ministerial contexts and the urgent needs they have articulated?

My findings indicate that, based upon the identification of pressing needs and perceived ministry context, religious leaders of small urban churches are addressing mass incarceration with a ministry focus in four primary areas with occasional overlap between the areas: direct ministry to formerly incarcerated persons (Table 4.5); prevention and intervention activities related to indirect or collateral damage of mass incarceration affecting individuals, children and families (Table 4.6); consciousness raising in congregations and the community (Table 4.7); and policy change activities (Table 4.8).

In addition, each area of ministry focus has its own intervention outcomes, a unique set of leadership strategies and faces specific barriers to initiating, implementing or expanding ministry efforts. These are the topics to which we now turn.

Direct Ministry to Formerly Incarcerated Persons

The first priority for pastoral work against the impacts of mass incarceration is with those who have been prisoners. The following subsections describe the needs that are to be met, from the perspective of interviewed in this study and the perceived impacts of such work.

Direct ministry: Addressing needs for care, hope, skills and resources. Many of those leaders who have previously worked or experienced time in the criminal justice system or identify urgent needs related to incarcerated or formerly incarcerated persons have chosen to focus on direct ministry to that population as a means to address mass incarceration. Eight interviewees, half of whom encountered or worked in the criminal justice system, report a primary ministry focus with activities that support returning citizens (Table 4.5).

Cameron's ministry provides entrepreneurial training, a food pantry and housing referrals. Carin provides academic (GED) training and relationship skills development while Deron's ministry provides job skills development; a narcotics anonymous program and assists in helping returning citizens find transitional housing. Diane stays with the citizen all the way through the incarceration process providing alternatives to incarceration for juveniles, transportation and food assistance, GED classes along with life skills and job development activities.

Table 4.5

Results for Ministries Primarily Supporting Returning Citizens and Their Families

Leader	Structure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
Cameron	Congregation	Entrepreneurial Training Pantry for food/basic necessities Housing referrals	Increased participation/interest Welcoming attitude in the church New model of prison ministry	African Centered Approach	None

Leader	Structure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
Carin	Congregation and nonprofit	Academic and vocational training Relationship and family skills development	Personal transformation	Emulate Jesus	Staff who are sensitive to the problem Population stigma
Deron	501c3	Provide a place for treatment and care i.e. narcotics anonymous Job placement and job skills development Assist in finding transitional housing Educate and inform community about mass incarceration, importance of voting	Increase in membership from among those served Anecdotal stories of success and personal transformation, i.e. went back to school, got off drugs	Embed in community	Financial resources Traditions and institutionalization of Black Church
Diane	501c3	Support family and citizen all the way through the incarceration process GED classes, life skills activities; job development Transportation and food assistance Work with juvenile justice to find alternatives to incarceration.	Documented increase in HS graduation rates; Job placement success Reduce recidivism	Restorative conferencing circles	Funding Trained Staff
Earnest	Nonprofit	Peer to Peer mentoring using "lifers" Intervention at court level	Anecdotal individual success stories of personal transformation	Leadership Development	Population stigma since population is other than nonviolent group/not politically popular

Leader	Structure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
JoAnn	501c3	Establish a 4-year college for returning citizens with wrap around services to help facilitate success	Established the groundwork and a model for others to build upon	Building networks and establishing relationships	Skepticism/low expectations for success
Lynnette	501c3	Life skills workshops Employment prep Assistance obtaining government benefits Adult literacy & GED classes	Anecdotal individual success stories of personal transformation such as how people have been able to achieve wholeness and move forward with increased self-worth; dignity Increased requests for their expertise from criminal justice and educational systems	Love, respect, empowerment	Awareness/ understanding of the issue Lack of funding support
Randall	501c3	Family relationship issues Employment support activities	Anecdotal personal transformation Renewed sense of hope	Collaboration with existing efforts	Funding

Earnest intervenes at the court level and provides peer to peer mentoring using those who have received long-term sentences (also known as "lifers"), while JoAnn has helped to establish a 4-year college for returning citizens that provides wrap around services to help facilitate the students' success. Lynnette provides life skills workshops, employment GED classes. Randall's ministry focuses on providing employment support activities and helping returning citizens improve their family relationship skills.

Perceived impact of direct ministry to formerly incarcerated persons. The aim of this research is descriptive and not an attempt to compare outcomes between other faith or nonfaith groups. Each congregational leader in this study reported perceptions of his or her ministry's impact, although mostly anecdotally, on the part of the people being served. For example,

Randall reported witnessing incidents of renewed sense of hope after focusing on helping Black

men reenter the workforce after incarceration:

> (We) give them support in terms of family relationship issues and also developing and
> assisting in development of job training opportunities. They have, with our assistance, a
> computer lab where they're learning interviewing skills. We're also participating in a
> clothing ministry where they'll have an interview and come in and get a free suit or
> clothes to go on the interview. We are also trying to integrate what the word (biblical
> scripture) says about self-esteem, what the word says about hope, and to many situations
> and many lives, that they have given up hope, and I think that's a specific job of the
> church which we have been able to do.

Cameron, a Presbyterian minister, touted increased participation and interest in a new

model of prison ministry and the development of a welcoming attitude among congregants in the

church because of their prison ministry, which includes entrepreneurial training, housing referrals

and a food pantry for returning citizens.

Earnest intervenes within the Department of Corrections and post release on behalf of

incarcerated persons and implements a peer-to-peer mentoring structure using "lifers" to produce

several anecdotal individual success stories regarding individuals who have gone through his

ministry and formed businesses post-incarceration:

> Charles, started 60 days out of prison while working at Chipotle, went down, filled out
> his business papers to start a landscaping business and got a check for 1000 dollars in 60
> days, and the thing is Chuck knows zero about landscaping. "Well what'd you pick it
> for?" He said, "Well, my mother's boyfriend had all the tools, I went out and got a book."
> Chuck, another returning citizen, is a salesman, so he started a t-shirt business. They're
> kind of more stylish than t-shirts, but it's called Arc Angel, and he's got Proverbs 16:28
> on it. And then we have Dwayne, he went to school as soon as he got out. He got
> somebody to pay for him to stay at a hotel for a week while he got trained to to become a
> substance abuse counselor while he was on the electronic monitoring bracelet, I still don't
> know how he did that.

JoAnn, who established a 4-year college for returning citizens with wrap around services

to help facilitate student success says: "I think that we've had some impact, we managed to do

this and we've left a model. You know, the activist Fannie Lou Hamer used to say 'leave big

footprints so the babies can follow behind' so this is a model to encourage someone else to follow, if nothing else."

Diane and Lynnette indicated that many returning citizens have been able to "achieve wholeness and move forward in their lives with increased self-worth and dignity" after participating in ministries providing life skills workshops, adult literacy/GED classes, employment prep and assistance in obtaining government benefits. The ministries have increased graduation rates and lowered recidivism while helping individuals obtain and sustain employment.

Other ministries, such as Deron's, provided church space for treatment and care, i.e. narcotics anonymous and assisting in locating transitional housing for returning citizens. Deron reported anecdotal stories of people going back to school or getting off drugs. Several of those served by Deron's outreach ministry have gone on to join his church and participate in other church ministries.

So, ministries which focus on the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated, have increased self-esteem, self-worth and dignity and helped individuals to achieve wholeness and go forward with their lives after incarceration. Some of these individuals have started businesses, returned to school and been able to kick addiction and re-offending. On other occasions, ministry to the incarcerated and returning citizens has helped to foster change on the congregational level, helping to make the church culture a more welcoming space and sparking more interest in prison ministry.

These interventions, however, do not occur in a vacuum. There are various processes which gives rise to the impact that occurs. In the next section we discuss strategies and tactics or

distinctive tools that help to deliver impact for ministries which focus on the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.

Strategies for direct ministry to formerly incarcerated persons. Leaders who focus on direct ministry to formerly incarcerated individuals use a variety of strategic approaches and distinctive tools or tactics:

Biblical perspective of love, respect and empowerment. Carin felt that successful work in addressing mass incarceration was a result of how her ministry treats the returning citizens with dignity and love. Her program allows testimonies in a prison-based school that provides GEDs. Several hardened inmates receive their GED proudly and with tears flowing. Carin stated:

> I try to mimic and emulate the love of Jesus. Love is a very powerful source. That kind of love has no fear. If you can talk to a man who is crazy in a cemetery like he's a human being, and instead of you letting the world say who he is, you have him say what his issue is, to let him know that's not who you are, let him know that he is human, it changes the dynamic.

African-Centered Christian approach. Other ministries intentionally employ African-Centered cultural strategies when carrying out congregational and ministry activities. Cameron's African-centered approach to addressing mass incarceration has resulted in more people in the congregation desiring to participate in prison ministry and where family members with incarcerated loved ones making the congregation a more welcoming and healing community. Cameron says that the "immediate success was tearing down the demonic wall of separation that mass incarceration has distanced those who are 'saved' from those who aren't. This was accomplished, he says:

> African centered Christianity is at the root of who we are as a church. So we're connecting our history and our humanity as African people directly to the history of people, history of the world as outlined in the Bible, but also connecting that document to other historical documents that, many of which, precede the history of the Bible. There are Principles of Maat, these ideas refer of balance and harmony and order and reciprocity, and tie that to the African principle proverb of Ubuntu, which says that, "I am because you are and you are because I am." We do make an effort to keep our ministries named for Swahili terms

and/or in names of tribal groups and it keeps a connection to our African selves and our African consciousness. The idea here, is not to make the person dependent on the church or the pastor, but to make them independent, so that you not only spread the Gospel, but you're spreading the Gospel and saying that this is the freedom it should give you. Salvation is freedom, emancipation from the systems of this world. Okay, so this ministry is about restoring these persons who had all of their freedoms taken from them for whatever period of time and helping them to restore that independence and freedom. So, those are where the principles and ideas of an African centered consciousness and an African centered Christianity take root in who we are and how we hope to execute this ministry.

Restorative conferencing circles. Pastor Diane uses the Restorative Conferencing Circle technique to achieve an 80 percent graduation rate, a job placement rate in the range of 60-70 percent and to keep recidivism to a really low 3 percent. Conferencing Circles is a restorative justice practice that brings both victims and offenders of crime together to discuss the harms and how to address responsibility, reparation and restoration of the offender to the community.

Collaboration and building networks. Several leaders attribute their successful outcomes to their work to establish relationships, build and attach themselves to networks or collaborate with existing efforts to address mass incarceration. Randall, for instance, is one example of utilizing networks to successfully create a renewed sense of hope within the congregation and in carrying out employment support or rebuilding family relationship activities:

> There are a lot of agencies that are already doing good work in dealing with the effects of mass incarceration, so the strategy that I have been pursuing is we don't have to reinvent the wheel. We have to search out those agencies that we find ourselves able to work with, and then come alongside and collaborate and support what they're already doing. That does two things: It makes the organization stronger, but it also gives us a readymade avenue into that area of ministry without starting from square one. So, the basic strategy that we are invoking here is collaborative efforts with existing efforts.

Peer to Peer leadership development processes. Earnest has witnessed several instances of personal transformation in his ministry. His process? He identifies leaders among incarcerated citizens and because of their lived experiences uses them to mentor others upon their release.

> I just identify the leaders, the strongest individuals and I challenge them, and then once I challenge them it becomes a peer-to-peer thing. I challenge them by going

into the prison, they'll all be in a room for five months and I'll say, "How many of you can do what I'm doing right now?" And like 4 or 5 will raise their hand, and I'll say, "Okay, the rest of you get out, 'cause I've never spent one day in prison, so I can teach you what I know, but I can't know what you know 'cause I've never spent a day in prison. You should realize that you can be better at this than me. Now, how many of you all want my spot?"

Barriers to direct ministry to formerly incarcerated persons. Ministry to the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated is not without discouragement and frustration. These leaders also encountered major barriers to initiating, implementing and expanding their efforts in this domain of ministry focus. These barriers included obstacles such as funding, population stigma, lack of awareness of the issue and trained staff who are sensitive to the problem.

JoAnn, stated:

The barriers have been the skepticism from funders, decision makers or others of not wanting to get involved or lack of faith that positive results could be achieved. We've heard all of that— "You can't do this." So sure, there have been many, many discouraging moments.

Pastor Lynnette shared:

Funding and just community awareness are really the two biggest obstacles. Most of the things I'm spending my time on are getting money and then just being out in the community, talking to people and trying to help them understand that the things they think about folks who have a criminal record, most of them really are not true.

Diane, added:

The greatest obstacles have been on the staffing side, that most people are not trained to do best practices in any way, shape or form. It's just not the way we're professionally trained, it's the way the village works, but it's not the way our people are trained to work with the village. So, we've had a lot of staff challenges, especially when people first start working with us because they just don't understand why we trust people or why certain people have a voice, when the staff certainly knows best, and we have followed that. So that's been the bigger issue. I think the other issue has been the issue of funding. We're trying to solve that now so that we kind of get off the 'project of the month club' with funding because we don't want to change who we are particularly just to apply for a grant, but that means there are grants we don't apply for now. So, we're no longer a large entity at all. So that's a change for us to get used to, just not having the ability to have permanent staff, so now everybody's got to do the work, everybody's doing everything, everyone is a consultant at this point and stuff like that. I think that that is a challenge because you can't develop staff when everybody's a consultant, and a lot of the entities here in Philly are

pretty much consultants for their staff, because of the funding cuts liked to have killed everybody and they weren't able to support their staff.

Summary: Direct Ministry to Formerly Incarcerated Persons

For those who provide direct ministry to the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated, there were both anecdotal and documented instances of impact among the clients served.

Hope has been renewed, businesses have been started and sustained, models have been created for others to use and expand upon, returning citizens have achieved wholeness and move forward in their lives with increased self-worth and dignity, gotten off drugs, joined the church and participated in the ministries themselves. Others have obtained jobs, gone back to school and/or left a life of crime behind.

Leaders accomplished these outcomes using a variety of strategies and tactics. The tactics included treating the formerly incarcerated as human beings using biblical principles of love, respect and empowerment; African-centered Christianity approaches; restorative conferencing circles; building networks rather than trying to "reinvent the wheel"; and by using unique leadership development approaches such as peer to peer processes.

Yet, leaders found that barriers are likely to accompany their ministry efforts. These obstacles included difficulty in obtaining scarce funding; apathy by decision-makers toward the problem resulting in stigmatization of the population and work; the lack of awareness of the problem; and inability to find trained staff with a sensitivity to the issue of mass incarceration.

I now turn to the next ministry focus area, which involves prevention and intervention activities among individuals, families and children.

Ministries to Address Collateral Damages of Mass Incarceration

Dealing with collateral damage—negative impacts on those close to the incarcerated is central to the work of several of the participants in this study. Their strategies, the impacts of their work and the barriers to their efforts are considered in this section.

Ministries with individuals, families and children: Intervention and prevention. High rates of mass incarceration leave individuals, families and children suffering from the collateral damage of financial burden, increased delinquency and lower academic performance in schools. Three urban religious leaders have ministries that focused primarily on these indirect collateral damages and their effect on youth (see Table 4.6).

Matthew administered a number of mentoring models to youth through his promotion of Healing Communities, a concept that creates networks within churches to establish them as "stations of hope" for returning citizens, their families and for victims. Pastor Mike provided mentoring and toys, educational supplies and food to youth in an impoverished urban neighborhood "to help ease the strain and struggle of the stigma of having a parent locked up." Tamara is a staff minister who leads a 501c3 nonprofit connected to a small Baptist congregation. The congregation-affiliated ministry conducted educational enrichment and socio-emotional development through provision of afterschool programs as well as workforce development and parenting/relationship augmentation.

Table 4.6

Results for Ministries Primarily Addressing Collateral Damage From Mass Incarceration

Leader	Org. Structure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
Matthew	Congregation/ CDC	Mentoring Models Healing Communities Monitor Sentencing	Anecdotal Personal success stories Able to turn lives around for youth	Healthy church Compassion and care Research Afrocentric biblical worldview	Money Infrastructure (administration) Resistance to faith/church teachings or perspective
Mike	Congregation/ Nonprofit	Mentoring Tutoring Provide resources to returning citizens and their families	Ease strain and struggle regarding stigma of parent being locked up	Philosophy that must outwork others Social Responsibility Corporate exemplars such as Starbucks, Marriott, Disney Management	Politics Funding Staffing Organizational capacity
Tamara	501c3	Education enrichment Socio-emotional development Delinquency prevention Parental support for those with juveniles in criminal justice system Workforce development	Educational programs outperform state peers Test scores raised Job placement and retention success Anecdotal parent comments	Advanced training and experience in cultural competence Evidence based practices and community impact Strong rapport with those served Tangible outcomes Top of the line marketing and financial systems	Racism Low Funder empathy/expect ations/concern for the demographic served System withholds access to information; coopt models 7 System concern with outputs rather transformation Bias in assessment decisions

Perceived impact of Ministries to address collateral damages. Perceived impact refers to the people who are being changed during the time frame of the intervention and what this change looks like or consists of. Because of the methodology of this study, I cannot address whether the change, if any, resulted from the effort of the ministry or the program administered. Tamara's ministry addresses mass incarceration through prevention and intervention activities. She observed elementary school students' standardized and other test scores rise by first increasing confidence and efficacy in participants, which then led to love of learning Tamara said:

> I think that transforming children from believing that they are not learners to seeing themselves as learners and as achievers, I would say that's transformation. Coming into the program, they see themselves there to just be entertained or really to destruct or to disconnect from the educational process and as if they're being babysat. And for some kids, that's what they see when they start because they've already decided that they can't perform school wise. However, by the time we get done with them, hopefully, they see themselves as learners, which depends on the process and not just passive, 'here let me get enough homework done and get her off my back or come just to eat or to play.'

Social-emotional issues possibly related to anger, racism or other residuals of mass incarceration impede the educational process as well. Tamara spoke of the impact achieved by addressing these emotional issues resulting in children who have been prepared to learn:

> When we're addressing the academic piece, we have to continually invest in social-emotional. So, we're helping kids with decision-making, things like that, because it just seems like very minor things set our little kids off, and their management of anger is probably one of the biggest challenges that we're seeing in terms of getting them ready to learn. They come in the door arguing and fighting. And so, again, with prison and what it takes to cope, I would conjecture that for those who have been around previously incarcerated individuals, they are imitating what they see at home, the community or media and it has given them challenges in the classroom, which attempts to get them on a spiral to another route. And that is compounded when they see racism, or they experience racism on the part of a teacher. They're even more likely to adopt that false bravado, prison-like mentality when it seems like they just don't fit in or they're not accepted by the schools and the White structures that sometimes act as if their very being is something that is abnormal.

Strategies for Ministries to address collateral damages. Impact is a result of agents and processes, unique strategies or methods that produce change. Ministries that address the collateral

or indirect consequences of mass incarceration also utilized an Afrocentric biblical worldview and/or culturally relevant pedagogy/programming. These leaders also stressed cutting edge research and evidence-based practices, organizational excellence and social responsibility in the mode of Starbucks/Marriott/Disney management experience.

Organizational strength and good accountability systems. Pastor Matthew, a former prison inmate, noted:

> The first principle is a healthy church, because if your church is not healthy, then it's going to be hard (to succeed). When I say healthy, I mean that it's vision driven, clear on its mission, has a solid leadership structure and development, good accountability systems, all of these. And I'm saying this out of success of my early models.

Tamara further pointed out the critical need for organizational health and accountability for operating ministry in the current socio-political environment:

> I went and increased my own educational capacity, so that I'm able to figure out the cutting edge of what it is going to take to move the work forward. Also, I have put structures together to make sure that staff has the capacity to carry out the work and monitor their own effectiveness to be able to communicate effectively. And, again, just, keeping up with the literature, what the research is saying, making sure that we are competent at what we do, and that we outperform our peers. And so that really bridges the gap to be in demand by the funders. And secondly, making sure that once our programming was at the exemplar level, we went back and updated our financial, marketing and other systems to top of the line.

> Lastly, our vision and mission is to improve specific outcomes, and so we're intentionally culturally relevant. And making sure that outcomes align with our vision is non-negotiable.

Learning from other organizations. Pastor Mike's strategy has been to learn from and mirror other successful organizations:

> I have a customer service background, so we implemented that. We implemented principles from the Marriott way. We implemented principles from the Starbucks experience. I take my team to organizations to learn directly from those organizations. I've sent people to the Disney Management Experience to learn principles from other organizations to make us a better organization. We're not large by far, and we didn't have to be, but we just had to be excellent.

Working harder than hard. Pastor Mike also instilled in his ministry the need to outwork

others. That organizational mentality is translated into working longer hours or "going the extra

step that others may not go in providing customer service.

Building coalitions and networks. "And the next thing is building coalitions," said Pastor

Matthew. Establishing networks are critical not only for knowledge and leveraging access into

opportunity, but also make a difference in the survival and effectiveness of the ministry to

individuals, families and children. Matthew, who maintained a relationship with colleges, juvenile

courts and social service agencies, adds: "If you are limited in your ability to build a network, it's

always going to affect how far you can go and how much you can build and how big of an effect

you can have."

African-centered principles. Some leaders utilized African-centered principles as a

framework for ministry and feel that it creates a bond with Black participants, that may be lacking

in programs run by mainstream organizations. Tamara utilized a culturally relevant pedagogical

process infused with racial socialization theory and other African-centered principles such as

communalism or Ubuntu (I Am Because We Are) that stress "ways to cope within this racist

society that we have to function within."

Tamara further described how her implementation of African-centered principles such as

communalism, improvisation, stability, and security create bonding among the program

participants:

> Those kind of things (communalism) are just natural and almost innate in the way we do
> everything here and that sense of caring is what the children connect with. That sense of
> improvisation, where you can feel free to be creative and how you come at answers and
> you can do stuff in groups and it's not an individual competition. Those things create a
> bond and also the importance of staff being there, being dependable. People are not going
> to bond with you if they don't see you as being dependable and reliable. If you're
> supposed to be there when those kids arrive, we better be there ready for them. If they're
> supposed to have a party where there is a presentation, then they can see we're definitely

gonna' prep and practice. If there's a schedule, then they can come and expect that we've got them. They know that they won't come in and homework table is postponed until 6:00 because this staff member over here is fumbling and another over there didn't have their lesson plan ready. That sense of stability and knowing what's going to happen and having folks that have their best interest at heart, so they don't have to worry about it themselves. And we don't allow bullying or kids to pick on anybody, we make sure that they're safe and feel secure. All of that builds bonds.

These strategies and principles together provide the means by which clergy can address the collateral damage of mass incarceration; but there are barriers confronting such efforts that the participants in this studied identified as well.

Barriers for Ministries to address collateral damages. Funding, along with administrative and staffing capacity, remained barriers in attempting to address the collateral harms caused by mass incarceration. Leaders also reported racism and funders' low empathy or expectations for the demographic served as impeding their efforts. In addition, it was perceived that potential funders withhold access to information and that larger White-run agencies were likely to coopt, appropriate or duplicate models or processes utilized by Black leaders. A final and barrier here was bias in assessments, what Tamara called "White theoretical frameworks shoved down the throats of Black and Brown kids with failure to account for variance in contexts."

Racism. Tamara remarked:

Basically, everybody has said that this is a group that's not reachable and that you can't do anything with them. And so when you start having impact and reaching solid outcomes, traditional power structures don't like it. So one thing that people have tried to do is impede our promotion. They keep us a secret. If you're doing good work, usually people give you a platform to talk about it, so that other people can know - funders, clients, things like that. We seldom get a platform. So that's one thing that I find that still is a barrier. Also, majority people typically know information about where opportunities are for growth and funding, and they just keep it secret, so that we're not privy. So we often play from behind as systems withhold information and try to make us look incompetent to clients. Every opportunity to sabotage, it's been thrown at us.

Finally, Tamara reflected:

If sabotage or failure to acknowledge us doesn't work, systems such as education or criminal justice try to steal our models and duplicate them. We've had that happen in this

community more than once, and yet they didn't get the same outcomes. And then when they don't, they try to sow seeds of discord to try to undermine my authority and my competence. So you have all of those games. If there's a game to be played, they'll try it.

Capacity. Pastor Mike said:

Political power, number one. That's been one of the problems we have because with every inner city political cycle, the mayor, governor, state reps, they all want to be able to put their hands on certain things, and so if you don't swing politically one way or another, they throw road blocks in front of you. That's the reality that I live in, number one.

Two, funding is a major hindrance. We try to be a financially or fiscally responsible ministry, so funding. I mean, we have to continue to raise funds and beg for finances to carry out the work that we are trying to do.

Number three, we don't have enough hands to carry out the work that we're doing, because you never have enough volunteers. We're mostly volunteer-driven. We do have some people on stipends, on small salaries, but not enough for you to actually live on, so it's definitely a supplement to something else that you're doing.

And finally, I will tell you that there were federal contracts that we could have gotten but because we had not previously managed that big of a budget, we didn't end up being able to actually receive it after we were awarded because we had not had the experience with it, so we had to have a fiduciary to be involved, which we didn't do.

White normativity. Tamara stated:

Funders often make decisions about faith-based services based on assessments that are rooted in racial identity. Put another way, these decisions are often affected by the racial identities of the decision makers. The consequence is that what gets funded is what is comfortable for White folks and so, cultural programs seldom are rated as evidence-based practices. Instead White evidence-based practices are being shoved down Black and Brown kids' throats. These programs seldom work for a Black context without being deconstructed to see what elements actually work for children of color.

Fiscal and personal responsibility, theological fidelity. Dr. Matthew viewed strict fiscal

compliance requirements on behalf of funders, funder resistance to his theological principles, and

what he sees as a lack of commitment or willingness on behalf of program participants to become

empowered as barriers in carrying out the work.

See, it costs me a lot of money to build the administrative infrastructure, and that was one the dilemmas, because we're pastors, we're shepherds and our members love people, so we figure we're doing the work, that's enough. No, that's not enough. You've got to do everything according to those administrative requirements and responsibilities and that's

as important to the funder than the outcome. So that becomes one barrier. And so, resources are always a barrier, the rhetoric is a barrier, but sometimes the client participation becomes a barrier, because they don't realize these are programs to create a lifestyle. They are programs for empowerment. I believe social service models and faith-based models are broken models because they create too much dependency. I believe we need to move more toward an independent model where people are forced to be more responsible. The final barrier is that the term faith-based, has become more political rhetoric than actual reality. Everybody wants to have faith-based, but how serious are they? Right now, we're trying to get the opportunity to bring our kids out for bible study, and we're getting push back and resistance. So, I told them, I said 'you don't want faith-based, you don't want the church. You want our help and our support. When you want us, you're gonna' accept our Jesus. Not proselytizing you, but that's who we are walking in the door. Nobody else has to deny who they are when they walk in the door except Christians

On remaining faithful to one's theology, Pastor Mike agreed with Matthew: "Being a religious based organization, there are certain beliefs that we won't back away from, and so because of that, funding guidelines have been an issue for us."

Summary of Ministries primarily addressing collateral damages. Leaders who focus primarily on the indirect collateral damages of mass incarceration and their effect on youth provided mentoring, educational enrichment, socio-economic development and food to young students. They incorporated social science (e.g., evidence-based) interventions and organizational leadership frameworks to enhance the impact of their ministry focus. They also used cultural affirmation to help children develop a love of learning by feeding them, reducing their anger and providing stability. These ministries aimed to develop solid leadership structure, good financial and other accountability practices. They also built strong networks and collaborations. Yet, like all ministries, those who address the collateral damages of mass incarceration faced obstacles, including racism, adequate funding and access to information that larger White-run agencies are likely to have.

Consciousness-Raising in Congregation and Community: Movement Building

Consciousness-raising has to do with raising awareness of the harmful impact of mass incarceration on the African American family, church and community. Three pastors—Levi, Rhonda and Rennard—operated ministries with a primary focus on consciousness-raising. Levi stressed a need to balance moral appeal with community and congregational safety and thus, saw a need to address mass incarceration via engagement with families due to the Church's lack of capacity or expertise in dealing directly with the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated. Rhonda and Rennard had direct experience with the criminal justice system.

Table 4.7

Results for Ministries Primarily Focused on Consciousness-Raising in Congregation and Community

Leader	Org. Structure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
Levi	501c3	Training members how to educate and raise awareness Train members on new models of prison ministry Support children of incarcerated parents through partnership with Angel Tree	Personal Transformation and enrichment	Teach bible from Afrocentric perspective as addressed to those on the margins	Traditionalism and institutionalization of the Black Church
Rhonda	nonprofit	Guidance/informing public and faith community about resources available to families and returning citizens Building coalitions to discuss engagement on issues of social justice	Personal gratification for helping someone	Organic method of networking Keep it Real	Population Stigma (people don't view the incarcerated as human beings)

Leader	Org. Structure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
Rennard	501c3	Collaborate in movement on the ground to bring information and speak out Money management classes Give aways	No data	Collaboration & stay outside any boxes Include formerly incarcerated or family members of incarcerated on board of directors	Lack of capacity, Funding, & training Lack of board involvement

Perceived Impact of consciousness-raising in congregation and community. Impact in consciousness-raising was primarily based upon anecdotal examples of attitudinal changes of congregation or community members as well as the study participants themselves.

Levi trained members how to raise consciousness about mass incarceration both within the congregation and in the community at large. He observed changes in the attitudes of members as well as in his own views and feelings on mass incarceration.

After attending some of Levi's workshops, attendees had reportedly begun to "see their incarcerated family members in a different light and to address their situation differently," he says. Family members began to write them letters, send birthday cards and to develop a new sense of hope, as measured by pre and post surveys. Additionally, his work changed the way they began to see incarceration. A prison fellowship program that provides children of the incarcerated with gifts from their parents caused relatives to perceive that their parent's incarceration "wasn't all negative, and it wasn't all bad because my parent was incarcerated," adds Levi. Interestingly, Levi also describes his own change in perspective as "personal enrichment from overcoming the negative mindset of the Church towards the marginalized such as incarcerated or returning citizens":

> I think that I didn't understand how institutionalized, structured, and blinded the local church was to ministering to people in the margins. I didn't realize how threatening and

how uncomfortable it was. So, I think that that's the downside. The upside of it is the personal transformation and enrichment that I went through and others went through. And then a leader has to make a decision. Am I going to go with the institutional mindset and protect that, or am I going to be transformed and follow that? If you stay with the institution, the pain, the personal pain might be minimized to a degree, but it's still hurting somebody. And really, it's hurting you. You just don't know it or don't feel it maybe as acutely as somebody else. But if you go the other way in that personal transformation, it's painful for the individual that decides to walk down that road, including you. I think that's the real value in that. And is that important enough to us? Is it important to us? Is it important enough for us to pay that price?

Pastor Rennard, who collaborates with other social justice movements on the ground to bring information and speak out on matters of injustice, also viewed impact in terms of a steadfast commitment which he understands as personal affirmation for his work.

My reputation in the community is that I'm loud and I speak my mind, but I don't have any blemishes on my record, so my character speaks for itself. It's a Godly character. I'm bold about what I say. I'm about what I believe in. I'm unapologetic in my involvement once I get involved with it. I will not back down and you're not going to intimidate me. If I believe it, I'm pushing forward with it. You're going to get that kind of energy every time you're with me.

Rhonda also identified impact in terms of personal affirmation of her work. She provides information and guidance to the public and faith community about resources available to families and returning citizens and helps to "build coalitions to discuss engagement on issues of social justice." Rhonda's "joy" was in pointing others in the right direction or connecting people (one person at a time) with others that can provide assistance in putting them on the right road.

That to me feels good, because that means I've touched them or the other thing I try to help people with is the second chance idea that says, "okay, just because something happened or that person is incarcerated doesn't mean that they are a person that doesn't deserve a second chance." I've done some things in terms of education and made people more sympathetic to the issue, even our people, cause we're kind of hardcore sometimes. Just getting the congregation to understand that you don't look at people like that. They're people, they're just like you, and okay, if they made a mistake they probably didn't or may not have deserved what they got because we know the system is 100 times harsher on us than it is on other cultures. So, I look at success one person at a time.

For leaders who focused on consciousness-raising in congregations and the community, impact was seen in the context of being able to change attitudes. Congregational members have

begun to view incarcerated family members with more empathy and see mass incarceration as something "not all negative" but something that needs to be addressed rather than ignored. Leaders themselves have even seen their own attitudes transformed from the personal enrichment that comes from successfully challenging the Church's negative mindset towards mass incarceration or appreciation for their work or character.

Strategies for consciousness-raising in congregation and community. The strategies that drive transformation for this ministry focus, according to the respondents were an Afrocentric approach to the ministry, building networks organically, and purposely operating outside practical or philosophical boxes:

Afrocentric approach for consciousness-raising in congregation and community. The urban leaders who engage primarily in conscious raising in congregation and communities made their case from a perspective that views the bible as an Afrocentric book addressed to politically, socially and economically oppressed people or those on the margins. An example is Pastor Levi who taught the bible from the African perspective because those returning from prison are likely to have this perspective:

> I understood the Bible as an Afro-centric book. And so to teach the Bible from the margins and from that Afro-centric perspective and talk about the African presence in scripture and its influence and to look at Christian history from an Afro-centric perspective rather than the Euro-centric perspective, that has been very powerful. So, what blew everybody's mind in church was that the brothers coming out of the prison already had been exposed to that stuff. Now I have a Bible study on Wednesday nights at the barbershop. And the brothers that come to the barbershop, they ain't going to nobody's church. But, man, we have anywhere from 30 to 45 guys in that barber shop every week. And I'm telling you, man, those brothers in that barbershop are smarter when it comes to the Bible and biblical history.

Urban religious leaders who focus on consciousness-raising also approached their work Through other strategies including networking, operating "outside the box," and drawing on ex-prisoners' knowledge and experience.

Building networks organically using authenticity. Rhonda used an organic advocacy method where she connects with individuals "one at a time," she stated. She felt that, for her, it is her "authentic" appeal that helps to get participants to become engaged and then moving in a direction that's positive as she connects them to others who can provide additional assistance. Rhonda said:

> What works for me is the actual connection with people, literally. Like being real, telling them who I am and connecting with people who can move them in a positive direction in their life one at a time. I'm just organic because I think when people get locked up, people who get arrested and people in the system, they need realness. If I'm not real I can't help you, I can't help me. I'm just a down to earth girl from the hood.

And these urban religious leaders . . .

Purposely operate outside any practical or philosophical boxes. Pastor Rennard is one who steadfastly refused to be limited or boxed in philosophically or theologically in the way he approaches consciousness raising: "I guess I'm a renegade in that case, and maybe that's not a good thing, but that's what I am," he says.

Utilize experience of formerly incarcerated. In an effort to add capacity in his organization, Rennard also mandates that board members be returning citizens themselves or be a family member of someone incarcerated or previously incarcerated.

Barriers to consciousness-raising in congregation and community. Major barriers to impacting individuals, congregations and communities for this group included a lack of capacity in the form of funding, trained staff and board involvement as well as the resistance that comes from the stigmatization of incarcerated persons by society buoyed by an institutionalized

historical Black church stuck in traditions. Leaders found that both their work and those whom

they serve are often seen as not worthy of the investment of time and resources.

    Resistance. Levi stated that the very idea of working with incarcerated people triggers

resistance from the Church in particular:

> I think the barriers and the obstacles arise from the local church as a whole, and the Black
> church specifically. I think that we have become so institutionalized and that our structures
> and things like that, that it's very limiting. And when you began to move into any
> ministry, but especially ministering to the incarcerated, that's such a paradigm shift. I
> think it's worth it, but there's a risk involved.

    Stigmatization and devaluation by the Black community. Population stigma by other

African Americans was also a major obstacle not only for her work, but for returning citizens of

color, who often find "less empathy among their own community than from White folks." The

formerly incarcerated are often devalued personally, perceived as undeserving of basic needs such

as food, housing or education and find that getting a job with a criminal record to be extremely

difficult, according to Rhonda.

> So, to me, the barrier is the prejudice that the society has about people who are either
> incarcerated, who have went through the system, who have any kind of blemish on them,
> to say I'm better than them. They made a mistake and it's not just a mistake, it's a crime.
> The barrier is people's suspicion, the barrier is the prejudice of people, and that prejudice
> leads to lack of opportunity. That makes me angry because it's so unfair, it's so unjust.
> Once you can get through that, then you can move the needle, but you first gotta get
> through, and that's where the education comes in, hoping to affect somebody's empathy.

    Lack of capacity and resources. Yet, even in ministries that focus on consciousness-

raising, lack of financial resources and talent was also a barrier. Rennard bemoans a lack of

capacity:

> When you don't have capacity, you don't have any funding. So that's one of the barriers,
> the lack of being able to build the capacity that we need, the lack of board involvement
> and understanding the mission of our Ministry. It makes no sense for you just to be on the
> board and you don't really understand what the mission is. Not having the exposure to do
> what we need to do, and I probably could say, that there's some doors of training that I
> could probably use, and the lack of funding would prevent me from getting that. I'm open

for partnership, I'm open for collaboration and I'm always open to learn. I think those are the basic barriers that we face.

Summary of consciousness-raising in congregation and community. Leaders who focus on consciousness-raising used Afrocentric approaches, purposely avoided practical and philosophical boxes, built organic networks to challenge the negative mindset towards mass incarceration in their congregations and in society and also utilized the formerly incarcerated or their family members to help guide their organizations. Their efforts were routinely impeded by a lack of financial resources, trained staff and board involvement as well as the resistance that comes from the stigmatization of incarcerated persons by society and an institutionalized Black church still stuck in old worship traditions. Leaders reported that they found society, in general, to be skeptical that change or impact can realistically take place or that returning citizens are worth the time and resources necessary to redeem them.

Policy Change Activities: Addressing the Injustice of Mass Incarceration

Three pastors used policy change activities as a primary ministry focus to address the harms of mass incarceration (Table 4.8). Pastor Washington, challenged institutional power by issuing calls for legislative change and criminal justice reform while building sacred spaces in the community to "adjudicate conflict before it gets to the police level."

Christine is a staff minister who leads a ministry that divests church investments from companies that do business with private prisons, supported businesses that hire returning citizens and sponsored forums and educational programs related to changing policies to address the harms of mass incarceration.

Donald pastors a congregation and also led a group of ministers that advocate for programs on the local, county and state level that lead to successful transition and re-integration

of returning citizens. This includes promotion of reentry programs and initiatives such as Ban the Box to governmental systems.

Perceived Impact of policy change activities. What behavioral change has been observed by those who focus on policy change activities?

Tangible support in the form of financial resources. Donald has seen several individuals in the community who have been so impressed by their work that they have written unsolicited checks to help further the ministry. In one case, the donation exceeded $10,000. His ministry had several other examples of people in the community that said "We see the work that you're doing, we want you to use that money to bless you. I really believe in when you do good and when you seek to really be a blessing, God will send the help that you need so that you can be an even bigger blessing," he exclaimed.

Table 4.8

Policy Change Activities

Leader	Org. ructure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
Donald	Congregation	Promote re-entry Support programs on the county, local, and state level that support successful transition Preventing incarceration Letter writing Ban the Box	Developed donors	Preaching and advocacy from a liberation theological context/ perspective	Staff Finances Lack of political will
Washington	Congregation	Challenge/ advocate legislature for policy change Public space for social justice organization Resource for returning citizens; housing and employment Restorative justice — build sacred space to adjudicate conflict in	Church increasingly seen as safe space and call for help when justice issues need addressed	Afrocentric Identity	Apathy Financial Resources

Leader	Org. ructure	Primary Ministry Activities	Reported Impact	Strategies	Barriers
		the community before it gets to police level			
Christine		Divesting investments from companies that do business with private prisons Supporting businesses who hire returning citizens Sponsor forums/ educational classes and programs related to mass incarceration	Effect on church investment/ divestment policies Quadruple attendance at bible study	Position mass incarceration under Christian Education with theological focus of Jesus as social activist Make the ministry the outcome of the bible study	Racism/ Classism within congregation

Safe space for prophetic work and community dialog. Washington observed his church become a safe place and he is one of the first persons people call for help when a justice issue needed to be addressed. He commented:

> In having Black Lives Matter, other social justice organizations see our church as a safe place, and a place where prophetic work and dialog are welcome, that is something I'm really proud of. I can say without contradiction that there is no other church in northwestern Indiana where a Black Lives Matter group convenes. And I know that they don't feel comfortable calling any other church. They are usually not welcome.

Congregational policy and program change. Christine's ministry has had a reported positive effect on church investment/divestment policies while attendance at bible study has quadrupled during the ministry. "We had a whopping 43 people who are involved in this, which is almost four times the number of people that normally take Bible classes. They're now on our mailing list, and we have a Google group, and they're all still interested, and I always let them know about various things that are going on in the community, so that they can attend them, and so forth," she says.

In addition, other policies and programming have begun to take off as a result of Christine's work on mass incarceration. The congregation, which has a sizable endowment fund,

began divesting from private prisons and has started to compile a list of companies that hire and train returning citizens.

Strategies of policy change activities. Policy change ministries were able to attract tangible financial support, create safe spaces for the maligned work of social justice and change congregational programs and policies. Leaders with a policy change ministry focus stressed an Afrocentric identity, a theological focus that presents Jesus as a social activist and preached from a liberation theology or perspective of empowerment in a social context of racial and economic injustice.

Afrocentric identity. Just as leaders who focused on formerly incarcerated persons or consciousness-raising, Pastor Washington, is "unapologetically Black" and utilized Afrocentric ministry strategies in policy change activities. This meant, for him, disengaging from European and mainstream American culture while advocating African cultural aspects, such as the extended family and community as central to the experience of being human, rather than the nuclear family.

> I'm serious about identity and being an African that lands in America. So, here's what my challenge is: What does liberation look like for us as a people of African ancestry living in America if we buy into the American system, if we don't view ourselves as a separate people who have our own culture? Then in many ways we end up perpetuating the same thing that we are fighting against. And so, what I would say makes me unique is that I see myself as a representative of a separate people in America, much like Chinese-Americans, Japanese-Americans, Polish-Americans, etc. I love this country, but I'm an African. And so, that then allows me to teach and inculcate some principles that are African that are not European that speak to the network of family that is just not a nuclear family—husband, wife, children—that it is the entire community. And so, for me that's what makes me unique.

Liberation theology and social media. Pastor Donald helped congregants and others to understand cultural conditions by using Liberation Theology. Teaching and preaching the struggle of oppressed people to members through Black history and literature as well as social media also served as an effective ministry strategy to help foster policy change. Donald communicated by "meeting people where they are" or understanding the social context in which Black people

currently live and by "understanding the language of the oppressed" in the mold of the ancestral

Black leaders:

> It's important to know the struggle of our people, understanding politics, understanding sociology, understanding our literary history since we began to understand the language of the oppressed, the language of those who are suffering, how do you utilize literature to create the possibilities for an even better world. Richard Wright did that beautifully, Ralph Ellison did, Toni Morrison does that. Each book has already kind of done the work to help to explain and understand what's going on in our society and what we can do better to help improve our society. And then, it's also important to utilize all forms of communication. Social media is really important. That's how I say connected to a lot of people today, on Facebook, Twitter, Periscope, I mean there's so many ways that we have to stay connected to people and I try to do as much as I can to utilize those various forms of media to stay connected and to spread that message.

Blending social justice with Christian education. Those performing social justice work

don't always understand the theological underpinnings of the work and those who study the bible

don't always relate the bible with social justice, Christine's approach was to intentionally wed

social justice ministry with Christian education efforts. She accomplished this by including people

directly impacted by mass incarceration and utilizing their perspective in her Bible Study classes

that connect spirituality with real life justice issues. Christine's articulated her perspective:

> I think what makes it unique is that so many people are confused in so many churches about how to bring these two elements together. And in many churches, the overriding belief is that we are in this world, but we're not of it. We're on our way to heaven, and we're not going to get caught up in this stuff down here. We're trying to survive until we go to be with Jesus. Okay? But there's another element that tries to bring those two together. I really think that Dr. Martin Luther King brought it together. So, it's interesting, but I think that's what made ours unique is we intentionally did reflection and action and did it throughout the whole course.

Barriers to policy change activities. Leaders who focus on policy change activities also

faced limited capacity in the form of financial and human resources. Additional barriers included

congregational racism and classism, apathy and lack of political will.

Lack of capacity/apathy. Donald remarked about his struggle with personnel power

shortages as a result of the toll that social justice ministry takes on volunteers. Finances seemed to

be unable to keep pace with the scope of necessary activities and required capital to accomplish

the work. And the current political climate indicate apathy towards poor people or, at best, the

lack of political will to implement or expand his work, he explained:

> Unfortunately, even in the church you have the same group of people who are trying to do everything and so one of the obstacles is burnout and fatigue, and then there's volunteers, experience and having to always try to encourage and inspire others to believe that they actually can do more to help other people. Of course, finances are always a barrier because you can do some things, but you realize you can do so much more if you had more resources. And unfortunately, we live in a society now - and even Dr. King experienced this when he was trying to get antipoverty legislation passed through Johnson's administration. The country didn't have the stomach for it then, and unfortunately as a country we don't really tend to have a stomach for poor people now. Policies sometimes speak to the middle class, but they've gotten away from speaking to issues impacting poor people, and so I think part of it is because the nation doesn't have much of a will to help poor people. Unfortunately, somehow, we've interpreted what Jesus said about poor people, always being among us as complacency, to mean that we don't have to do anything about it, no matter what we do it ain't gonna help because they'll always be.

Congregational racism and classism. Two leaders of multicultural and socioeconomically

diverse congregations also acknowledged the occasional collision of various political and

theological perspectives which seem to emanate from classism and perceptions of racism, even

within a congregation performing social justice work.

Summary of policy change activities. Pastors who focus on policy change reported

impact both in their congregations as well as in the community. Among these positive effects

were the increased financial support for the ministry and programming, perception of the church

and ministry as a safe space for prophetic work and experiencing improved results on

congregational policy changes and programming.

Impact was achieved by using less common ministry strategies and methods such as

Afrocentric identity, theology with a liberation orientation and by marrying Christian education

with social justice emphases. Yet, these ministries faced various obstacles, which impede the

implementation of their work. These include the lack of financial resources, apathy toward the poor or insufficient political will and the existence of racism or classism.

Conclusion

This analysis indicates that, against a backdrop of racism, poverty, ostracism and dehumanization or loss of dignity, religious leaders of small urban churches attempted to impact lives by addressing mass incarceration with a ministry focus in four primary areas with occasional overlap between the areas: first, direct ministry to incarcerated or previously incarcerated persons and also activities related to indirect or collateral damage of mass incarceration including, second, prevention and intervention activities for children and families; third, consciousness raising in congregations and the community; and fourth, policy change activities.

These ministries operated holistically rather than being confined only to a single "spiritual" response to the harms of the U.S. War on Drugs. For instance, several leaders described what they believe are less common theological or cultural orientations such as Afrocentric/African-centered; Communicating in the language of the oppressed which includes Preaching Liberation Theology or teaching by meeting people "where they are"; and Holistic or wraparound philosophies. Others utilized social science, such as evidence-based and culturally relevant programming.

When these theologies, cultural practices and spirituality, of course, are married together with the social services provided, it produced a bond or cultural connection in a racially hostile world. This bonding leads to engagement, which in turn allowed the participants to be helped. The clients then accepted intervention on a voluntary rather than on a mandated basis.

Afrocentricism stresses communalism—restoration or connection to a community —where self-improvement is measured against oneself rather than competing against others as in

the individualism prevalent in today's broader society. These theologies and cultural processes also stress improvisation, safe environments, stability, encouragement and positive identity that helped individuals believe that achievement and success are possible.

Has there been impact or evidence of successful outcomes in addressing mass incarceration?

According to participants, ministries, which focus on the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated, have increased self-esteem, self-worth and dignity and helped individuals to achieve wholeness and go forward with their lives after incarceration. Some of these individuals have started businesses, returned to school and been able to kick addiction and re-offending. On other occasions, ministry to the incarcerated and returning citizens has helped to foster change on the congregational level, helping to make the church culture a more welcoming space and sparking more interest in prison ministry.

Leaders whose ministry focus is directed towards children, individuals and families described their impact as experiencing documented increases in standardized and other test scores. These results are achieved, they concluded, by first increasing confidence and efficacy in participants, which then leads to love of learning.

Leaders who are involved with consciousness-raising of the harmful impact of mass incarceration noted changes in the attitudes of congregation members as well as in their own views and feelings on mass incarceration. These pastors emphasized Afrocentric approaches and avoided practical and philosophical boxes while building organic networks.

Pastors who focus on policy change touted increased financial support for the ministry and programming, the perception of the church and ministry as a safe space for prophetic work and experienced positive effects on congregational policy changes and programming.

Chapter V: Discussion of the Study

> The genius of our Black foremothers and forefathers was . . . to equip Black folk with cultural armor to beat back the demons of hopelessness, meaninglessness, and lovelessness.
>
> —Cornel West

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret and discuss the research findings. Here, I first briefly discuss the purpose and methods used in this study. Key findings as detailed in Chapter IV are then reviewed. Next the implications for theory, practice and research are considered followed by presentation of the study limitations. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the contributions this study makes to research on ethical leadership as well as next steps in future research.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the work of Black urban religious leaders of small (under 1,500 members) congregations as they address the collateral damage of mass incarceration such as poverty, unemployment, delinquency, educational disparities and other social and economic woes. The Black Church, according to some, is "dead;" (Glaude, 2010), that is, it has outlived its intended purpose or operates in a state of declining significance, particularly as a relevant resource to those who live on the margins of society (A. E. Johnson, 2014). Therefore, my goal at the outset of this research process was to explore whether the Black Church, the small urban church in particular, is "alive" If making meaningful and practical difference in the lives of Black individuals, children and families exposed to the harms of mass incarceration is an indicator of vitality, then the current study shows that, unlike Glaude's assertion, there are indeed isolated signs of Church life. Thus, the relevant question becomes: How does the Black Church's leadership go about combatting the harmful effects of the prison industrial system's massive incarceration of Black men and women?

This research explored the complexities and practices of urban religious leaders who operate at ground zero of the collateral damage of mass incarceration and highlights the leadership of a few of the many small urban congregations that are taking the issue of mass incarceration head on. A specific focus of the study was the role and strategies of the Black Church in its urban, post-mass incarceration context as it examines its leadership in order to learn their best practices in addressing the present day political, economic and social consequences of mass incarceration, an issue that elected officials, even if capable, are unlikely to adequately address.

A blended critical ethnographic/phenomenological approach utilizing narrative analysis was used with a criterion-based sample of Black pastors and ministry leaders ages 38 to 71 (N=17), recruited from advocacy organizations who are addressing mass incarceration throughout the United States. The results of this qualitative research were derived from in-depth interviews I conducted to examine the approaches of 17 religious leaders at small (under 1,500 members) urban congregations in the United States as they addressed direct and indirect impact of mass incarceration on individuals, children, families and communities of color. Figure 5.1 diagrams the interplay of impacts and context.

Figure 5.1. Responding to harms of mass incarceration.

Key Findings

Specifically, my primary research question was: How is the Church addressing the impact

of mass incarceration's effects on the lives of Black individuals, families, children and

communities? This study was also shaped by a closely related secondary question: What

strategies, methods or tasks do Church leaders utilize to directly or indirectly address the

collateral damage of mass incarceration in urban settings?

The results were consistent with the Black Church's tradition of social activism

(Billingsley, 1999; Chaves, 2004) during periods of severe and sustained crisis where leadership

and sufficient resources are available. This work, which addresses the contemporary crises of

mass incarceration, builds upon Billingsley's descriptive work of Church response to social

problems such as HIV/AIDS, joblessness, lack of affordable housing, crime and violence among

youth. This study also built upon Chaves' emphasis of "low-intensity" or "peripheral" social service involvement of most congregations and adds small churches as an object of study.

The results of this study were also consistent with the process and practice aspect of ethical leadership from the Black Church perspective. For Fluker (1998, 2011), ethical leaders are those who shape shared identities and socially constructed realities by transmitting values that arise from traditions and cultural narratives. Unlike Western ethical constructs, Fluker describes ethical leadership as "the critical appropriation and embodiment of moral traditions that have historically shaped the character and shared meaning of a people [an ethos]" (Fluker, 2011, p. 11).

Also central to Fluker's ethical concept is the role of systems (institutions, traditions, practices) as social architect of individual lives and how moral agents might counter unjust systemic practices that promote unhealthy and self-destructive practices in the community. In addition, Fluker's (2011) model incorporates a community component, which includes a concern for justice, compassion and courage.

This theoretical concept is consistent with *salvation,* a biblical term that occupies a central theological space in structures of faith. The term has a military connotation which means physical rescue from danger, defeat or distress in the Hebrew scriptures and although it carries an eschatological nuance in the New Testament, also has to do with healing related to restoration of physical health (Metzger & Coogan, 1993). These findings indicate that urban religious leaders recognize a need to operationalize their theology or, in other words, transfer their spiritual tenets into physical spaces, seeing the Church as agent in saving or rescuing people and communities.

As in other ethical concepts (Brown & Treviño, 2006), these Black urban religious leaders are also managers of moral meaning. Yet their moral insights emerge from traditions, culture narratives and shared history. Also, a major function of the Black Church has historically

been to provide intergenerational cultural transmission, education and socialization for the purposes of group empowerment and liberation (Colon, 2003).

Together, these theories frame the processes and practices leading to the complex outcomes provided by Black urban religious leaders to followers who experience unique social and economic circumstances in the post-War-on-Drugs era.

My findings indicate that in addressing the harms or collateral damage of mass incarceration, Black urban religious leaders contribute assistance through various ministries with the goal of helping to restore or rebuild communities and the lives of individuals, families and children in positive, practical and meaningful ways. This effort, distinctive to the Black Church, is tantamount to a Church version of the Marshall Plan, an American economic initiative designed to aid and rebuild Western Europe following the devastation left in the wake World War II.

Restoration efforts begin when leaders first assess their ministerial context and acknowledge the perceived urgent needs of those being served (Figure 5.1). The assessment of their ministerial context and the leaders' perceived urgent needs of the community and/or congregation in which they serve then helps to determine which particular leadership strategies or practices and area of ministry focus are most appropriate to address the direct and indirect harms of mass incarceration for the specific context.

Below, I consider study findings by first looking at leaders' perceived needs in their ministry context. I then discuss specific leadership strategies or practices used to address the collateral damages of mass incarceration. Finally, I present findings in terms of the perceived impact generated by these leadership strategies.

Perceived Urgent Needs of Those Being Served

Taken together, four common themes begin to emerge from the participants' perceptions of urgent need. Although the leaders address these needs through different ministry focuses, they almost unanimously speak of dehumanization, ostracism, poverty and racism. These results are consistent with Alexander's (2012) assertion of the United States' long and conflicted history of race and systemic policies of social and cultural control including segregation, discrimination and public degradation. Yet, throughout history, the Black Church has responded with various forms of resistance (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990)—until now. Racialized mass incarceration, the contemporary issue of our day, has been a policy area left unresolved by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements (Colon, 2007) and largely left unaddressed by the Church.

Racialized mass incarceration leaves the poor Black communities where these research participants practice ministry longing for compassion and care, reconnection to community, resources and support services, family stability, skills, worth and self-esteem, development of social capital, commitment to human rights and racial justice and safe spaces for dialog. These challenges are consistent with the research on collateral damages resulting from mass incarceration by Alexander (2011, 2017), Carson and Mulako-Wangota (2011), Clear (2008, 2018, Pattillo et al. (2004), Roberts (2004), Wacquant (2012), and West and Sabol (2008).

Leadership Strategies to Address Mass Incarceration

As Paris (2004) argued, there are common spiritual, moral and aesthetic values that were brought to America by the Africans who originally came to the United States. These basic values, implicit in both African and African American culture, unite people of the African diaspora. We see Paris' theory confirmed in the strategies utilized by leaders as well as the leadership theories

of Fluker (1998), which center around countering unjust systemic practices that promote
unhealthy and self-destructive practices in the community.

Ministry practices are directed in three categories: mass incarceration's effect on

- the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons;

- children, individuals and families;

- the African American community at-large.

The following briefly outlines these three targets of practice.

Ministry to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals. Leaders who minister
to the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated primarily use African-centered and collaborative
strategies toward addressing mass incarceration. These approaches are a response to formerly
incarcerated individuals' need for compassion and care, resources and support services and a need
to be reconnected to the community. The devaluation of Black humanity, disconnectedness, lack
of skills and stigmatization experienced by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons are
catalysts for utilizing biblical principles and peer to peer leadership development models in
addition to African-centered and collaborative leadership approaches for this group. Leaders who
focus on ministry to the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated are hindered by possible racism
evidenced by apathy toward mass incarceration by funding and policy decision-makers, scarce
funding, and often, staff who are uninformed and insensitive to the problem.

Ministry to children, individuals, and families. Ministry to children, individuals and
families is consistent with that of Alexander (2017) and Goode, Lewis, and Trulear (2011).
African-centered and collaborative approaches are also used to provide children, individuals and
families with an opportunity to live healthy, stable and sustainable lives as well as a means to
counter ostracism and other struggles experienced by this group. This leadership approach also is

a response to racism and bias in the criminal justice system and the negative mindset on behalf of the Church and others towards individuals affected by mass incarceration. Yet, as Lewis (2011) asserts, pre-entry ministry can be a deterrent or proactive intervention that can be used to help prevent juvenile contact with the criminal justice system. This type of ministry can, as a result, ultimately reduce the jail and prison population and thus eventually help scale down ministry to incarcerated or formerly incarcerated individuals.

The effort to help Black individuals, children and families to live healthy stable lives is also increasingly difficult given that 80% of the increasing number of women in prison are primary caretakers of children but are kept in sparse facilities geographically located far from their families and communities (Alexander, 2017). This makes it extremely challenging for these individuals and communities to maintain family relationships and care for their children.

However, with perceptions of diminishing community and family life a reality for many in urban settings (Clear, 2018) and anecdotal methods inadequate to attract funding support, those who minister to children, individuals and families also use social science/evidence-based interventions that are culturally relevant. In addition, these leaders maintain top notch organizational management practices to address this group's need, like that of the formerly incarcerated, for compassion and care, family stability and resources/support services.

Ministry to the African American community at large. Leaders who focus on the African American community at large, like the other two areas of ministry focus, utilize African-centered approaches and professional collaborations as strategy. In addition, these leaders intentionally operate outside philosophical and practical boxes, and consistent with Baldwin (2016), preach liberation theology and social context, and teach the bible from a social justice framework. This group of ministers attempts to meet community and/or congregational needs for

commitment to human rights and racial justice; awareness and issue education, safe spaces for

dialog and community accountability. The work of these leaders is catalyzed by racism and bias

in the criminal justice system, direct experience with the criminal justice system, a lack of

congregational and/or community expertise, the negative mindset in the Black community

towards mass incarceration and the individuals affected by it and an unwelcoming Black Church.

Ministry to the African American community at large also faces many barriers such as the

lack of administrative and staff capacity, apathy by decision makers, classism, racism, and

traditionalism as well as a scarcity of funding.

Findings common to all strategies and ministry focus areas. Consistent with the

African cultural theory of Karenga (2017), particularly using the philosophy of Kawaida—which

centers on recovery and reconstruction of African culture and history—all areas of ministry focus

use African-centered approaches to ministry. In addition, all focus areas utilize faith and nonfaith

collaborations to combat the harms of mass incarceration. Poverty, racism and stigmatization also

serve as catalysts for action across all three areas. These findings illustrate the importance of

shared cultural practices and meanings, countering the harmful effects of systems and the need for

group empowerment and liberation, themes also consistent with the theories of Colon (2003) and

Fluker (2011).

Additionally, all ministry categories view funding, racism and administrative capacity as

barriers to implementing and expanding the work of addressing the collateral damage of mass

incarceration.

Perceived Impact of Strategies Addressing Mass Incarceration

Impact, for the purposes of this study, is defined as perceived "changes in knowledge,

attitude, behavior, or status," (Fischer, 2009, p.2). The methodology in this work lacks benchmark

data from a comparison group in order to conclude what, if anything, might have happened in the absence of the ministry or its intervention.

Findings concerning ministry impact add to the existing research on ethical leadership. This research is descriptive (rather than correlational) in nature with a focus on ministry models and delivery styles and is not an assessment of the effectiveness of social service programming. However, I found that when these African-centered strategies, theologies, and cultural practices are married together with the social services provided, the result sometimes appears to be a bond or cultural connection in a racially hostile world. This bonding can lead to engagement, which in turn allows the participants to be helped. The clients then accept intervention on a voluntary rather than on a mandated basis.

Afrocentricism (Paris, 2004) stresses communalism or connection to a community, an environment where self-improvement is measured against oneself rather than competing against others as in the individualism prevalent in today's broader society. These theologies and cultural processes as Paris notes, also stress improvisation, safe environments, stability, encouragement and positive identity that helps individuals believe that achievement and success are possible.

Given the urgent needs of the leaders' contexts and barriers faced, have leaders' strategies produced impact or successful outcomes?

The methodology of this qualitative research is not designed to measure whether the services provided by these ministries are effective. Instead, this study can only report leader perceptions of changes in behavior, attitude, knowledge or status among those served during the time intervention was provided. As a result, my findings add to the existing research on ethical leadership. The true treatment effect of social services intervention can only be addressed by

research methodology which utilizes randomly sampled comparison groups between served and unserved groups.

Again, the impacts, as conveyed by the participants, can be discussed under the three categories of focus: on the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated; on the children, individuals and families; and on the African American community at large

According to participants, ministries, which focus on the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated, the work of the Ministries has helped

- increase self-esteem, self-worth and dignity;

- individuals to achieve wholeness and go forward with their lives after incarceration;

- individuals to start businesses, return to school and bee able to kick addiction and re-offending;

- foster change on the congregational level, helping to make the church culture a more welcoming space and sparking more interest in prison ministry;

- change attitudes of members and transform their views of and feelings about mass incarceration.

Leaders whose ministry efforts are focused upon children, individuals and families focus on evidence-based outcomes and describe their impact as experiencing documented increases in standardized and other test scores. These results are achieved by first increasing confidence and efficacy in participants, which then leads to love of learning.

Leaders whose ministry efforts are focused upon the African American community at large, have seen:

- positive changes in the attitudes of congregation members as well as in their own views and feelings on mass incarceration.

- increased financial support for the ministry and programming,

- perception of the church and ministry as a safe space for prophetic work

- positive effects on congregational policy changes and programming.

Table 5.1 summarizes the findings in terms of the three categories that ministries focus on.

Table 5.1.

Summary of Leadership Approaches to Mass Incarceration

Mass Incarceration's Effect on:	Leaders' Perceived Needs	Agents (Catalysts) of Change	Strategies	Barriers
Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons	Compassion and care Re-connection Resources and support services	Devaluation of Black humanity Disconnection from society, family Lack of skills in population Pervasiveness of incarceration Stigmatization	African-Centered approaches Biblical Principles Building Networks and collaborations Leadership development models	Apathy by decision-makers to the problem Funding Population stigma Uninformed and insensitive staff
Children, individuals and families	Compassion and care Family stability Resources and support services	Ostracism Opportunity to live healthy, stable and sustainable lives	African Centered Worldview Build Networks and Collaborations Culturally relevant practices Good organizational practices and accountability practices Social Science/ evidence-based interventions	Administrative and Staff Capacity Apathy Program Cooptation Racism Theoretical Bias

Mass Incarceration's Effect on:	Leaders' Perceived Needs	Agents (Catalysts) of Change	Strategies	Barriers
African American Community at-large	Commitment to human rights and racial justice	Racism/ Bias in criminal justice system	African-Centered approach	Administration and Staff Capacity
	Awareness and issue education	Direct experience in criminal justice system	Building Networks and collaborations	Apathy by decision makers
	Safe spaces for dialog			
	Community accountability	Lack of congregational and/or community expertise	Operate outside practical and philosophical boxes	Classism
		Negative mindset towards mass incarceration and individuals affected by it	Preach liberation theology and social context	Funding
				Racism
		Unwelcoming church	Teach Bible from Social Justice framework	Traditionalism

Implications for Leadership and Change

Theories and concepts: The conceptual roots of Black Church Studies. African American religious life has since been studied in several diverse disciplines, including humanities, social science and theology. Specifically, As R. D. Smith (2014) notes, Black Church studies have been approached from various perspectives, including the Church as spiritual springboard, the Church as a refuge, and the Church as a social resource. This research is aligned with post-Civil-Rights Afrocentric approaches to Black Church studies that explore the Church as social resource with a focus on the social ethics of the Black Church. Unlike the sociology of the Black Church, whose aim is principally to describe, the study, like Colon (2003), focuses on the liberative

social transformation of Black people individually and collectively in order to correct and shape the collateral damage of oppressive forces and conditions (Floyd-Thomas et al., 2007).

As the War on Drugs winds down, there has been a paucity of research on the post-War-on-Drugs era concerning the Black Church. While the Church has given priority to racial justice issues such as civil rights, affirmative action, or criminal justice reform and socioeconomic issues such as public welfare and public education, these are perceived to be a continuation of the issues addressed by the Civil Rights Movement (Kurosaki, 2012). Meanwhile, the Church has not responded, in large measure, with issues such as rebuilding the community from the devastation caused by the mass incarceration of young Black males (and women) for drug-related offenses (Moore et al., 2015).

This research, then, contextualizes ethical leadership in a setting that includes Black Church Studies. Specifically, the study further develops Black Church Studies by extending past research by Billingsley (1999) and Chaves (2004) on Church sociopolitical response to the crisis of mass incarceration, a topic left unaddressed by the Civil Rights or Black Power Movements.

While this study correlates with and is situated within various conceptual frameworks, its main objective is to add to the conversation of academic scholarship, the voices of Black urban religious leaders—those who practice at ground zero of mass incarceration's destruction, but whose voices have been conspicuously absent in leadership studies, the socio-political role of the Black Church around collateral damage of mass incarceration (Moore et al, 2015) and from public policy debate. By including the voices of those who are directly involved in Church praxis, this work provides "real world research" and, helps to, in the words of Baldwin, "bridge the chasm between theological education in the academy and what African Americans believe and affirm in the context of the Black Church" (p. 46).

Ethical leadership. A key question is: How, if at all, does ethical leadership theory speak to the Black Church context?

The conceptual roots of ethical leadership. Chapter II of this study began with a search for theoretical models which would help to understand the nature of African American urban religious leadership in the post-War-on-Drugs context. Published research on ethical leadership as a theoretical foundation is sparse. This complex construct, still in its theoretical infancy, emerged from high profile business, religion, sports and government scandals during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

During that time, many approaches to leadership were focused on the leader or follower until a shift began that looked beyond the behavior to the heart of leadership, a category called "Leadership with a higher purpose," (Jackson and Parry (2011).

Ciulla (2005) developed a three-part moral assessment to determine the standards by which the heart of a leader can be evaluated. The assessment answers the question of whether a leader does the right thing, the right way and for the right reason. Ciulla's assessment includes the following three interlocking categories:

- The ethics of leaders themselves (personal ethics and leader intentions),
- the ethics of how a leader leads (process and leader relationship with those affected by leader actions),
- the ethics of what a leader does (ends of leadership).

Ethical leadership is related to the topics of authentic, spiritual and servant leadership, all which concern themselves with morals and values and situated in the category of "Leadership with a Higher Purpose." These theories emphasize visionary and inspirational leadership for the purpose of transforming organizations. Although providing important insights, much of the

research approach to the "new leadership" concepts such as servant, authentic, spiritual and ethical leadership theories are included under this framework.

What is ethical leadership? The normative perspective, which includes what a leader does, the process of leadership, and the moral reason of why leaders act (ends of leadership), are the three forms of ethical leadership included in Ciulla's (2005) definition as "someone who does the right thing, the right way, and for the right reasons."

Stated another way, ethical leadership has been characterized by two primary aspects: that of the moral person (leader's character), and the other which includes the leader as a moral manager, who promotes moral conduct and character development through two-way communication**.** Moral managers communicate values by talking about ethics, setting ethical standards, reinforcing the message using rewards and punishments and by serving as visible exemplars of their message. This study is consistent with the moral manager aspect of leadership and to a lesser degree on the dynamic between leaders and followers, or the process through which all religious leaders mobilize congregants to change their attitudes or perceptions. The study does not address the leader's character in a direct sense.

Some of the leaders profiled in the study were internally focused on building systems (and lay leaders) to address the collateral damage from mass incarceration, but others seemed to focus more externally in the prophetic role where they focused on the political concerns and activities of the broader community.

Ethical Leadership from the Black Church perspective. Do ethical leadership theories speak to a Black Church perspective? A review of the research shows that leadership theory has emphasized a universal, monocultural application and has seldom included discussion on the Black Church tradition—the chief social locus for the ethical foundations of leadership for the

African American community. Neither have the indigenous sources and experiences of African American peoples been taken seriously as a resource to inform and provide insights to the larger society. However, this study is a focus on leadership theory that deals directly with the quest for a higher purpose in order to find relevant insights for a contemporary Black Church context.

Many people coming to churches today are unfamiliar with Church and other Black cultural norms, values and traditions. Many residents of urban areas affected by mass incarceration come to the Church looking for answers to life lived in the midst of violence, crime, addiction, unemployment and often lack the skills needed for conflict resolution, obtaining employment or providing adequate parental guidance or child development.

Therefore, the practical challenge for urban leadership operating in a post-mass incarceration context is to discover how to effectively provide alternative approaches to education and socialization in a way that provides group liberation "in a social climate that emphasizes individual success as a prime value and is, therefore, antagonistic to a group liberation and value system" (Colon, 2003, p.153).

Yet, ethical leadership from the Church perspective has been absent from traditional ethical leadership perspectives. One exception is Fluker's (2011) model. Fluker's ethical concept involves the appropriation and embodiment of moral traditions that have historically shaped the character and shared meanings of a people. Also central to Fluker's ethical concept is how moral agents might counter unhealthy and self-destructive systemic practices.

Fluker's (2011) concept of ethical leadership is most relevant to the context of the Church since it requires the identification and retrieval of the moral discourse and practices of the Church tradition and to reinterpret them for the contemporary community crisis. First, from a priestly perspective, to communicate moral wisdom and language about the meaning and destiny

of individuals within the African American community. A concurrent challenge, from a prophetic perspective, is required to reengage in the national policy debate in order to hold the nation morally and ethically accountable on public policy issues.

This study, consistent with Fluker's (2011) model, reviewed the following theoretical insights from the Black Church Ethical Leadership:

- The experiences of African American religious leaders of small churches operating among the urban poor and people of color have been mostly ignored or omitted in traditional leadership concepts. This has created color and context gaps which gives us an incomplete view of the full complexity of leadership.

- Black religious leaders are both moral persons as well as moral managers. However, morality, character and ethics are managed effectively by sharing stories, traditions and cultural narratives which arise from a shared experience.

- Moral managing also involves addressing systems that produce unfair policies that contribute to unhealthy and dysfunctional behaviors.

- The Black Church context calls for the provision of training, education, character development, information, and resources in a nurturing, healthy, and safe environment as well as positive role modeling.

Contributions to Ethical Leadership Theory

Utilizing narrative analysis, this qualitative research adds to the limited body of research by a blended critical ethnographic and phenomenological approach that presents the lived experiences of Black urban religious leaders (10 men and seven women) of small churches as a contribution to ethical leadership studies and thus fills a color and context gap in the research.

The study also adds the Black, urban religious perspective to the normative description of the process of leadership or what leaders do. Black, urban religious leaders, distinctively, provide group empowerment or liberation in a social or political climate that is hostile to the group's liberation and value system.

This research also transfers ethical leadership theory to the Black, urban small church setting, a context previously absent in traditional leadership or ethical leadership research. And, finally, the study connects ethical theory with practice in context, an area on which we elaborate below.

Linking ethical leadership theory and practice: The Church's "practitionist" role. A highlight of this work is that it looks at the Church beyond its traditional priestly and prophetic functions to view the Church as *practitionist,* a term I have coined to capture its activity that attempts to provide relevant practical ministry beyond Sunday morning spiritual guidance and worship. This aspect of the Church's function includes providing interventions, especially to those on the margins. Empirical research on faith-based social service interventions for African Americans is sparse. Of the existing literature, a vast majority has to do with health-related interventions representing partnerships between churches and the healthcare industry. There are few, if any, studies outside of re-entry programming that examine Church interventions to address the collateral damage resulting from drug-related mass incarceration of Blacks.

Also, although the body of research on ethical leadership often uses a Eurocentric lens and lacks studies that bring in the leadership perspective of Black Church, the Church is a historically prominent and highly respected institution in the Black community. Even among youth, the poor, and non-church goers and since slavery has served as a de facto provider of a diverse multitude of social services in the Black community. Because of the Church's location in areas of high poverty

and its special relationship with the marginalized and people of color, it is uniquely situated to address the litany of social ills resulting from drug-related mass incarceration. Churches have been shown to be effective in reducing disparities which negatively affect the poor and racial minorities but remain an underutilized resource in solving the problems of the Black community in general and mass incarceration in particular.

Finally, the voice of Black clergy leadership, having been excluded since the Civil Rights movement from both leadership theories and concepts and marginalized or completely absent at the table of public debate regarding the reshaping of America, is presently challenged to provide practical, ethically based strategic direction in the aftermath of the U.S. war on crime and drugs.

The contribution to the scholarship on ethical leadership and understanding solutions to the post-mass incarceration problems, which disproportionately affect Black families, must be derived from the core values, culture and traditions of African American leaders. Knowing more about their experiences and historical role of responding to racialized oppression will provide a unique contribution to the literature. The aim of my dissertation was to hear and comprehend these often-overlooked voices and to fill the color and context gaps that limit our capacity to understand the full capacity of ethical leadership and the collateral damage of drug-related mass incarceration.

Implications for Practice

I approached this qualitative study with an eye toward ethical leadership and its application to Black Church praxis, the contextual space in which I serve. Research practitioners, or those like myself whose research is focused on problems and issues with direct relevance to human lives, operate in a current research world that is experiencing rapid and far-reaching

cultural and intellectual/academic change. Moreover, as G. Fischer (2013) notes, the problems

which confront the 21st century post-industrial urban context are primarily comprehensive and

complex systemic problems and therefore impossible to be adequately addressed by any

individual human mind or single specialty discipline.

The following implications for the Black Church emerge after listening to the collective

voice of the research participants. Ethical leaders who address the collateral damage resulting

from mass incarceration:

- have shifted to a practitionist or practical and holistic agenda rather than relying solely

  on dispensing spiritual guidance and wisdom in a traditional worship setting;

- focus on outcomes rather than delivery of social services only;

- develop a connection or bond with those served and are thereby able to tap into shared

  experiences and intra-group dynamics such as familiar traditions, customs and cultural

  meanings around which the black community historically unites;

- build strong networks and collaborations with others from diverse communities of

  practice;

- install solid leadership structure with good financial and other accountability practices;

- use explicit or implicit biblical and theological principles;

- face formidable internal and external barriers in initiating and implementing the work;

The Church appears to perform its worship or priestly function well. With the recent

emergence of Rev. William Barber and the Poor People's Campaign and Reverend Traci

Blackmon in Ferguson, Missouri, there are signs that the Church has also begun to excel again in

its historical prophetic activist role. Therefore, the practical challenge for Church leadership in the

second decade of the 21st century, is to discover how to effectively provide alternative approaches

to the contemporary problem of our day—the collateral damage of mass incarceration. Solutions to these problems are more likely to come from a "practitionist" Church, one whose function/role is to help diagnose and provide interventions for acute, episodic and chronic structural issues as part of a team for prevention, care and education. Teams will consist of the collaboration of various stakeholders of diverse backgrounds, disciplines, and communities of practice, including both faith and non-faith institutions.

Ministries that are "alive" are those whose leaders have created new paradigms of ministry, not limited to providing spiritual guidance but are those that also supply practical and relevant solutions to everyday needs, especially for those living in urban areas and on the margins—a population displaced by the Church's fixation with the prosperity gospel.

These ministries are not without their challenges. Many small churches lack the financial or administrative capacity to effectively address contemporary social problems caused by mass incarceration. And since these churches are competing for the same public or philanthropic funding as traditional social service agencies, they often experience racism, program sabotage or indifference to the problem.

Yet, these "alive" and practitionist churches, despite their small size and struggles with everyday crises in Black communities, find ways to develop networks/collaboration, acquire expert knowledge in their academic disciplines and combine with culturally-relevant strategies to overcome the challenges they face. As the Church moves forward into the future it will be necessary to re-evaluate its structures and ministry models as what once worked i.e. traditional revivals, Sunday School or Bible Study nights, may not work in the same way for a contemporary post-mass incarceration context. In addition, the Church, particularly the small urban congregation, may also have to re-examine its stewardship models. The Church has long relied

upon internal support where tithes, offerings and church fundraisers were the primary sources of funds. Several participants of the study, however, noted a need for a mix of internal and externally developed streams of revenue.

Implications for Policymakers

Despite billions of dollars of public funds having been appropriated for social services, the racial gaps in the categories of health, wealth, income, employment and education have not narrowed as the poor and people of color continue to receive negligible benefit in the form of positive outcomes. Yet the Church—possessing the unique knowledge or the cultural competency to effectively handle Black pain—is counted on to help fill the gap between unaddressed need and available human services. Only they are often expected to do it for free or serve without access to the funding mediated by the government and larger organizations.

This study revealed how urban religious leaders might have the capacity to provide many benefits, including the ability to address the collateral damage of mass incarceration and touch all aspects of life in the urban context. However, these leaders, despite their long history of caring for their own through slavery, segregation and the Civil Rights era, face obstacles of racism, sabotage, and apathy or indifference.

As a result, the pain from the consequences of mass incarceration sadly continues unrelieved in urban areas while the allocation of funding is withheld and/or placed in the hands of others without a connection or real commitment to the victims of the War on Drugs. How can the dilemma be resolved? It will take a marriage of the larger social services system with those who are most able to assist families because, to use Trulear's (2011) terminology, they have proximity to the problem. In other words, they are those who understand the social and cultural dynamics and reside or operate where the families they attempt to help also reside.

This study sets the stage for increased public and private investment. It has also shown that when the larger social service system collaborates with urban religious leaders of small churches—not merely through funding, but also by providing assistance in how to maximize scarce resources, educational and technical support functions (Hasenfeld, 2009) and help in interpreting legislation—both systems can coexist in a way that will effectively serve underserved communities affected by mass incarceration while achieving the positive outcomes which build community and provide real change.

Recommendations for Future Study

The intersection of mass incarceration, leadership and Black studies is an overlooked area that is ripe with future research opportunities. Our exploration only touched the surface of this critical issue. There are many unanswered questions that were beyond the scope of this research:

Unanswered questions: Outcomes and effectiveness. Are these faith leaders truly making a difference? Change as indicated by perceived outcomes, for the most part, was represented by self-reported anecdotal data except in a few instances. While it is an assumption among interviewees that faith-based services provide better outcomes than their secular counterparts, the ability to directly assess the specific role of faith or specific strategies was beyond the scope of the study. Many small churches, perhaps because of their limited size or administrative capacity, do not focus on collecting data that is more complete, accurate and methodologically rigorous. While randomized design has seldom been used in evaluating faith-based services, perhaps other rigorous methods such as quasi-experimental research designs using comparison groups can be used in future research in order to identify causality or correlation to demonstrate effectiveness and accountability (Fischer, 2009), issues which are beyond the scope of this work. While this is a descriptive study, looking at this work through the lens of

comparative studies between two or more similar organizations in order to compare similar

ministry models, strategies or funding streams is an important next step. In any event, the Church,

as R. Fischer (2009) asserts, must begin to put emphasis on collecting, managing and analyzing

data.

Unanswered questions: Other outcomes of interest. In addition to impact, within each

of the three areas of ministry focus there are specific issues that represent areas for future study.

Within the ministries that focus to the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, recidivism

can be studied. What is the length of time those served stay out of jail or prison compared to those

who do not receive intervention? Do they have jobs? How do those citizens (or others) describe

the clients' mental state before as compared to after receiving intervention? Do returning citizens

or their families report more or less isolation, shame or devaluation? How do they self-report

relationships with family or support systems? What do their support systems report about their

relationships with the incarcerated?

For ministries that focus on families, children and individuals and prevention/intervention,

unanswered questions that need further rigorous exploration in this ministry segment are: What, if

any, has been the change in the relationship between parents and children after intervention

compared to those without intervention? What has been the change in educational performance,

including socio-emotional performance? Has there been a change in the satisfaction children or

parents at home? Has there been a reduction in stress or changes in mental health among parents

or children? Has there been a change in children's love of learning or sense of connectedness?

For ministries that focus on the prophetic role of the Church and the community at large:

What policies are being enacted or eradicated as a result of their activism? Do they see a reduction

in barriers to providing services? What do documented outcomes show regarding the

community's understanding of mass incarceration? Empathy for the formerly incarcerated or their families?

Benefits of future study. Pursuing these unanswered questions with more rigorous assessment of the work could give policymakers the hard evidence needed to justify additional program investment and the funding necessary to make it more readily available. In addition, future research with its focus on outcomes measurement and the collection and management of data may also help practitioners become more effective in the delivery of their services, which in turn, could help to ultimately improve their administrative or organizational capacity.

In addition, this research is a call to seminaries to take a critical look at how they help "craft the calling" of those that are coming out of their institutions so that they include or at least do not lose praxis as part of their educational mandate. A part of that decree comes from Matthew 25 and asks: "When I was in prison did you pay attention? Did you take the time to talk to me, send a letter or help?" Many leaders are not involved in addressing mass incarceration because they don't understand the issue, lack skills or have a distorted view of the topic. Others are frustrated and suffer from burnout trying to emulate or adopt the seeker-friendly mega church model of praxis which does not fit every context or community need. Also, many leaders of smaller churches suffer from the "Elijah complex" (the sense of being the only godly person left) and feel powerless and alone in attempting to address systemic ills in urban communities. This research provides encouragement to these leaders while not ignoring the need for them to brace themselves for barriers in implementing or expanding the work.

Certainly, including the intersection of leadership and mass incarceration as praxis in seminary instruction could be a benefit of this and other work, particularly to those who are prone

to advocate or seek guidance in learning how to provide relevant practical ministry in poor and communities of color.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

While qualitative research methodology, in general, presents the potential for researcher bias, this study contains limitations and potential weaknesses, which are primarily connected to site and sample selection. Careful consideration was given to account for these limitations and to minimize their impact.

Interviewees were limited to urban leaders of the Christian faith as a result of the sampling method. While other Black faith leaders were not excluded, there were no other leader responses. Respondents came primarily from the East Coast and Southeastern seaboard. There were no respondents west of Chicago, Illinois. Finally, as a result of the sampling method, only 18 percent of the respondents were under the age of 50 years. Younger participants who were born in the post-Civil Rights era would make an interesting population for study. Perhaps future studies can target a younger population to determine how they perceive their role in the aftermath of the War on Drugs and provide insights as to what ethical leadership from the Black Church perspective might look like once those over age 50 retire. Also interesting is what might the work look like if the voices of younger leaders differ from those of the older generation.

Closing Reflections

In the Gospel of Matthew, John the Baptist, who had earlier professed faith in and proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, finds himself in prison and in a state of doubt and depression near the end of his ministry. The stern old-school prophet, whose generation specialized in speaking truth to power, evidently began to doubt his earlier convictions because Jesus did not utilize this same paradigm for ministry. So, he sends a group of messengers to Jesus to ask him,

"Are you the one we've been expecting? Or should we keep looking for someone else?" (Luke 7:19, New Living Translation).

Unquestionably, those who look for the Church to play some prominent public role in addressing the social ills that plague our contemporary urban context share John's same sentiment. Is the Church who we thought it was? Is the Church dead or irrelevant? Or should we look for someone else to do something about our immediate predicament? When John's messengers arrive and pose that question, rather than directly answering it, Jesus instead points to his works which, unlike John's, are focused on healing, restoration and transformation rather than speaking truth to evil institutional power. He tells them:

> Go back to John and tell him what is being done to address the needs of people on the margins —the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor. (Luke 2:22, New Living Translation)

Because Jesus' ministry of liberation to and empowerment of oppressed people was a paradigm that did not align with John's preconceived role of the Messiah, he (John) mistakenly had thought that real ministry was not taking place.

The Black Church tradition, then, as opposed to White Church tradition, was born out of an effort to help oppressed and dispossessed people meet and overcome the practical challenges they face in this world. Therefore, this work is a reply to those who perceive that the Black Church is no longer relevant to their needs and are wont to seek guidance and support elsewhere. It is also, perhaps even more directly, written to those who, like John, are depressed or disillusioned by the mass exodus of young Black individuals and families from the institutional Black church and frustrated by hyper-spiritualized Church leaders who whoop loudly about heaven or money but are silent on socio-political issues like mass incarceration.

This research proclaims that the Church is indeed alive! The intent of this work is to make known the best practices of a few of the many overlooked small urban churches that have revised their agenda and developed a new paradigm for holistic ministry that addresses the practical needs of those living in the post-U.S. drug war era.

As a student and leader of change operating in both faith-based and human services systems, I feel a need for a leadership model that meets the needs of the complex challenges faced in an urban post-industrial context. Entering the program as a student, my primary goal was to build the community competency necessary to effectively challenge the burdensome social issues affecting the poor and people of color. As I leave the program, it is my belief that a practitionist and collaborative leadership model which unites the social and professional supports of the Black Church and other professional faith and nontraditional partners can produce favorable outcomes for vulnerable populations.

Change literature greatly aided me in the process of implementing change. Particularly helpful were Kusy and McBain (2000), Manderscheid and Kusy (2005), Senge (1994) and Bunker and Alban (2006). I was also assisted in this project by reviewing other literature that addressed collaborations and change. Finally, Fluker (1998, 2016), Colon (2003), R. D. Smith (2004) and Trulear (2007, 2008, 2008, 2016) all provide relevant perspectives on ethical leadership from the Church tradition.

Colon (2003) asked: How do we effect group empowerment or liberation in an increasingly multicultural world? This question for today's post-War on Drugs context then becomes what methods can we learn to shape and transmit what needs to be learned and lived for freedom and the development or transformation of the widely diverse African American community?

So then, for me, the challenge of ethical leadership ultimately requires the identification and retrieval of the moral discourse and practices of the Black church tradition and to reinterpret them for the contemporary community crisis. First, as Fluker (2009) posited, from a priestly perspective, that is, to communicate moral wisdom and language about the meaning and destiny of individuals *within* the African American community and applied to intra-group problems. And secondly, from a prophetic perspective, which requires Church leadership to reengage in the national policy debate in order to hold the nation morally and ethically accountable on public policy issues that confront Black life and culture (Perryman, 2014). And finally, from what I have termed the practitionist role of the Black Church, a role that finds its leaders going beyond the four walls of its sanctuary into the world of those oppressed by the harmful consequences of mass incarcerated to heal, transform, empower and liberate communities and individuals rather than merely entertain them on Sunday morning. These are the leaders who are breathing new life into the Church that many have left for dead.

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<u>For Figure 2.2: Fluker's (2011) ethical model of leadership.</u>

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Fluker, Walter, "The Quest for Character and Community." *Liberal Education.* Summer/Fall2011, Vol. 97 Issue 3/4, p. 14-21

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