ESWOCHY

Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme in Social Work with Children and Youth

The Psychosocial Effects of Parental Imprisonment on the Lives of Young People and Their Families in Soroti-Uganda

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ABSTRACT

Mass incarceration and the associated statistics have become a growing concern worldwide; the burden of parental incarceration poses a significant risk to children and family members who are often left behind unattended. Children of imprisoned parents have continued to suffer the impact of not having a parental figure in their lives. This has created profound psychosocial challenges during and after their parent's imprisonment. Whereas numerous studies have examined the existing outcomes of the same, limited studies have concentrated on understanding the outcomes from children, caretakers, ex-inmates, and social workers' perspectives comparatively to understanding coping strategies and expressed needs of children and affected families. This study hypothesizes that parental imprisonment is a predictor for family disruption, externalization, and internalization of deviant behaviour among children, leading to poor academic performance and dropouts for schooling children and increasing the risk of poverty within the affected families. This study used semi-structured interviews and included data from a total participant sample (n=21), comprised of social workers (n=8), young people ages 17-24 years (n=5), caretakers (n=3), and ex-inmates (n=5). The study sought to compare life before and after separation among children and families of incarcerated parents over time. The results infer high risks for behaviour internalization, antisocial–delinquencies, school disruption, dropout, lowered academic performance, family economic decline and strain, and relationship disruption outcomes reported from all four categories of respondents. That said, this has created both positive and maladaptive coping strategies, with some children reporting resorting to fellow peers, friends, sports, child hard labour, prayers, and other theft, drugs and alcohol use in dealing with the post-traumatic stress disorders, and caretakers, and ex-inmates resorting to seeking assistance within their extended families ties, obtaining business activities to improve their misfortunes that arose from the imprisonment of a primary giver in the family, these have resulted in some positive outcomes as well as negative implications. Conclusively, children and young people whose parents are in prison face significant vulnerabilities due to multiple risk factors that increase their likelihood of experiencing adverse outcomes. To avert and mitigate the above, participants called for increased educational support to children, social support assistance, guidance and counselling services, material support, and financial aid as a way forward and a means of providing lasting solutions to their challenges. The impact of parental incarceration on these children goes beyond the typical effects of separation, custodial solutions, and associated risks.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM AREA

1.0 Parental Incarceration

The term parental imprisonment has been defined differently by scholars. For instance, New York City (NYC) Vital Signs (2021) defined it as the jail custody of one or both parents to serve their time NYC Vital Signs, 2021). According to Murray (2010), parental imprisonment or incarceration refers to any custodial confinement of a parent by the criminal justice system (Murray, 2010) while, Johnson & Easterling (2012) refers to Parental imprisonment or incarceration as confinement in a jail or prison for any length of time of a parent (Johnson & Easterling, 2012).whatever the case may be, this study shall define Parental imprisonment or incarceration as a phenomenon, a means and the actual process leading to/of custodial confinement of a parent (mother or father) leading from remand to actual sentencing and detainment.

1.1 Historical Background to Parental Incarceration

It is estimated that millions of children worldwide have a parent in prison, and an estimated 19,000 children are living in jail with their parents, most often their mother, and many times their mothers are separated (Penal Reform International, 2015). This makes parental incarceration a global crisis within families and societies as the global prison population continues to rise (Global Prison Trends, 2021).

According to World Total Global Statistics about Children with Imprisoned Parents (2019), globally, 21172 154 (0.9%) children had their fathers imprisoned, 1,454,941 (0.06%) children had their mothers imprisoned, and 22,447,095 (1.03 %) of children had an Imprisoned Parent (INCCIP, 2024). These global statistics are equally alarming in almost all the continents across the globe. For example, the global prison population continues to rise significantly (Global Prison Trends, 2021). According to the report, more than 11 million people are in prisons globally, constituting an increase of 8% since 2010; more than 740,000 of those worldwide are women (17%). 53% in Oceania, 50% in Asia, 29% in Europe, 24% in Africa, 17% in South America, and 8% in North America, with more than 3 million in pre-trial detention (30%), 70% awaiting trial (Global Prison Trends, 2021).

In Africa, statistics further reported that 4,409,137 (0.80%) have their fathers imprisoned, 164 (0.03%) have their mothers imprisoned, and 4,573,600 (0.83%) have a parent imprisoned (INCCIP, 2024). A typical description of African prisons is in the 1995 Resolution of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR). Africa is believed to have some of the world's most overcrowded prisons. With a total inmate population of at least 903534, the average of awaiting trial inmates in Africa is about 45 per 100,000, while the global rate is 44 per 100,000, and the number of children with parents in prison is increasing in many countries in the world (PRAWA, 2014). For example, in Uganda, according to Penal Reform International (2015), it is estimated that 200,000 children have a parent in prison at any one time (Penal Reform International, 2015). In addition, the official statistics from Uganda Prisons Service (2022) reported 34,058 (48.6%) convicts, comprising 32,548 males and 1,510 (females), and remand cases were 34,069 (males) and 1,621 (females), summing to a staggering 35,690 (50.9%) cases as of June 2022 (Uganda Prisons Service, 2022) as shown on the summary table below:

Table 1.1: Showing Uganda Prisons Service Monthly Statistics: Average Population of Prisoners, September 2023.

Categories	**August 2023**			**September 20023**			**Percentage Change (%)**
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
Convicts	37,525	1,774	39,299	37,224	1,685	38,909	-1.0
Remands	34,419	1,776	36,195	34,632	1,750	36,382	0.5
Debtors	321	97	418	350	123	473	13.2
Total	**72,265**	**3,647**	**75,912**	**72,206**	**3,558**	**75,764**	-0.2
Percentage (%)	95.2	4.8	100.0	95.3	4.7	100.0	
Approved Capacity	-	-	20,996	-	-	20,996	0.0
Occupancy Rates (%)	-	-	361.6	-	-	360.8	-0.8

Source: Uganda Prisons Service, Sep. 2022)

In Soroti Prison, in the Study District, according to a rapid situation assessment of HIV/STI/TB and Drug abuse among Prisoners in Uganda Prisons Service (2019), Soroti Prisons had 544 inmates (males) (Uganda Prisons Service, 2019). These figures could be well above the official statistics of March 2024 despite numerous efforts by the Uganda Government to promote human rights, improve prison conditions, offer educational and rehabilitation programs (Republic of Uganda, 2015, Uganda Prisons Service**,** 2018), and also introduce other justice and conflict resolutions like Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms. Petty offences have continued to rise, leading to an increased number of prisons on remand (Uganda Prisons Service (UPS), 2022). However, the challenge is that little is known about the backgrounds of those imprisoned in Uganda or how imprisonment may affect their families (Butler & Masinde, 2018). Theory and qualitative research suggest that parental imprisonment might contribute to child harmful behaviour and mental health problems because of the trauma of separation, strained child-care arrangements during parental imprisonment, loss of family income, and other stressful life events such as moving home and school, and the stigma of parental imprisonment (PRAWA, 2014). This means very little is still known as to the measured impact of parental imprisonment on children and their families in Uganda due to limited studies, particularly on the impact of parental incarceration on the children and their families In Uganda.

Fathers' (men's) responsibilities in families are widely acknowledged even though less has been documented regarding their characteristics as prisoners. A recent study finding in Uganda by Butler and Masinde (2018) in research conducted in Uganda under the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (2015) suggests that 76% of imprisoned women were imprisoned due to poverty-related factors, a reason to provide for and protect their families (36%) and nearly (97%) of the imprisoned mothers reported having children. Statistics at the time of this report indicate that about 276 children and their families were affected, including 194 mothers imprisoned (Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, 2015). By 2016 alone, over 225 babies were living with their mothers in prisons in Uganda to facilitate their feeding and ensure early-age bonding and attachment, according to (the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2017) in research by Butler and Masinde (2018). In a related finding, inmates experienced loss of employment/job (43%), homelessness (35%), their

children taken away (31%), families broken up (25%), health issues (24%), stigmatized by family and community (20%), husband leaving them (13%), children who were homeless (9%), early school leaving (4%) and other consequences (2%) according to Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (2015).

1.2 Perceived Impacts of Parental Incarceration on the Children (Young People) and their Families

The incarceration of the parents of minor children is, therefore, an issue whose impact affects not only those sentenced to prison but is also detrimental to the children, their caregivers, the prison system, the welfare apparatus of the state, and the law. From the arrest of an offender to his or her conviction and imprisonment, the individual's children who have done no wrong are subjected to the stigma of criminality. However, they are practically ignored within several criminal justice systems. In the words of Oliver Robertson, they are the "*invisible*" victims of crime and the penal system (PRAWA, 2014). In 2012 alone, over 2.6 million minors experienced parental incarceration (Sykes & Pettit, 2014). Moreover, Murphey and Cooper (2015) estimated that over 5 million children have experienced the incarceration of a resident parent. Given the number of children exposed to parental incarceration, concerns surrounding the collateral consequences of incarceration have amplified.

Researchers such (as Davis & Shlafer, 2017 Lee, Fanf, & Luo, 2013; Young, Collier**,** & Mears, 2020) have found that parental incarceration has toxic, wide-ranging consequences for children's outcomes throughout their life course, including economic disadvantage and poorer mental and physical health. However, several scholars, there is a need to critically examine children's exposure to experiences related to maternal incarceration and family incarceration. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly clear that in this study, the psychosocial effects of parental imprisonment on the lives of Children (Young People) and their Families in Uganda were investigated.

1.3 Problem Statement

Despite the efforts made to promote human rights, improve prison conditions and offer rehabilitation programmes in Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 2015; Uganda Prisons Service, 2018), it is estimated that 200,000 children have a parent in prison at any one time (Penal Reform International, 2015). Official statistics from Uganda Prisons Service (2022) as of June 2022 reported 34,058 (48.6%) convicts comprising 32,548 males and 1,510 (females) and remand cases were 34,069 (males) and 1,621 (females), summing to staggering 35,690 (50.9%) cases (Uganda Prisons Service, 2022) and a rapid assessment HIV/TB assessment in Soroti Prisons in 2019, also found out that Soroti Prisons had 544 inmates (males) (Uganda Prisons Service, 2019). A knowledge gap exists regarding this phenomenon from a social work context from the Ugandan perspective. This, therefore, formed the basis to conduct this study with the following objectives purposely:

1.3 General Objectives

The main objective of this study was to examine the psychosocial effects of parental imprisonment on the lives of children/young people and their families in Uganda, based on three specific objectives (1.3.1 below).

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the effects of Parental Incarceration on the lives of children and their families
2. To identify the coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by caregivers in families affected by Parental Incarceration
3. To recommend ways of improving the welfare of children with parents in incarceration.

1.4 Research Questions

The focus of the study was to investigate the psychological effects of Parental imprisonment on the lives of Children (Young People) and their families in Uganda. As such, research questions were formulated, and the researcher was guided to answer the

following questions: “How does parental incarceration affect children (Young people) and their families in Uganda?” Specific sub-questions were explored hereunder:

1. What effects does parental incarceration have on children’s welfare in the family?
2. What coping mechanisms and support systems do caregivers employ to navigate the challenges associated with parental incarceration in their families?
3. How can the welfare of children and families with parents in incarceration be improved?

1.5 Justification of the Study

The burden of risk created on children and families in society as a result of the imprisonment of a parent or both is of general concern, attracting global attention (Loeber & Pardini, 2012; Murray & Murray, 2010). The magnitude of the plight and appaling conditions of life of *(“victims of crime”)*- children and families of imprisoned parents in sub-Saharan Africa in countries like Uganda remains not fully noticed and understood due to limited reliable research data and reliance on studies and findings from foreign countries, missing the full attention of policy makers further consequently pre-exposing children, young people and families of incarcerated parents and exacerbating their vulnerability.

Despite scanty efforts by the Ministry of Education and Sports and Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development to enhance family socioeconomic well-being and children support services through initiatives, including the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal Secondary Education (USE) among others, the funding efforts directly targeted at positively impacting livelihoods of families of inmates remains a critical requirement in enhancing the Psychsocio-economic and educational well-being of children and young people.

Much as similar studies have been carried out in other countries (Murray, 2010; Turney & Goodsell, 2018; Eddy & Reid, 2003), the results and recommendations from these studies may not be fitting and generalizable for use in the Ugandan context. The researcher

is interested in Uganda as the country has experienced rapid growth and demographic changes with increasing socioeconomic transformation unique to itself, bringing development challenges together with it. Therefore, conducting this study in Uganda on the psychosocial effects of parental imprisonment on the lives of children and affected families is crucial in bridging the knowledge gap and country-specific questions and answers crucial for policy awakening, debate, formulation, and intervention development trajectory.

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope covered the underlying perception of the psychological effect of Parental Incarceration on Children (Young People) and their Families in Uganda, explicitly drawing experiences from Soroti. Hence, this study focused on the aspects of the effect of Parental Incarceration on children and their families, coping mechanisms and support systems caregivers employ to navigate the challenges associated with parental incarceration in families, and how the welfare of children and families of incarcerated parents can be improved.

1.7 Structure of Thesis

The study is structured according to six Chapter. Chapter one is meant to introduce and gives a background of the research topic. Chapter two is a review of literature on related studies, identify relevance to this research object, identify and study relevant theories, research gaps in the body of related studies whilst drawing significance for the current study. Chapter three dives to identify relevant models and theretical frameworks relevant to making accurate research urguements based on theoretical approaches explaining phenomena. Chapter four presents the methodology, research design, sampling method applied, sample size, the data collection tools, analysis, and ethical considerations applicable. The fifth presents the findings, analysis and discussion component and lastly Chapter six summary of findings, conclusions and relevant recommendations for policy makers and future researchers.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the significance of parental imprisonment or incarceration and its psychological effects on young people (children) and their families. Disparities in the body of literature on the topic are also introduced. Reasons why the proposed study is necessary and its significance for the field of social work are also discussed comprehensively.

2.1 Young People or Children

The term young people, according to the General Medical Council of England, refers to older or more experienced children who are more likely to be able to make decisions for themselves. According to the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), a Child means every human being below the age of 18 years. For this study, young people and children shall mean any person under 18 years living with their father or mother and both parents.

Children and young people bear the most significant burden of disadvantage, with disruption to caregiving, placement into care, disruption of schooling, impoverishment, post-traumatic stress disorders and other mental health outcomes and increased likelihood of substance abuse, among others. According to Glaze and Marusechak (2010), nearly 1.7 million children are affected by parental incarceration, and approximately one-fourth are under four years old (Makariew & Shaver, 2010). However, data about children of incarcerated parents are lacking because the criminal system does not regularly collect in-depth data regarding prisoners and their children. Accurate statistics regarding children of incarcerated parents are vital to understanding the impacts of parental incarceration on children as well as their families. This is what this study precisely postulates itself to do.

2.2 Family

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a family is a group of one or more parents and their children living together as a unit. For this purpose, we shall adopt the Cambridge Dictionary definition, which refers to a family as a group of people related to each other, such as a mother, a father, and their children.

Families significantly influence many aspects of prisoners' lives, yet families are one of the most critical factors affecting prisoners' rehabilitation after release (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002). Unfortunately, prisoners' families have been little studied in their own right. The effects of imprisonment on families and children of prisoners are almost entirely neglected in academic research, prison statistics, public policy and media coverage. However, we can infer from prisoners' backgrounds that their families are a highly vulnerable group. Limited research to date suggests that imprisonment can have devastating consequences for partners and children (Murray J. 2005).

Researchers have picked a particular interest in the family system concerning parental incarceration. It is, therefore, vital in this study to focus theoretically and empirically on the nature of family life before and after the parents' incarceration as, in most instances, these other periods last longer and maybe more all-encompassing relative to the incarceration. Family systems theory and trauma-informed approaches are logical conceptual frameworks for locating parental incarceration within the context of a broader set of family experiences (Arditti, 2012).

Family dynamics, as highlighted by social learning theorists, are considered foundational but are peripheral to this research that has been aimed at examining parental incarceration. Families are viewed to have been touched by incarceration, parents and other family members' behaviours. The aspects of family climate may expose the child to an array of stressful situations and a ready-made repertoire of attitudes, behaviours and coping strategies. (Peggy, Jennifer, Wendy, & Monica, 2019)

2.3 Background to Parental Incarceration in Uganda

Separation of a parent from the family as a result of incarceration or imprisonment has both short-term and long-term effects on the children and their families, even after release from prison. The impact of parental arrest and imprisonment on children and their families goes far beyond affecting the relationship between the children and their imprisoned parents (Penal Reform International, 2015).

Research by the UN Development Programme and Open Society Justice Initiative conducted in Sierra Leone in 2013 found that for every four detainees in pre-trial

detention, there were five families who no longer had the support of a breadwinner and that families of pre-trial detainees experienced social stigmatization as well as economic severe consequences, including falling into debt and having to sell household goods, because of the imprisonment of their family member (Open Society Justice Initiatives (OSJI), 2013).

Uganda ratified the ACRWC in 1994 without reservations, and it has been incorporated into Ugandan law by the Children's Act 1997. It submitted a State Party report in 2007 and was reviewed by the Committee in 2010. In Uganda, when Parents are arrested and sent to prison in Uganda, little to nothing is known or recorded about what becomes of their children and their families. This means there are no precise figures about how many children in Uganda are affected by parental imprisonment (Penal Reform International, 2015). However, according to the latest Uganda Prisons Service Monthly Statistics Summary (September 2023), there are 75,764 prison inmates (Uganda Prisons Service (UPS), 2023). The challenge is that little is still known as to the measured impact of imprisonment of the parents on children and their families in Uganda due to limited studies or inadequacy of the findings of the already carried studies such as those done by the Ugandan NGO, Wells of Hope, who estimated that 200,000 children in Uganda have a parent in prison at any one time (Wells of Hope Ministries, 2013), but never accurately estimated the impact of the imprisonment of Parents on the children and their families. In light of the limited research available on children and the families of imprisoned parents, there is a need for further research to establish the psychosocial effects of parental imprisonment on the lives of young people (children) and their families. Precisely, this is what this study tried to establish in Uganda by looking at an examination of the effect of parental incarceration on the lives of children (young people) and their families, identifying the coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by caregivers in families affected by parental incarceration and recommending ways of improving the welfare of children with parental incarceration.

2.4 The Effect of Parental Incarceration on the lives of Children (Young People) and their families

The impact caused by the incarceration of parents is a significant hindrance to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) numbers (1) No poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and well-being, and (4) Quality Education. This affects both children (young people) and their families. According to studies by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2017, inmates experienced loss of employment/job (43%), homelessness (35%), their children taken away (31%), families broken up (25%), health issues (24%), stigmatized by family and community (20%), husband leaving them (13%), children who were homeless (9%), early school (UBOS, 2017).

2.4.1 Effect on Children (Young People)

Prisoners' children have been variously referred to as the 'orphans of justice' (Shaw 1992), the '*forgotten victims'* of crime (Matthews 1983). Children can suffer a range of problems during their parent's imprisonment, such as depression, hyperactivity, aggressive behaviour, withdrawal, regression, clinging behaviour, sleep problems, eating problems, running away, truancy and poor school grades (Boswell and Wedge 2002; Centre for Social and Educational Research 2002; Johnston 1995; Kampfner 1995; Sack et al. 1976; Sharp and Marcus-Mendoza 2001; Shaw 1987; Skinner and Swartz 1989; Stanton 1980) cited in (Murray. 2005). Additionally, according to a study by Marjore (2019), children face stigmatization, discrimination and deterioration in their living conditions, their relationships with others and their community, and their physical and mental health. They often suffer from trauma, fear, shame, guilt and low self-esteem, and parental imprisonment sometimes damages children's mental health (Marjore, 2019).

Mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder: According to Philbrick (1996), up to 30% of prisoners' children suffer mental health problems, compared to 10% of the general population (Philbrick 1996). In a study by Davis and Shafer (2017), mental health outcomes were presented in children whose parents were incarcerated. These outcomes items suicide attempts and self-injurious behaviours; children with a formerly incarcerated parent were about twice as likely to experience each outcome (Davis and Shafer, 2017). Similarly, Marjore (2019) reported

that parental imprisonment sometimes damages children's mental health (Marjore, 2019). However, there appears to be no documented evidence to support this claim. In Morris's study, 49% of prisoners' wives reported adverse changes in children's behaviour since their husbands' imprisonment (Morris 1965). Friedman found that children of jail inmates were more often rated below average in the school world on social, psychological and academic characteristics than controls (Friedman and Esselstyn 1965). These studies, therefore, suggest that parental imprisonment is a risk factor for mental health problems among children. However, these studies need to establish the impact of the effect of parental incarceration on the mental health of children (young people) in the context of Uganda.

Parental incarceration often increases the risk of delinquent or antisocial behaviour in children. A study by Farrington and Murray (2005) conducted in London found that "separation because of parental imprisonment was a strong predictor of all antisocial and delinquent outcomes, even up to the age of 40 years. Separation due to incarceration predicted worse outcomes for children than parent-child separation caused by other reasons, and these effects were stable even after controlling for parental criminality and childhood risk factors (Farrington and Murray, 2005). In addition, Johnston 1995; Sack 1977; Sack and Seidler 1978) asserted that Children are at risk of antisocial reactions to parental imprisonment (Johnston 1995; Sack 1977; Sack and Seidler 1978). It is further frequently stated that children of prisoners are six times more likely than their peers to be imprisoned themselves (Murray J., 2005). However, there appears to be no documented evidence to support this claim (see Johnston 1998, cited in Myers et al. 1999). Only one study has prospectively examined later-life criminality among children who experienced parental imprisonment (Murray and Farrington (in press) found that of London boys who were separated because of parental imprisonment between birth and age 10, 48% were convicted as an adult, compared to 25 % of boys who were separated for other reasons. A study by Aaron and Dallaire (2010) found that children of incarcerated parents were more likely to be delinquent and experience low-income family processes, which were a secondary effect of incarceration, largely contributed to the heightened risk of delinquent behaviour for the children (Aaron and Dallaire, 2010)

Murray, Loeber and Pardini (2012), who examined the Youth in Pittsburgh on the effects of parental arrest, conviction, and incarceration on children's future development of theft, marijuana use, depression, and poor academic performance, found that parental incarceration was associated with an increase in theft, which is a form of delinquent behaviour (Murray et al., 2012). They further argued that a possible explanation for the increase in theft is due to the negative social expectations, stigma and labels that are given by society to children of incarcerated parents, which might cause a child to adopt a delinquent identity (Murray et al., 2012).

Children of incarcerated parents have an increased potential for psychopathological difficulties and social well-being. According to Marjore (2019), Children face stigmatization, discrimination, their relationships with others and their community, and their physical and mental health as they often suffer from trauma, fear, shame, guilt and low self-esteem (Marjore, 2019). His argument is in line with Murray and Murray (2010), who agreed that parental incarceration is a predictor of future psychopathological problems in children and the degree of separation due to incarceration is said to inhibit attachment, possibly leading to the development of an insecure attachment between the child and caregiver. Interestingly, maternal incarceration is found to have more risk factors for children than paternal incarceration. Because mothers are typically the primary caregivers, children may experience more turbulence when the mother is imprisoned (Murray & Murray, 2010). However, Murray and Murray (2010) also note that risk factors present prior to parental incarceration are essential when considering child psychopathology (Murray & Murray, 2010).

Parental incarceration affects children's social well-being: Arditti (2012) argues that children who have had or have an incarcerated parent experience "disenfranchised grief", which occurs when a person's experiences of loss cannot be openly acknowledged, publicly mourned or socially supported. In the case of incarceration, a child may feel like their parent has died in a social sense. Nevertheless, they may not be able to express this publicly because the person who is biologically alive feels embarrassment or shame upon disclosing that their parent is in prison due to the negative stigma that is attached to incarceration (Arditti, 2012). Additionally, Easterling and Feldmeyer (2017) interviewed

a mother who reported that after having her arrest and being on the front page of the newspaper, some parents would not let their two young children play with their children. Other women in the sample described their children being "saddled with their mother's criminal records" and being known as 'the kids with a mom in prison," so much so that in some cases, the "children and families were compelled to move to escape the stigma (Easterling and Feldmeyer, 2017).

Child's Relationship with the Incarcerated Parent: Being separated from a parent for great lengths of time can create several mixed emotions in children, including grief, confusion, anger, and, in some cases, even relief. According to Arditti (2012), the first type of ambiguous loss is when a family member is physically absent but psychologically present; for example, a child's parent may be in prison, but the family still sets a place at the dining table for them (Boss, as cited in Arditti, 2012). The second type of ambiguous loss occurs when a family member may be physically present but is psychologically absent; for example, upon visiting an incarcerated parent, a child may realize their parent is "a different person" from before. These forms of loss can create a large amount of confusion for a child who has lost a parent to incarceration, especially when the incarcerated parent changes psychologically during and after incarceration Boss, as cited in Arditti, 2012). One way to reduce the sense of loss that a child may feel is through visitation, which can help mitigate negative mother and child outcomes (Schubert, Duininck, & Shlafer. 2016).

Parental Incarceration is further argued to have positive outcomes for children, such as being less likely to drop out of school or be suspended from school have been associated with more contact with an incarcerated parent (Brewster and Trice, as cited in Duininck et al., 2016). However, according to Arditti (2012), visitation is a "paradox" because although visitation has benefits for both the parent and the child, it can also arouse painful emotions such as traumatic separation in both parties (Arditti, (2012).

Further, its effect on a Child's Academic Performance at school: Haskins and Turney's (2014) study on Fragile Families and Child well-being found that those children who experienced their father's incarceration between the ages of one and five years old had a greater likelihood of being retained in kindergarten and third grade. Teachers reported

proficiency, not test scores or behavioural problems, and explained more than half of the relationship between incarceration and early grade retention (Haskins and Turney, 2014). This suggests that it may not be the child's intellectual capacity or behaviour that leads to their grade retention but the biased treatment they may receive from their teachers. The little to no effect parental incarceration has on academic performance was also found in Nesmith and Ruhland's (2008) interviews, where they found that of the 34 children in the study, 53% described themselves as doing "well" or "really well" in school, only one student reported they were struggling, and the remainder reported they were doing "okay" (Nesmith and Ruhland, 2008). However, in the study by Loeber et al. (2012), parental incarceration was not found to affect the development of poor academic performance among the children within their sample, though this study attempted to measure the perceived effect of parental incarceration.

Concerning the above, parental incarceration is perceived to have effects on children's resilience. In a study by Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) where children and their caretakers were interviewed, children of incarcerated parents showed strong resilience and coping strategies. They describe how "it was impressive how many children found healthy outlets for their feelings or creative coping mechanisms to get them through the hard times" (Nesmith and Ruhland, 2008). The most common way of coping was getting involved in sports, theatre and church activities to provide an outlet for frustration, a focus beyond the stress at home, and an opportunity to build confidence. Furthermore, the findings that parental incarceration has little to no effect on a child's academic performance also reflect a child's resilience because it suggests they did not allow the stress of parental incarceration to prevent them from doing well in school. Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) also found that children of incarcerated parents were "remarkably sensitive to, and attentive to their caregiver's needs and emotions" and sometimes fell into adult-like roles. It further argued that incarceration has a positive side as it gives the children a sense of purpose, and for some children, it also brings out their nurturing side (Nesmith and Ruhland, 2008). Overall, while children who experience parental incarceration may experience an increased risk of mental illness, delinquent behaviour, negative social well-being, and strained relationships with their incarcerated parent, children still display higher levels of resiliency and can often adapt to their difficult situations.

2.4.2 Effect on Families

Families can face numerous challenges that affect the family and each family member individually. Arguably, one of the most difficult challenges a family may face is when one family member is removed from the family either temporarily or permanently through incarceration or imprisonment. It is important to note that in examining the effects of parental incarceration on families, there are other disadvantages, such as living in poverty.

Poverty: According to strain theory, parental Incarceration can affect effects the family structure. Poverty and the inability to achieve material success increase the likelihood of crime and misbehaviour" (Cohen, as cited in Loeber, Murray, and Pardini, 2012). The children of incarcerated parents are also at a heightened risk of problems due to the strain that is created by parental incarceration, and it affects a family's income during and after incarceration, thus leaving families at a financial disadvantage even after incarceration (Hardy, 2018). Additionally, according to Marjore (2019), the length of parental incarceration disrupts family structure, diminishes available economic resources and decreases the quality of family life, hence putting the children at a disadvantage (Marjore, 2019). Further, research that focused on how incarceration affects the family regarding the changes in their income and the potential for intergenerational mobility has found that when a father is incarcerated and, therefore, becomes unemployed, financial difficulties for the remaining family members may arise due to the loss of the family's primary earner. A report on child poverty found that mass incarceration in the United States played a significant role in increasing child poverty, particularly in non-white communities (Hannon and DeFina, 2010). Wildeman (as cited in Shaw, 2016) further argues that "experiences of parental incarceration significantly increase the risk of child homelessness, especially among Black children" (Wildeman, (as cited in Shaw, 2016). Hannon and DeFina (2010) further suggest that even after a parent's time is served, the earnings of that individual may still be limited due to the erosion of skills, the loss of social networks, the loss of destructible attitudes or behaviours and the stigma associated with incarceration.

In addition to poverty, parental incarceration affects marriage: When a parent is incarcerated, not only does a child lose their parent, but in many cases, someone is separated from their spouse. Siennick, Stewart, and Staff (2014) outlined four consistent findings regarding the effects of incarceration on divorce. These include that only incarceration during marriage leads to divorce, marriages are at risk of dissolving even after incarceration, the increased odds for divorce among those who have been incarcerated are double, and the effect increases with increased sentence length (Siennick et al., 2014). Siennick et al. (2014) also provide a review of the social exchange theory, which considers the attractiveness of a marriage, which is the ratio of rewards to costs, the barriers to leaving the marriage, and the relative attractiveness of other alternatives. In the context of incarceration, separation from a loved one can work to lower attractiveness, reduce barriers, and increase the attractiveness of other alternatives, which ultimately leads to higher chances of divorce. Furthermore, they found that incarceration during marriage was associated with more relationship violence, higher chances of extramarital sex, and less marital love (Siennick et al., 2014).

Braman (as cited in Lopoo and Western, 2005) found that "symptoms of depression and isolation from family and friends were experienced more by the wives of incarcerated men than the men themselves" (Lopoo and Western, 2005). This is due mainly to the stigma associated with incarceration, which can spread to family members and can affect their interpersonal relationships.

Massoglia, Remster and King (2011), however, found that although stigma appears to play a role in later separation, it is the physical separation that plays a more significant role in increasing divorce rates due to the lack of meaningful interaction and emotional connections between couples (Massoglia et al., 2011). Further, Lopoo and Western (2005) found out that while incarceration has little effect on the chances that an unmarried man will later marry after his release, they found that in the year that a man is incarcerated, his marriage is about three times more likely to fail compared to a man who is not incarcerated (Lopoo and Western, 2005). Further, Shaw (2016) argues that when a parent is stigmatized through incarceration, the stigmatization can spread to the rest of the family, limiting their current and future status as well. This results in what Shaw (2016) calls an

“intergenerational effect” that can work to sustain inequality (Shaw, 2016).

2.5 The coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by Caregivers in families affected by Parental Incarceration

Coping mechanisms are the patterns and behaviours people use to deal with unusually stressful situations, and humans lean on these strategies to keep themselves calm until they can fully adjust to the change after certain circumstances. Imprisonment of a parent can be a life-changing challenge for families left behind, particularly for innocent young children who may not be reasonable enough to understand their parents' situation innocently (Heinecke & Eklund. 2017). Metamorphosing parental separation and associated attachment disorders, economic strain, social stigma, health risks, academic disruptions, and behavioural problems are risks to children, adolescents, and their families due to the imprisonment of parents. This calls for a combination of personal, professional, structural, and systemic interventions in order to negate some of the adverse effects parental incarceration has on children.

Limited research has hampered highlighting of the coping strategies utilized by children, adolescents, and families; the priority of this section of the research is to review available studies and generally describe the different practices, indigenous coping mechanisms, knowledge, strategies, and support systems that children, adolescents, and affected families utilize to meaningfully take control of their lives, deal with stressors, adapt, and take care of their current and prospects in the global context. Johnson & Easterling (2015) undertook an in-depth interview to explore coping mechanisms in a sample of adolescents (n =10) after the imprisonment of their parents. Their study revealed that more adolescents utilized a combination of strategies. Thus, they Protect privacy and prevent the identity of their incarcerated parents in public spaces, a process known as de-identification. This helps them to reduce the negative emotions associated with their parent’s situation by limiting discussions on their imprisonment (Johnson & Easterling. 2015).

Further, desensitization, emotional-focused control, restraint, and quiet coping strategies are often influenced by adults’ and caretakers’ views, enabling families to manage emotions in stressful situations (Manby et al., 2015). The implications of this style

notwithstanding, the study revealed a coping variability that underscored the need for more research into these mechanisms.

Again, school-based interventions are one of the strategies identified. This is because schools and social circumstances have a significant role in strengthening children's resilience. After all, they individually developed their coping abilities and resilience processes and were influenced by the environment in which they lived. Hence, children depend on role models like caregivers, teachers, peers and settings in their environment, such as school (Heinecke & Eklund, 2017).

Manby et al. (2015) observed that children primarily used a combination of strategies, including distraction through school, participating in sports, going to the theatre, relying on their faith, spending time with friends, talking to supportive people such as family members, caregivers, and health professionals, therapy and attending NGO programs (Manby et al., 2015).

Once more, keeping Parental imprisonment secret is identified as a coping mechanism for both caregivers and children. Avoid talking about the root causes of incarceration. Stigma and isolation are problems that decrease Children's coping abilities (Marjore, 2019). It is evident that NGOs supporting children and families of prisoners have consistently emphasized the importance for children to receive clear information about their imprisoned parents (Marjore, 2019). Manby et al. (2015) confirmed the importance of telling the children about the plight of their parent's incarceration in honest, sensitive and developmentally appropriate ways, affirming Children's trust in caregivers. In contrast, hidden or distorted information could result in distrust or contribute to mental health problems (Marjore, 2019).

Regular prison visits could facilitate the coping journey with separation anxieties to adjust to the challenges and changes post-separation healthily. Halpenny, Greene & Hogan. 2008), in their research "Children's perspectives on coping and support following parental separation" among children and adolescents (n = 60) of two age categories (8-11 years of middle childhood and 14-17 representing adolescents), found out that children were able to utilize different sources of support both informal (family, friends) and formal

(counselling/peer support services, school, and other prison services) available to them (Halpenny et al., 2008). Halpenny et al. (2008), in the same study, noted that 68% of children reported frequent contact with their non-resident parents, representing a high frequency and preference for prison visits. Visiting prisons is, therefore, a vital component of institutional setups, offering families a critical means to stay connected and alleviate the harmful consequences of being apart (Halpenny et al., 2008).

Further, a study by Woodall & Kinsella (2017) about "Play-work in prison as a mechanism to support family health and well-being" conducted in a North England male prison using a cross-sectional qualitative design, employing tele-interviews with prison visitors (n = 6) who had previously participated in focused group play activities, reaffirms that prison visits mainly play a critical building component to the children's coping journey in helping children stay connected with their incarcerated parents which enables them to adjust to the realities of their parent's incarceration healthily by mimicking the typical play-life at home between the imprisoned parents and their children vital for the children and parent's emotional and mental well-being (Woodall & Kinsella, 2017). This, therefore, sports, play, and other physical activities confer cohesion, psychosocial, and integration benefits between inmates and their children and families, contributing to a critical aspect of the coping and support programs (Parker et al., 2014).

However studies by Poehlmann-Tyna & Pritzl. (2019) reported the contrary, arguing that unavoidable strenuous circumstances facing families of incarcerated parents, such as to afford frequent visits to their non-resident parents due to high transport costs, non-friendly days offered for visits, policies, and administrative issues in the correctional facilities, location, and distance between families, privacy concerns and inadequate prisons facilities for children to emulate a homely environment, caregiver restrictions and relationships (Poehlmann-Tyna & Pritzl. 2019). They argued that this makes prison visits an ineffective intervention for coping and adjustment for children and affected families.

Non-stigmatizing support programs by external service agencies to facilitate the Children's coping journeys throughout the separation process (Halpenny et al., 2008). In a study by Drapeau, Samson, Saint-Jacques (1999), among children (n = 62) (32 girls and

30 boys) whose parents had been separated for less than three years, results revealed the utilization of control and a problem-focused approach as opposed to suppression in a combination of other strategies to deal and cope with their challenges in managing the strains, stressors, and adversity and restoring functionality in the family post parental incarceration (Drapeau., et al. 1999). In direct contrast to the above, active participation in prison facility activities and other reunion programs has been seen to show positive outcomes in enabling inmates and their families to cope with the challenges of imprisonment. Data presented from a study of inmates (n = 101) representing 63 inmates and 38 inmates' wives that compared their results with non-participants in family reunion activities (conjugal) programs, the results of this study showed that these activities provided room for inmates and their wives to engage in developmental conversations on family matters, pray together, and plan better for their children and families compared to the control group, which allowed them to smoothly adjust and cope collectively as a family, in conclusion, family connectivity is the over-riding support that these families need to cope and adjust healthily (Carlson & Cervera (1991).

In conclusion, it is therefore vital that multiplicity or a combination of coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by caregivers in families affected by parental incarceration mitigate the adverse effects of parental incarceration among the children and their families.

2.6 Ways of improving the welfare of Children with Parental Incarceration

The increasing number of children with incarcerated parents constitutes perhaps one of the largest at-risk populations in the world and suffers short- and long-term effects. Studies have shown that it is difficult to quantify these effects. However, current literature indicates that children of incarcerated parents are becoming increasingly vulnerable to economic stress and adverse interpersonal difficulties. Studies on how to improve the welfare of children with incarcerated parents have been conducted, and there are proven interventions/programs designed to improve the welfare of the children in developed countries rather than in developing countries like Uganda. Such intervention approaches included the following:

Relationship-strengthening strategies are one of the ways recommended for improving the welfare of children with Incarcerated Parents. Since the 1990s, US policies have aimed to increase family stability by promoting two-parent families, using educational programs and economic incentives. The Administration for Children & Families- part of the US Department of Health and Human Services- has given more than a dozen grants to programs that aim to support families both during the father's incarceration and after his release (Turney & Goodsell, 2018).

Evaluations by Philip & Carolyn (2002) found that the best predictor of a father's involvement with his children was the quality of his relationship with the children's mother (Philip & Carolyn, 2002). This is because incarceration can strain parents' relationships and contribute to adverse outcomes for their Children; relationship-strengthening interventions for incarcerated parents may indirectly reduce inequalities between their children and others.

Another way is deliberately improving the economic well-being of incarcerated children and families: Economic hardship and deprivation shape early childhood development and have repercussions for well-being later in life. Some policies to improve economic well-being for low-income families have been incorporated into initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood, while other policies and benefit programs target poverty more directly (Philip & Carolyn, 2002). Evaluations of these programs often show that increasing parents' income can improve their children's well-being (Greg, Katherine, & Elizabeth, 2014). Several studies have examined the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a refundable tax credit for low to moderate-income workers. Using 1986–2000 data from the children of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, one such study found that an increase of $1,000 in annual family income, including money provided by the EITC, was associated with an increase in combined math and reading test scores in the short term. It brought the most significant gains to children from disadvantaged families, younger children, and boys (Philip & Carolyn, 2002). Parents' transition to and from jail or prison often puts immediate and short-term strain on family finances, and these findings suggest that an income boost may be beneficial for children in such families (Gordon & Lance, 2012).

Further, Child-Centred Play Therapy (CCPT) is another way to improve the welfare of Children of incarcerated Parents. Brown and Gibbons (2018), using case illustration, argued that CCTP is responsive to both the developmental and cultural needs of Children with incarcerated parents (CIP) and also provides Children with incarcerated parents with a therapeutic environment to deal with their grief and move towards achieving growth and healing (Brown & Gibbons, 2018). They further argued that in addition to providing intervention and support to tackle the emotional and social needs of Children with incarcerated parents, Child-Centred Play Therapy offers a supportive environment to express their grief and full range of emotions during parental incarceration while also allowing them to experience a sense of control (Brown and Gibbons, 2018).

However, this approach is limited by the stigma associated with taking part in the Children with Incarcerated Parents program, admitting and retaining participants, establishing trust with Children with Incarcerated Parents and caregivers, and managing logistical issues (Brown and Gibbons, 2018).

Group Treatment or Counseling interventions are proposed as a treatment approach for Children with incarcerated parents. A study by (King-White & Jeffries, 2019) examined the efficacy of an eight-session group model on attendance, academic success, self-esteem, and delinquent and aggressive behaviour in Children with incarcerated parents (King-White & Jeffries, 2019; Lopez & Burt, 2013). However, King-White and Jeffries's (2019) study found a non-substantial reduction in attendance, academic attainment, and delinquent and aggressive behaviour after treatment, with a slight rise in self-esteem scores. Lopez and Burt (2013), in their expository research, argued that by adopting a group program for Children with Incarcerated Parents treatment, Children could relieve anxiety, identify social support and coping strategies, build their self-esteem, establish trusting relationships, and develop social skills (Lopez and Burt, 2013).

In addition, mentoring interventions for Children of Incarcerated Parents are one of the ways to improve the welfare of incarcerated children. Studies have evaluated mentoring interventions and programs for Children of incarcerated parents. One such studies were

done by Brewster and Foreman (2012), who found out that 80% of their survey respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that mentors helped them to challenge themselves to succeed, helped them to put more effort into learning, they could discuss their problems and future with their mentors, their mentors made them feel good, and they could look unto their mentors for guidance (Brewster and Foreman, 2012).

Although mentoring might not address all the challenges facing Children with Incarcerated Parents, mentoring can create positive results that may alleviate some risks connected with being a Children with Incarcerated Parent. Studies by Stump et al. (2018) suggest that mentoring programs enhance their program practices to address the specific needs of Children with Incarcerated Parents; mentoring can result in more positive match and youth outcomes for Children with Incarcerated Parents (Hellen, 2021).

Again, Trauma-informed Practice (TIP) and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). Studies by Morgan-Mullane (2018) and Skinner-Osei & Levenson (2018) respectively demonstrated that Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT) and Trauma Informed Practice could be efficiently adopted for both children and adults experiencing traumatic symptoms in association with parental imprisonment and other complex traumas (Morgan-Mullane, 2018), (Skinner-Osei & Levenson, 2018).

However, the TF-CBT model is believed to work best for children who experience higher rates of depressive symptoms and are willing to engage in the treatment process; however, children who present with stronger symptoms of trauma avoidance and distrust in authoritative figures would have challenges connecting with their therapists. TF-CBT should be seen as a potential treatment that should be utilized if its essential conditions for treatment can be met (Hellen, 2021). Integrative trauma-informed practice can help social workers rebuild resilience, restore hope, foster healthy relational skills, and disrupt the intergenerational transmission of lost potential for Children with Incarcerated Parents. Adopting a trauma-informed approach can also help social workers model problem-solving and decision-making strategies so that children can learn and practice self-correction skills which may have been absent in chaotic families or communities (Hellen, 2021).

Lastly, Inclusive education improves children with incarcerated parents' welfare. Schools play vital roles in supporting children who experience parental imprisonment (Ramsden, 1998; SCIE, 2008; United Nations, 2011). Research has shown that good relationships with teachers can protect children who experience parental imprisonment (Losel et al., 2012). Schools have an essential role to play for two reasons: firstly, nearly all children attend school, and thus, schools offer a significant opportunity to support children of incarcerated parents and to help meet their needs (Robertson, 2011). Secondly, parental imprisonment has been shown to have a direct impact on children's academic attainment as well as socio-emotional development, often leading to changes in behaviour, which may escalate to school exclusion or truancy (SCIE, 2008). Appropriate, sensitive pastoral care at the school level is, therefore, necessary not only in terms of providing support to children who are typically highly stigmatized but also in contributing to improving outcomes for a group of children who have been identified as being at risk of several poor outcomes (Julia, Caroline, & Rebecca, 2013). The general and specific knowledge of parental incarceration held by schools that offer inclusive education improves a school's ability to respond appropriately to impacted students (McCrickard & Flynn, 2016). Studies have shown that children of incarcerated parents are significantly more likely to be suspended and expelled from school and suffer adverse educational outcomes (Megan, 2009).

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Theoretical Perspectives

Scholars have utilized a range of theoretical approaches to explain their findings on the effects of parental incarceration (Murray et al., 2012; Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2003; Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999), it is unlikely that any one theory or finding will provide a thorough enough understanding of such a complex issue (Eddy & Reid, 2003). (Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2003), emphasize the importance of taking a multi-theoretical approach and posit that using such an approach in parental incarceration research will perpetuate better research and elicit more effective responses from policy-makers Parke and Clarke-Stewart (2003).

3.1 Social Learning and Socialization Processes

Popular theoretical constructs guiding research on the effects of parental incarceration have been socialization processes and mechanisms of social learning, such as imitation. The theoretical notions associated with the socialization approach date back to the late 1940s and Donald Sutherland's nine propositions of differential association theory. Sutherland posited that criminal behaviour was learned through interactions with others and those closer to us (i.e. intimate groups); those whom we saw more often, for more extended periods, and who were early influences (i.e. parents, siblings) were said to be more influential to our learning process (Akers & Jennings, 2015). Through these interactions or associations with others, we learn definitions that are either favourable or unfavourable towards the commission of a crime. In addition to initiating our definitions favourable or unfavourable to the commission of crime, interactions with intimate groups also facilitate learning techniques (i.e. how to break into a car) and motives for committing crimes (Akers & Jennings, 2015).

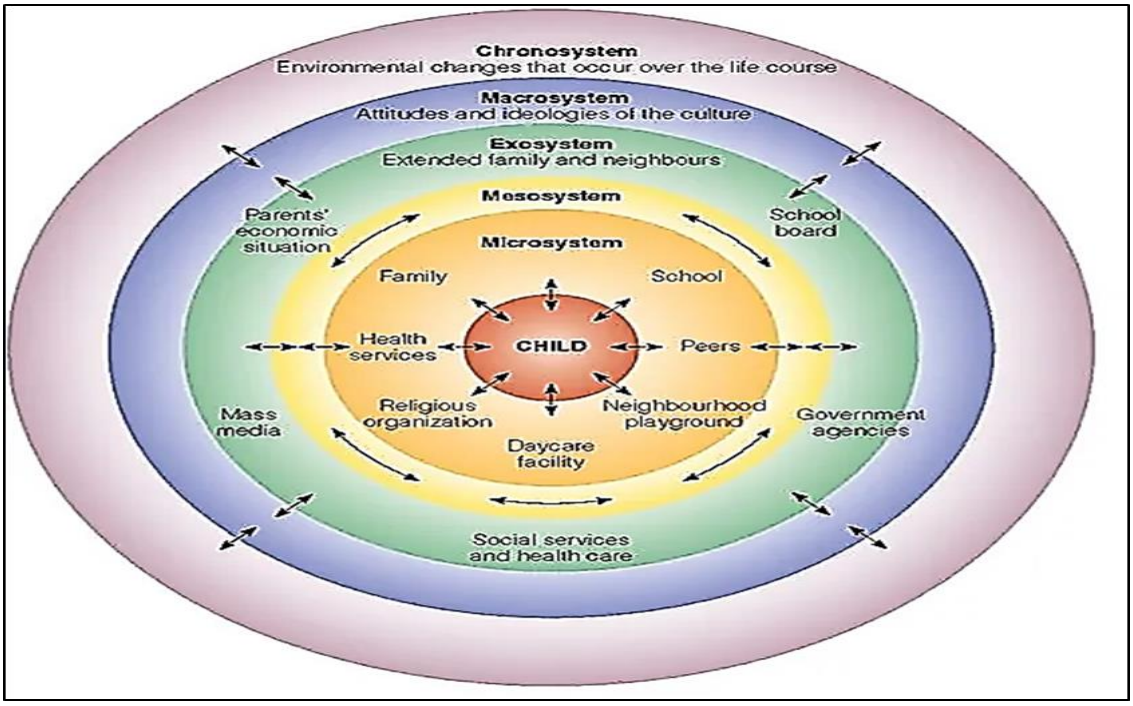
Since its inception, refinements have been made to Sutherland's theory, but theorists have remained true to his nine initial propositions while attempting to clarify the intricacies of the learning process (Akers & Jennings, 2015). In their attempt at this challenge, Burgess

and Akers (1966) successfully applied concepts prominent in behavioural psychology (operant conditioning, reinforcement, imitation) to specify the learning process that takes place when we interact with others (Akers & Jennings, 2015). Akers developed these ideas even further, eventually outlining what is now known as social learning theory.

In addition to differential associations with others, social learning theory posits that these past interactions and experiences result in future expectations of punishments or rewards, which, in turn, affect decisions of whether to commit a crime. More specifically, the differential reinforcement we experience will impact our future decision-making process, as we have learned one way or the other. Social learning theory also proposes that observing the punishment or reinforcement of others' behaviours can also impact our decisions, as we may imitate their behaviour to achieve similar outcomes or avoid replicating their missteps (Akers & Jennings, 2015). As far as the potential effects of parental incarceration on Children, both positive and negative outcomes have been hypothesized in terms of these socialization or social learning concepts (see Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999; McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988; Sack, 1977).

On the one hand, antisocial parents may teach children definitions and techniques favourable to committing a crime, and, therefore, parents' subsequent incarceration may have beneficial outcomes for the child (Sutherland, Cressey, & Luckenbill, 1992, as cited in van de Rakt, 2011). On the other hand, parents' incarceration may reveal antisocial behaviours of which their children were previously unaware, and this new awareness could prompt imitation or modelling of parents' behaviour (van de Rakt, 2011; Sack, 1977). Also, social learning perspectives highlight that opportunities for delinquency ripen due to potentially weakened parental involvement and supervision and increased reliance on peers in the socialization process (McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988).

3.2 The Ecological Model of Human Social Development.



Source: From (Guy-Evans, O. (2020)

Figure 3.2: Illustration of The Ecological Model of Human Development by Urie Bronfenbrenner explains the influence of systems on the development of an individual.

The ecological Model of human development is a framework by the American proponent-psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, which illustrates the diverse ways people interact with the environment. It presents an interesting theoretical concept that could be used to contextualize, explain, and link the broader subject of imprisonment. It analyzes how synergies affect or can change life either positively or negatively depending on the dysfunction of one or the other in the system. The model presents two main prepositions: (i) Development is complex, interactive and is a reciprocal process between the individual and their immediate environment (ii) the second proposition states that the individual's innate characteristics influence the interactions with his or her environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1995) signifying the substantial part an individual's characteristics plays in the environment they live in.

According to Guy-Evans (2020), Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, also known as the ecological system theory of human development, influences an individual's behaviour by sex, age, and health (biophysical and psychological characteristics). In this context, human development, growth, attitudes, and other behavioural characteristics interact and are firstly influenced by the most intimate (microsystem) techno-subsystem, family, friends, neighborhood, religious institutions (religious teachings, beliefs, and doctrines), schools (classmates, teachers) and the workplace (organizational culture, values, norms) to the furthest and broadest influencers (mezzo, exo, and macrosystems) as in the above diagram. The interaction in systems creates a feedback loop (in and out interactions). Bronfenbrenner described this as bi-directional interactions; the reactions, attitudes, and behaviours and reactions of individuals towards the intimate and broadest systems also affect how the workplace, schools, and religious institutions react and treat him/her in return; therefore, as individuals, we have the power and ability to influence broader systems too (Guy-Evans, 2020).

The ecological model, which may for this subject be linked to the social learning theory per se, posits that individuals learn new behaviour and acquire positive or negative energy from observing the experiences and consequences of other sub-systems and that this learning occurs through a combination of direct experience, observation, and reinforcement. This philosophy can be applied to examine how children learn to cope with parental imprisonment and how parental imprisonment may lead to behavioural and emotional problems through the modelling and reinforcement of dysfunctional coping strategies. Additionally, the ecological systems theory could be used to explore how support systems use programs and interventions to promote positive coping strategies and behaviour in children, young people, and other family members (parents or other secondary caregivers) impacted by parental imprisonment.

The ecological model explains how different innate factors interact with other cofounders to influence human general adaptation. This theory focuses on how a person interacts with their environment, particularly the family, which is the primary system that affects/impacts the functioning of individuals and themselves across the lifespan. Consequently, if a parent passes or is separated from a child in prison, it can ultimately

have eco-social and psychological consequences immediately or across their lifetime. Therefore, it is essential to note that a weakness in one part of the system or subsystems can impact the whole system across the continuum. Suppose the challenges that arise out of incarceration are not adequately addressed at the family level. In that case, it can have a domino effect across other parts of the system as a whole, including peers, neighborhoods, and schools, and it can affect government expenditure in treating the costs arising from the same. How children interact with their family, the immediate and part of the larger external environment significantly dictates the physical, social, emotional, and developmental function both internally and externally as a chain in the world of systems (Utrzan & Carlson, 2017).

According to Bronfenbrenner, there are five (5) distinct systems and somewhat subsystems that must interplay and interact to influence every aspect of a child, a young person, and humanity in general: the micro, mezzo, exo, macro, and chronosystem as agents of socialization and reinforcement (Utrzan & Carlson, 2017). Therefore, the systems theory is vital in providing focus to cause-and-effect discussions but also in providing a more profound sense of direction in exploring and analyzing causes of behaviour by environmental factors, for instance, which is essential in designing interventions for the client's problem situations (Gray & Lombard, 2010). The theory also seeks to provide redress when dysfunction occurs within a given system. Therefore, seeking to prevent or rehabilitate adverse effects without addressing the root cause may not yield sustainable solutions or interventions.

Our nature and nurture, which govern our upbringing, generally shape our dominant tendencies predominantly. Some of us come from childhood wanting more love and care, connection, protection or intimacy, space, and freedom to be left alone. Therefore, whereas one may be more afraid of losing the other or afraid of abandonment, others may respond otherwise in the same situation. How one responds to adversity is predominantly shaped by internal strength (feelings and beliefs) and external systems.

Similarly, Farnfield's (2008) systems theory proposes a theoretical model for comprehensively assessing problems. Accordingly, social workers focus on undesired

behaviour or social problems. Understand the issues and gaps within individual subsystems within the more outstanding system to know where the dysfunction emerges from based on the system's theoretical model. Problem characteristics of emergent behaviour cannot be rationalized when looking singularly at any of its systems or parts Farnfield, (2008).

The microsystem, to the researcher, contributes to the core functions of a being. This system comprises the individual's immediate environment and agents of socialization (family, schools, peers, community support organizations, religious institutions, healthcare services, neighbourhood playgrounds, etcetera.). These, combined with a child's innate attributes (attitudes, behaviour, feelings, beliefs, and actions), both directly and indirectly impact and reinforce positive or unsocial behaviour with other systems within the synergy in the event of parental imprisonment. The risks of child mental health deterioration and secondary victimization leading to antisocial behaviour in children are influenced by family dynamics and the relationship between the child and the incarcerated parent, as well as other family members. This includes emotional support, financial stability, and caregiving responsibilities. These can contribute to the deterioration of the child's overall situation if their closest systems are not supportive enough. Caregivers (extended family and peers) with whom children have direct contact have the most significant impact on the child within the microsystem. Moreover, parental imprisonment can affect a child's concentration, behaviour, and overall academic success; the child's experiences at school, including interactions with teachers and peers, and academic performance outcomes will be significantly determined by his immediate environment. If a shortfall or dysfunction exists within this unit of the system, it can have a more adverse impact on the child in his coping in the event of an absent parent to imprisonment.

Interestingly, most studies on this topic focus mainly on the microsystem (i.e., the hampered face-to-face interactions of the parent following incarceration). This includes the parent-child relationship before, during, and after incarceration. The absence of a parent due to incarceration has the potential to affect children across different domains adversely. As a social worker, this unit must be more empowered to support the children to heal and build their social health and stay in school to help them cope before other

systems get involved; otherwise, depression, anxiety, withdrawal, self-injury, suicidal ideation or attempts, emotional problems, and other behavioural problems may continue to manifest within these children compared to their peers (Utrzan & Carlson, 2017).

The mesosystem denotes and encompasses the direct linkages between the micro, the child, his or her home, peers, various community systems, other institutions, and or even the prison institutions and their services, if available, closest to the children. In the case of parental imprisonment, the mesosystem reflects the quality of communication channels, the mode and frequency of interaction between the child, the family members, the incarcerated parent and other supportive networks and community services effective in mitigating the effects of parental absence. The reciprocal interactions and energy as synergy in the whole system influence the child and family's positive or adverse outcomes. In other words, when a child is affected by neglect at home, this may influence how he or she interacts with the teacher within the school environment. If the Children are unable to visit their imprisoned caregivers due to existing prison-disabling visitation policies, children may experience stress caused by the prison services.

Children are much more likely to develop a phobia and negative judgment or conclusions about any prison officers wearing a security badge due to the institutional links to law enforcement and parental imprisonment. Suppose children are not able to visit their incarcerated parents in the prisons. In that case, it may cause them more trauma, depression, and anxiety towards the institution of prison and the justice system.

In the Exo and Macrosystems Ecological layer, two or more settings exist; even though some may not directly correlate with the child's structure of the microsystem, the child has no influence and active participation in this setting as it influences children's life course development outcomes. The legal system, government policies concerning parental imprisonment, prison visitation rights, the economic conditions, employment opportunities available to the parent, parents' (employer) workplace influence, family reunification programs, economic conditions, government agencies, school boards, cultural factors, societal attitudes (like stigma and discrimination towards the child and the imprisoned parent). All of these system factors have the potential to directly impact

the well-being of the child and their family if they are effective in enabling the psychosocial growth and development of the children. If they are dysfunctional, they can exacerbate and increase stress for the imprisoned parent, the child and their families.

The last system is the chronosystem, which encompasses the transitions and shifts in the child's life and environment (Utrzan & Carlson, 2017). This system consists of all the environmental changes that occurred over the individual's lifetime, and this can be influenced by the time the parent spends in custody, may have a considerable effect on the children and their families and can wholly or temporarily disrupt family relationships and structure influencing and shaping the transitional and coping journey of children and families of incarcerated parents.

3.3 Attachments, Trauma, and Social Bonds

The theoretical concept of attachment, or parental bond, is prominent in criminological literature (see van de Rakt, 2011; Dallaire, 2007; Murray et al., 2005; Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2003). Specifically pertaining to parental imprisonment research, attachment-based theoretical arguments are often subcategorized as trauma perspectives (Murray & Murray, 2010). The trauma theory most often cited in parental incarceration literature is Bowlby's (1973) attachment theory.

Bowlby (1973) posited that the disruption of parent-child attachment, in our case, via parental incarceration, can result in adverse emotional reactions among Children. These adverse emotional responses likely hinder continuous healthy psychosocial development (Sroufe, 1988, as cited in Parke & Clark Stewart, 2003). Research that has considered parental incarceration from this perspective posits that trauma is experienced as a result of parent-child separation or disruption of the parent-child bond. In addition, parental incarceration not only includes disrupted attachment, loss, or separation from a parent, but trauma can also result from disrupted living arrangements or changes in caretakers (Murray & Murray, 2010).

Hirschi's (1969) social bond theory has also been noted regarding the impact of disrupted parent-child attachments on Children's outcomes (see van de Rakt, 2011). As Hirschi (1969) suggested with social bond theory, people with less to lose are likelier to commit

crime. He clarified that the most crucial aspect of the social bond is the emotional attachment between persons or the community. If one is attached to his or her parents, he or she will be more likely to refrain from committing crimes to avoid damaging the relationship. Ergo, if the parent-child attachments are broken due to separation caused by parental incarceration, Children will be less likely to refrain from committing criminal acts.

Specifically, regarding differences between maternal and paternal incarceration experiences, both social bond and attachment theory suggest that the disruption of mother-child relationships would intensify children's inability to establish or maintain secure attachments with alternative caregivers beyond that of father-child separations (Dallaire, 2007). Also, as stated earlier, because incarcerated mothers are more likely than incarcerated fathers to have been caretaking for their child prior to imprisonment, the loss of a mother is even more disruptive to children's lives (Glaze & Marushack, 2008; Eddy & Reid, 2003; Mumola, 2000; Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999).

Strain**:** The notion of strain, or emotional stressors related to the separation from a parent due to parental imprisonment, is at the root of attachment theory. However, the types of strain most often discussed in parental incarceration literature are economic and social strains. Agnew's general strain theory encompasses all of these potential sources of strain. It posits that crime may be used to alleviate the stress associated with introducing various types of strain (Agnew, 1992).

By applying a more individualized, social psychological approach to earlier aggregate 19-level strain theories, Agnew (1992, 2001) was able to broaden the theory's applicability. By adding sources of strain to the classic 'failure to achieve monetary or success goals,' Agnew outlined how the removal of positively valued stimuli or the inability to avoid negative stimuli could also cause strain (Akers & Sellers, 2009; Cullen & Agnew, 2006). General strain theory ties nicely into parental incarceration research, with much research typically considering the strain associated with the families' loss of social capital- not solely financial – but also relational and emotional (see Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994).

In many cases, the loss of financial contributions from the subsequently incarcerated parent creates economic hardships for families and children on the outside (Siegel, 2011; Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999). Further explicating the concept of lost social and human capital after the removal of a parent, McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) note that, assuming the incarcerated parent was providing some form of social capital, whether financial or emotional, current caretakers will now have less support, time, and money to invest in the upbringing of Children. Moreover, with less quality supervision due to parental absence and increased risk for poverty due to loss of income, children are at increased risk for criminal involvement (Arditti, Lambert-Shute, & Joest, 2003).

Siegel (2011), in her qualitative study of children of system-involved parents, adds to parental incarceration literature using strain, noting the emotional toll incarceration can have on a family unit. She writes,

> "There are strong theoretical reasons for concern: families coping can experience strain, affecting the quality of the entire family environment and nature of the parent-child relationship, all of which can adversely affect children." (Siegel 2011:15)

Siegel (2011) underscores the typical income disparities between male and female 20 prisoners, noting that, before imprisonment, a woman's economic standing is most likely worse than a man's and is most often below the poverty level. Taken together, Siegel's (2011) findings and the strain perspective suggest a directional hypothesis about outcomes for maternal versus paternal incarceration, in that maternal incarceration may cause more strain and, therefore, increase the likelihood of Children's arrest.

Stigma and Labeling. Additional research on the effects of parental incarceration focuses on the stigma and subsequent behaviours associated with having a parent behind bars. Labeling perspectives suggest that instead of achieving the desired deterrent effects, labelling as a method of social control may unintentionally produce subsequent deviant behaviour through *labelees'* commitment to deviant self-identities (Paternoster and

Iovanni, 1989). To further clarify the actual process of how self-concepts develop amid deviant labelling, it is crucial to bear in mind the stigma and negative images or stereotypes mainstream society attaches to deviant labels- such as "*prisoner*" or "*convict*" or, in the case of Children, "*child of a criminal*" (Bernburg, 2009; Link & Phelan, 2001).

Paternoster Lovanni (1989) explain that when the deviant label follows individuals into everyday social settings, developing self-concepts are liable to be negatively influenced by repeated stigmatization and additional labelling from others. More simply, societal stereotypes about criminals, imprisonment, or other norm violations influence society's reactions and attitudes toward labelled individuals. These stereotypes will likely impact the quality of interactions between labelled individuals and different members or institutions within society and subsequently reinforce deviant self-concepts for those labelled (Bernburg, 2009).

Studies have found that having a parent or family member behind bars can result in the labelling and stigmatization of Children and families of those incarcerated parents. Using a labelling perspective to guide their hypotheses, researchers have explored how Children's subsequent behaviour may be impacted by the stigma associated with parental incarceration (see Siegel, 2011; Giordano, 2010; Nesmith & Ruhland, 2008; Murray et al., 2005). Studies have focused on parents' criminal label attachment to Children, potentially affecting their self-perception and how they are treated or viewed by others (van de Rakt, 2011; Murray et al., 2005; Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999). Foster and Hagan (2015) report that "actual and anticipated rejections [by others] can have lasting harmful consequences" for Children stigmatized by their parents' incarceration.

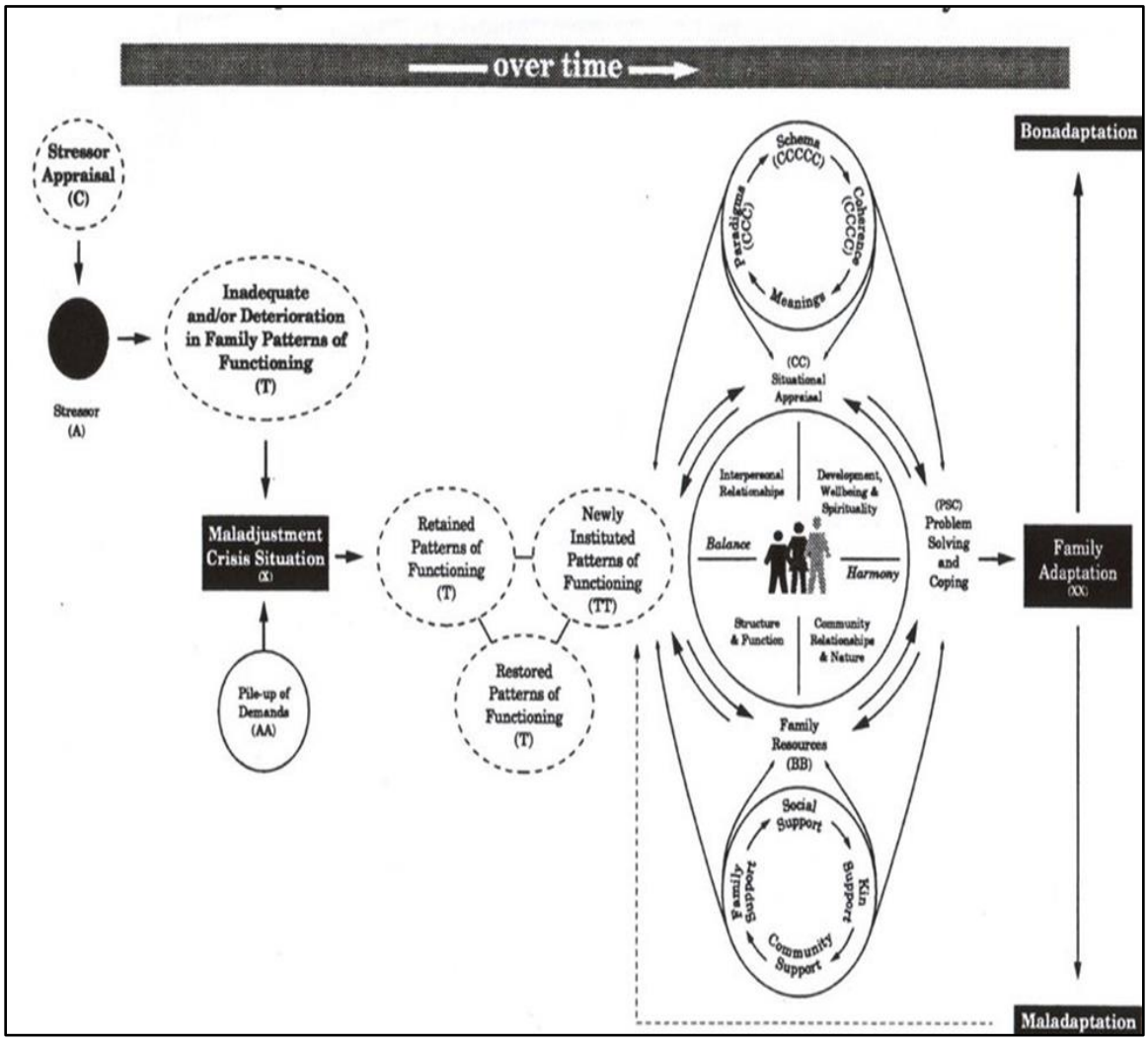
Research by Hagan and Palloni (1990) supports the notion that labelling individuals who are already stigmatized can have a more significant criminogenic effect. They found that sons who were labelled as having a criminal parent (fathers had criminal convictions) who themselves eventually became involved in the criminal justice system (i.e. arrested) experienced a more significant labelling effect (i.e. had higher rates of subsequent delinquency) than those who did not have preexisting labels as children of criminal parents.

About the current study, it is helpful to note Siegel's (2011) findings that maternal incarceration was more stigmatizing than having a father in prison. She writes that maternal incarceration betrays stereotypical gender expectations and "runs counter to the idealized image of what a mother should be" (Siegel, 2011:159). These findings, guided by the labelling perspective, inform the direction of our hypotheses, noting that outcomes for Children who experience maternal incarceration will be worse than for those who experience paternal incarceration.

3.4 Life-course or Developmental Perspectives

A life course or developmental perspective is another theoretical avenue in parental incarceration literature (Siegel, 2011; Eddy & Reid, 2003). Life-course perspectives place Children's parental incarceration experience in context with their additional life experiences while underscoring the unavoidable influence of parent-child networks (Siegel, 2011; Elder, 1998, as cited in Parke & Clarke Stewart, 2003).

The life-course perspective highlights turning points in individual's lives, which, regarding this study, could include losing a parent to incarceration as either a positive or negative experience. Considering Children's experiences with parental incarceration holistically, scholars using this theoretical framework acknowledge Children's experiences separate from parental incarceration. More to the point, the life-course perspective takes into account Children's experiences before their parent was incarcerated, their experiences. In contrast, their parents were incarcerated, as well as their experiences after their parents were released. Using this holistic approach, the effects of parental incarceration can be better isolated as potentially influencing Children's life-course trajectories. Hagan and Dinovitzer (1999) suggest, regarding this perspective, that "the imprisonment of a parent represents one kind of event that can combine with other adverse life experiences in influencing longer-term life outcomes" as illustrated and explained in the figure below:



Source: www.researchgate.net

Figure 3.4: Illustration of the Risk and Resiliency Model of Family Strain, Adjustment and Maladaptation

Risk and Resiliency: Risk and resiliency perspectives, sometimes referred to as selection factors, are found increasingly in the parental incarceration literature, and, like developmental theories, they take a more holistic view of the potential effects parental incarceration experiences may have on Children. The theoretical notions put forth by these perspectives take into consideration the additive risks, or multiplicative pathways, that can influence future outcomes for Children who experience parental incarceration (Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999).

Foster and Hagan (2015) explain that an earlier process that must occur for 23 families who experience maternal or paternal incarceration makes those families inevitably different from other families from the start. Said differently, by analyzing Children's future outcomes from the vantage point that there are additional risk factors, such as their genetic predispositions or exposure to violence, neglect, or poor parenting techniques that predate their parents' imprisonment, risk and resiliency perspectives assume families experiencing parental incarceration are already unique from parents and children who do not experience incarceration (Murray et al., 2012b; Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999).

However, these theories also highlight that increasing risk factors does not guarantee adverse future outcomes (i.e., adulthood criminal justice involvement). A key to this perspective is the resiliency aspect, where various protective factors may engender positive adaptations to adverse life events like having a parent incarcerated (Dallaire, 2007; Eddy & Reid, 2003; Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2003). Studies have found that some children have successfully avoided the pathways to adverse life outcomes associated with increased risk and have positively adapted to their experiences (Giordano, 2010; Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2003).

In her interviews with Children of high-risk parents, many of whom had been incarcerated, Giordano (2010:168) explains,

> "Children possess the uniquely human capacity to reflect on their parents' and their own experiences, (and) some youths, based on the totality of their experiences, and their social psychological reactions to them, move forcefully to develop an identity in sharp contrast to the one the parents have modelled."

Along these same lines, because of the complexity of factors often predating and following parental incarceration, along with the additionally unique experience of parents' criminality, scholars caution against attributing any future outcomes solely to the effects of parental incarceration (Murray et al., 2012b; Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2003).

Proponents of research on the impact of parental incarceration on children have expressed a need for broader approaches to understanding the intricacies of such a complex issue.

As Giordano (2010:147) explains, a “comprehensive portrait of children’s experiences and exposure” to related risk factors is hindered by solely focusing on the periods while a parent is imprisoned. Relating findings from her mixed-method study of Children of highly delinquent survey participants, Giordano (2010) concludes that, for children who have experienced parental incarceration, there are many more life stressors beyond the period in which their parents were imprisoned. Many children expressed that handling their parents’ incarceration was more accessible than dealing with other life situations (Giordano, 2010).

Regardless of the complexities involved, by using risk and resiliency perspectives to guide their research, scholars and practitioners can better show how parental imprisonment experiences may be one adverse event amongst many risk factors and better identify the unique effects of parental incarceration (Murray et al., 2012b). In terms of the current study, proponents of the risk and resiliency theories have suggested an essential step towards achieving this goal includes knowing whether maternal incarceration or paternal incarceration presents more significant risk factors for Children (Dallaire, 2007; Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999). This theory posits interesting concepts to explain adversity, strain, stress, and human nature’s ability to overcome adversity and maintain positive outcomes despite exposure to stressors and that resilience may depend upon individual, familial, and social factors. In line with parental imprisonment, resiliency theory could be incredibly applicable to investigate how children's secondary caregivers and society can help cope with the adverse effects of parental imprisonment and maintain positive outcomes despite the numerous challenges they face. Familial factors, such as positive healthy parent-child relationships or family cohesion. Additionally, social factors, such as community resources and access to support programs, might promote resilience in those impacted by parental imprisonment. By understanding these protective factors, policymakers and practitioners can develop and implement support interventions to promote resilience and positive outcomes for children and secondary caregivers who have been impacted by parental imprisonment.

The resiliency Model seeks to contextualize and explain the different dynamics of responses to stress by isolating the individual, family, and community processes to social

or medical adversity (Patterson, 2002). It links the ideas of the ecological model and suggests that families are dependent and independent systems with the internal capacities to adjust, adapt and cope with and overcome stressors (Tableley, C. R., & McCubbin, 2016). The proponents of the (RMFS) advanced the following ideas below. (i). Adversity and stress are inevitable: We must learn to love and live with it (Kaldy, J. (2017). Children, families, and communities worldwide, regardless of status, geographical location, and economic situation, will inevitably experience adverse events, such as disasters, separation, illnesses, bereavement, joblessness, sickness, and or parental imprisonment.

(ii) Adaptation is the key to resilience: In the face of stress and adversity, families (children, young people, and other members) must gradually adjust and adapt to stressful events to a problem and solution-focused direction to maintain normal functioning. Adaptation refers to the processes families use to adjust to change, recover from stress, and grow in a positive direction. However, based on individual and family adjustment, the Bon-adaptability mechanisms to deal with stressors may provide opportunities for average growth and development.

(iii) Resilience is a dynamic process: Resilience may be classified as a personality trait; it is a child's, family, group members, and or the community's ability to bounce back and thrive forwardly in the face of adverse events and regain their competency, normalcy, and functioning later in life. It is not a fixed trait or characteristic but a dynamic process that can be learned and developed over time. Families can build resilience by developing positive coping mechanisms, building solid relationships, and seeking external support.

(iv) Bon-adaptation: As a desired outcome of positive resilience, which is vital for normal functioning, children and families that withstand stressors and adverse events achieve bon-adaptation, which is a set of numerous processes that stabilize the state of positive adjustment and growth of the individual from the risk of maladaptation. In this state, the individual and family members adapt, evolve, and develop new means of living and dealing with the reality of risk productively. This may involve building new character, mentality, skills, perspectives, or resources that enhance the family's capacity for resilience, and short of the above considerations, it may lead to (v) maladaptation in

families and children. These dysfunctional experiences occur commonly in society and often can delay or dissuade a family's growth and development trajectory. They are the negative responses of individuals when faced with stressful events. These may include criminality, alcoholism, drug use, delinquency, and dropping out of school. Maladaptation and dysfunction in families are often the daily concerns of governments and may require swift intervention or support to be addressed.

Despite the challenges children may experience before and during incarceration, the availability of social support systems internally and externally enhances their ability to cope, navigate and adapt well in the face of the underlying challenges. Moreover, the stigma associated with the incarceration of parents may lead to the mocking of their children. Stigmatization may even result in some people withdrawing from their children. While dealing with self and societal stigmatization, the children may engage in and resort to secrecy, isolation, or withdrawal from others. The stigma associated with parental incarceration may negatively or positively affect the social support available to their children. That is, due to stigma, the children might not be able to relate well with others, limiting the social support available to them. However, through the stigma, others may learn about the children's problems and offer help, enabling these children and families to cope and adapt to stressful circumstances, develop productive, healthy, functional habits, and thrive. The resiliency model of family stress (RMFS) recognizes that humans may experience stressful times but can also bounce back and thrive well during difficult times. This theory provides a framework that can be used to understand the unique mechanisms individuals and families use to demonstrate their resilience when faced with adversity.

3.5 Afrocentric Ubuntu Model

The Afrocentric "*Ubuntu"* model of helping one another pre-modern social work. Where appreciate the documentation and evolution of modern-day social work practice guided by evidence-based research by philosophers and theorists, social work was practised unconsciously by lay people within our indigenous nuclear and extended families to the broader systems of society and communities, though not guided by written literature but by oral traditions, there is evidence that this works too. It is, therefore, a misguided myth to believe that modern-day theories derive and develop from space. It is prudent that

researchers appreciate documentation of oralist practices. Do not sideline, ignore, and replace indigenous knowledge; instead, encourage social work practice alongside modern interventions to qualify the views and ways of social work practice in African societies. As the researcher proposes modern models to theorize and help deepen the reader's appreciation of societal problems, we should appreciate that unwritten indigenous knowledge existed, which was a basis for analyzing family and community problems. These approaches were used to resolve problems faced by families, anchored on tradition and norms according to the different tribes and cultural heritage. These were relevant to the problems facing indigenous African families and tribes before introducing professional Social Work (Twikirize, 2014).

The green-group theories, approaches, and model of Africa under the "Ubuntu" system were regarded as helpful, safe, and a valuable choice for promoting resilience, peace, harmony, and functioning in society used in families under the guidance of traditional cultural kings, chiefs, and clan heads to enhance societal welfare and security. These leaders unconsciously facilitate the problem of reducing human suffering and leading to the restoration of the average individual and family functioning. Clan systems and their heads usually helped to deal with problems whenever they emerged, based on wisdom and experience. These local oral traditions within rural settings ensured peace, harmony, and cohesion of families and the broader communities. If couples experienced marital conflicts, they would be sanctioned by the clan elders and heads who would sermon the extended families to address individual and family problems using indigenous knowledge and theories to resolve and prevent insecurity in the family using the kinship systems before the colonial era (Twikirize, 2014). If individuals, families, or couples experienced any form of marital conflict, they did not have to go and seek redress from the family support police, courts, or formal institutions, as is the case today. Instead, problems were reported to the clan elders, who would then offer indigenous social support, reassurance, and security to help resolve the conflicts before the introduction of professional social work and support services in traditional societies, family distress, adversity, orphanhood and child protection assistance were offered and managed by the extended families and the wider community (children belonged to the community) who protected them and worked to their best interest, based on their indigenous systems. Children were the

responsibility of the community irrespective of whether they belonged to their respective families, tribes, and or kinship.

In the context of imprisonment experiences in the family, family members and the more prominent extended family would be concerned about aiding the affected whenever needed, making regular visits to the prison to meet the imprisoned relative. Family members are conscious of the encouraging, spiritually uplifting power of visits to their imprisoned beloved ones, brother, mother, and father, taking with them food, drinks, clothing, and words of encouragement to the imprisoned to remind them of their worth and help them positively cope and feel cared for. Taking this family support into account plays a critical part in helping to strengthen family relationships and structure, which creates balance and harmony vital for family adaptation between the incarcerated and their affected families, significantly reducing maladaptation. Children would often become the responsibility of the extended family members, who would rally support for any requirement for the children and the affected families. This form of social work practice is based on the ubuntu doctrine of "*ukama"* and "*ujamaa"* (collectivist and collaborative resolution of problems, as opposed to individualism).

3.6 Current Theoretical Framework

As evidenced by the summaries above, social scientists have considered several processes to understand the effects of parental incarceration on children. These processes include individual- and family-level factors as well as psychological, emotional, economic, and social factors (Murray et al., 2012b; Murray & Farrington, 2008). Potential explanations emphasized in criminological literature include insufficient or decreased parental supervision and diminished access to economic resources. Murray, Farrington, Sekol, and Olsen (2009) point out that a child's level of care and supervision before, during, and after parental imprisonment is vital to the future outcomes for that child. However, removing a parent can have long-term familial effects, often impacting the level of supervision provided for children (Phillips, Erkanli, Keeler, Costello, & Angold, 2006). In order to better inform the parental incarceration literature about the differential effects of paternal and maternal incarceration, this study is proposed. This study shall be used to formulate

the most effective policies and interventions. Policy-makers need to know which combination of parental incarceration factors (i.e. mother or father incarcerated) presents the most risk for Children's future involvement with the criminal justice system.

Theoretical notions addressed in this section's perspectives and research findings guide my hypotheses. The following section reviews past research on the effects of parental incarceration. This summary is intended to underscore the complexities of not only parental incarceration experiences but also of parental incarceration research. While the analyses of this current study are limited to a small piece of the pie, the following literature review is intended to provide an understanding of the bigger picture. Empirical Research The idea that children of criminals might themselves become criminals has been a longstanding consideration within the field of criminology. It presents new research challenges (see Murray, Loeber, & Pardini, 2012b).

With more parents behind bars than ever before, interests in familial links to criminality perpetuate this line of research, with literature on this topic growing substantially in recent years (Murray & Farrington, 2008).

Researchers have taken notice of the complexities of the issue at hand, and scholars worldwide have studied the effects of parental incarceration, using both qualitative and quantitative methods and various international samples of Children of incarcerated parents (Murray et al., 2012b). In order to accurately hypothesize the effects parental imprisonment has on children, we must also recognize that this upward trend in incarceration has not impacted all children equally. Across the U.S., high imprisonment rates have been concentrated in a few communities, with typically the poorest urban areas among those most affected (Travis & Waul, 2003). Accordingly, these inequalities have disproportionally impacted ethnic minorities, as well. As mentioned earlier, it is vital to consider these additional risk factors for adulthood criminal justice outcomes, as parental imprisonment experiences may represent one event in a series of adverse experiences throughout children's lives (Murray, Farrington, & Sekol, 2012a; Johnston, 2006).

Many studies have explored the potential detrimental effects of parent incarceration on Children's future outcomes through various pathways; however, findings have not been

consistent, with results differing based on the sample or research methods utilized in analyses. As results have been inconclusive about the association between parental incarceration and children's adverse outcomes, some suggest that the risks for children appear relatively strong. In contrast, others claim that there is no specific risk to children impacted by parental incarceration. Often, Children's adverse outcomes can be explained by predated risk factors associated with children's social disadvantage and other life stressors (Murray et al., 2012b; Arditti & Few, 2006). Hence, parental incarceration's effects remain unclear (Murray et al., 2012a; Murray et al., 2012b; Siegel, 2011; Wildeman, 2009; and Murray & Farrington, 2008).

This review of empirical research presents the literature by categorizing the research findings. The first section includes studies that have found strong effects linking parental incarceration experiences to children's poor future outcomes. An additional summary provides literature that has explored the compounding, and sometimes confounding, risk factors most often associated with children who have experienced parental incarceration, and finally, this chapter ends with a summary of studies that have found, after controlling for alternative risk factors, no specific effect of parental incarceration experiences.

Parental Incarceration Effects on Children. Murray and Farrington (2005) completed a large-scale analysis using longitudinal data to examine the effects of parental incarceration on son's antisocial outcomes later in life. Utilizing data from 411 English boys in the Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development, Murray and Farrington (2005) compared several groups of boys between the ages of 0 and 10: 1) boys separated from parents due to incarceration, 2) boys separated from their parents for reasons not related to criminal justice involvement (i.e. divorce, marital separation, illness, or death), and 3) boys from two-parent homes. Although their sample of boys who experienced parental incarceration was limited to 40 observations (17 before birth, 23 between 0-10 years of age), Murray and Farrington (2005) found a significant impact from parental imprisonment experiences even after controlling for parental criminality, parent-child separation factors, and associated childhood risk factors by examining the samples' lifetime outcomes by the age of 48.

Murray and Farrington (2005) concluded that children who lost a parent due to incarceration were more at risk for worse future outcomes than any of the control groups – even those who had been separated from their parents by death and those whose parents were incarcerated before they were born. More specifically, Murray and Farrington (2005) linked parental incarceration experiences to poor mental health outcomes and antisocial behaviour that could not be explained by parental criminality or separation. However, their study has some weaknesses due to the small sample size of boys who experienced parental incarceration and the fact that the data was collected between 1953 and 1964 – a fact that calls the data's applicability to current parental incarceration experiences into question. Despite these weaknesses, Murray and Farrington's (2005) findings align with much of the additional research from qualitative studies and further quantitative analyses pertaining to parental incarceration effects. Two years after Murray and Farrington's (2005) publication, Huebner and Gustafson (2007) reported similar findings using U.S. data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY). Limiting their sample to children born to young mothers (ages 14 to 22) in 1978, Huebner and Gustafson (2007) examined future adult offending for children whose mothers were incarcerated at any point before their child's 24th birthday (n= 31) compared to children whose mothers were not incarcerated (n= 1,666). Of all the mothers sampled initially in 1978, twenty-six were incarcerated at some point during their child's life (before 24 years old).

Controlling for a variety of risk factors (i.e. family processes, peer influence, economic and educational resources) and demographic variables (i.e. race, mother's age when she gave birth, socioeconomic status), Huebner and Gustafson (2007) examined adult children's probation and conviction statuses. They found a significant association between having a mother incarcerated and increased odds of adulthood criminal justice outcomes. While only 10 per cent of the control sample had records of a criminal conviction, 26 per cent of the 31 children whose mothers had been incarcerated had their adulthood conviction records. This group of children also reported increased levels of delinquent peer pressure during adolescence and was four times more likely to have served probation during their adulthood.

In the same year, Dallaire (2007) completed a comparative analysis of outcomes for Children who experienced the incarceration of their mother or father. Analyzing data collected for the 1997 Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, Dallaire (2007) compared maternal versus paternal prisoners' reports pertaining to their adult children's incarceration status and minor children's living situations. Dallaire (2007) found that family size (higher number of children in the home) and intrafamilial incarceration (i.e. incarceration of a spouse or other immediate family members) were significant predictors of Children of imprisoned parents becoming incarcerated themselves. Interestingly, Dallaire (2007) also found that mothers who were incarcerated were 2.5 times more likely than incarcerated fathers to report that their adult children had spent time behind bars. Mothers were also significantly more likely than fathers to score higher on an overall measure of risk factors associated with having incarcerated Children. Considering the link found between parental incarceration and adverse life outcomes, it is understandable why researchers and professionals alike have designated these children as vulnerable and in need of extra support (Murray et al., 2009). Attempting to address these concerns, researchers have better informed our understanding of the potential psychological effects of losing a parent to incarceration, as well as the potential moderating effects neighbourhood contexts can have on children's parental incarceration experiences. Some of the potential factors, as found in additional literature, are presented in the following section. Compounding and Confounding Risk Factors. Because the experience of parental incarceration is not evenly distributed throughout society, researchers must consider many covariates associated with individuals' future outcomes (Murray et al., 2012a). Children most often impacted by parental incarceration not only suffer the collateral consequences of punitive, 30 ill-planned criminal justice policies such as those discussed in Chapter 1 but also must often endure a myriad of other disproportionate, negative outcomes associated with growing up in impoverished, urban, and predominantly minority communities. Braman and Wood (2003) explain that populations hardest hit by mass incarceration are among the most fragile in our society. Many of these families are already on the brink of emotional or financial ruin before being hard-pressed by an often unsympathetic correctional system (Travis & Waul, 2003). Similarly, children living in these communities face daily hardships like ongoing poverty

and instability, diminished access to resources, and family substance abuse and mental illness – all risk factors for negative future outcomes further exacerbated by the experience of imprisonment of a parent (Braman & Wood, 2003; Rose & Clear, 2003; Travis & Waul, 2003). Along the same lines, Murray et al. (2009) report that children with parental incarceration experiences were more likely to have disadvantaged backgrounds than comparison group children involved in court or clinical settings. Scholars have posited that, for children in disadvantaged neighbourhoods whose parent has been incarcerated, it can be difficult to develop the relationships needed to circumvent the intergenerational cycle of imprisonment, as the family and community supports needed to attenuate the loss of a parent to incarceration are difficult to locate in such areas. Further exacerbating such situations are the great lengths often taken to keep the incarceration of a loved one private, as all family members, adults and children alike, must cope with the shame and social stigma associated with imprisonment (Hairston, 2002). Children are often fed misinformation or intentionally deceived by immediate family members or caretakers to avoid dealing with the additional stress of parental incarceration. As Hairston (2002:8) writes, "Imprisonment is not a reason for celebration or to be proud…it is not the goal one seeks for 31 oneself or one's children". For some children, misinformation given to them about their parent's incarceration results in extreme confusion concerning their fathers' or mothers' whereabouts (Murray & Farrington, 2005). In addition to a higher likelihood of social disadvantage, children who experience parental imprisonment are approximately twice as likely to develop undesired mental health outcomes, such as anxiety and depression, than children whose parents have not been incarcerated (Murray et al., 2009). In their systematic review of literature about parental incarceration experiences that had been completed to date, Murray et al. (2009) highlight the findings and outline recommendations for future, more thorough research. In their review, the authors found support for their hypothesized correlations between parental imprisonment and children's antisocial behaviours and mental health issues. They explain that, in reaction to the imprisonment of a parent, children may "act out or become withdrawn, anxious, or depressed" (Murray et al., 2009:6). In fact, children who experience parental imprisonment are about twice as likely to develop such undesired outcomes as children whose parents have not been incarcerated (Murray et al., 2009). These undesirable

outcomes do not necessarily occur only in childhood or while a parent is incapacitated but, indeed, may happen throughout the child's life course- during or after parental imprisonment or even well into adulthood (Murray et al., 2009). Furthermore, children with incarcerated parents may be subject to bullying or teasing as a result of the social stigma associated with imprisonment (van de Rakt, 2011).

In their in-depth interviews with disadvantaged families impacted by the imprisonment of a loved one, Braman and Wood (2003) found that children do not talk about their experiences and emotionally withdraw from social settings and relationships due to the confusion and social stigma associated with parental imprisonment.

Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) report similar patterns of isolation and 32 rejections from peers among children with incarcerated parents. Interviewing 34 children with incarcerated parents, researchers recorded several reports of anxiety felt by these children, with many fearing discussing the whereabouts of their parents with their peers. Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) also report children's distress regarding their current caregivers' increased responsibilities and strain. They explain that children of incarcerated parents were quite aware of the stress their parents' imprisonment had placed on their current caregivers and extended family.

Wakefield and Wildeman (2011) highlight the confounding risk factors that could also, or more directly, affect most children with parents in prison, as their findings suggest these children were not on pathways to positive outcomes prior to parents' imprisonment. Utilizing two popular longitudinal data sets with representative samples of American youth and their parents (Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN) and the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCW), Wakefield and Wildeman (2011) avoided some of the pitfalls associated with prior research that relied on somewhat outdated, international, possibly irrelevant datasets. The authors' main goal was to underscore the potential for intergenerational inequality, precisely racial inequality, as a result of mass imprisonment. Through sophisticated analyses of paternal imprisonment effects on Children, they found increases in both externalizing (i.e. behavioural) and internalizing (i.e. mental health) problems when compared to children

whose fathers had not been incarcerated. However, when taking children's preexisting disadvantage into account, paternal incarceration effects weakened when more sophisticated analyses or different data sources were used (Wakefield and Wildeman, 2011) and disappearing effects (Kinner, Alati, Najman, and Williams (2007) were found disappearing effects of parental incarceration using an Australian-based sample of children born to mothers between 1981 and 1983.

Kinner et al. (2007) compared outcomes for 137 children whose paternal influence (father or mother's partner) had been incarcerated any time before the children's 14th birthday. With a comparison group of over 2000 children born during the sampling period, Kinner et al. (2007) initially found that paternal incarceration significantly impacted children's level of antisocial behaviour and internalizing behaviours. However, after controlling for a myriad of family, parent, and childhood risk factors (i.e. parenting style, maternal mental health, domestic violence), Kinner et al. (2007) reported no effect of paternal incarceration on those outcomes. They conclude by stating, "In the context of general disadvantage, paternal arrest and imprisonment may have relatively little impact...and in the context of broader psychosocial disadvantage, it may be that paternal imprisonment is not as damaging as once thought" (Kinner et al., 2007). However, Kinner et al. (2007) note that future research should consider the different impact maternal incarceration may have on Children, as well as differences between Children's genders and reactions to parental incarceration.

Murray, Janson, and Farrington (2007) achieved similar findings using a Swedish sample of children born in 1953 who were all living in Stockholm 10 years later. Comparing the rate of convictions of the adult children who experienced parental incarceration between the ages of 6 and 19 years old with children whose parents were not incarcerated, Murray et al. (2007) initially found parental incarceration experiences to be a strong predictor of adult children's (19 to 30 34 years of age) criminal behaviour, however, after controlling for parental criminality (i.e. regressing an additional comparison group of 245 youth from the same cohort but whose parents were incarcerated before their children's birth only), parental imprisonment had no additional effects on Children's outcomes.

Murray et al. (2007) findings suggest that parental incarceration effects did not cause Children's offending. However, because of the location and years in which the data was collected, the authors posit that the contemporaneous social contexts and incarceration policies in Sweden could bias their results. They suggest further research regarding the potential differences such social contexts might incur.

The current study focuses on a small piece of the parental incarceration puzzle by examining the differences in Children's adulthood arrest outcomes according to which parent (mother or father) was incarcerated. Guided by past research findings and theoretical frameworks described, it is hypothesized that Children who experienced the imprisonment of a parent will be more likely to report having been arrested themselves when compared to respondents who never had an incarcerated parent. Furthermore, The researcher hypothesizes that Children whose mothers had been incarcerated will be more likely to report personal arrest when compared to Children whose fathers were incarcerated. The subsequent chapters address the methodology and results of this study and conclude with a discussion of the limitations, findings, and implications for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODS

4.0 Introduction

This section presents the methodology and describes the research methods the researcher applied to answer the research questions, the study's study design, the sampling method used and the sample size, the data collection tools used, data analysis, and the essential ethical considerations applicable in the study.

4.1 Study Design

The study used the qualitative research method to gather data to answer the research questions through semi-structured interviews. This type of research method is the most appropriate for this kind of study because it helps the researcher explore relationships between participants whilst understanding participants' lived experiences in the form of semi-structured interviews, achieving data triangulation and obtaining an in-depth response from the participants from a semi-structured interview.

Through this research design, the researcher acquired rich data because the participants were guided thoroughly to answer with the help of research interview protocols, better known as Guide Questions. Respondents were able to express and narrate their stories and experiences according to the respective participants' guide questions. Thus, using qualitative research and semi-structured interviews, utilizing face-to-face sessions, the researcher had the opportunity to explore the studied topic further and elicited adequate data from participants to answer the research questions. It offered flexibility to the researcher to probe, maintaining focus and enabling the participants to address missing information, providing complementary information that survey questionnaires may not adequately address, and helping address research questions (Malina, Nørreklit, & Selto, 2011). However, the shortfall of using this data collection technique is that one may likely deviate from the set purpose and objective of the process (Malina et al., 2011).

4.2 Research Respondents and Justification

The study respondents were purposively sampled to help answer the research questions according to each respondent's category suitability or experience in relation to the research topic (Palinkas et al., 2011). Accordingly, purposive sampling was used to determine the respondents, in line with qualitative research recommendations, to identify and select information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest; hence, 1) Social Workers were purposively sampled to enable the investigator to understand everyday needs deeply. They reported effects created by parental imprisonment in families to obtain an understanding of the unique individual and familial coping strategies utilized to cope with created challenges and to know the support services and systems made available to affected families by social work departments/agencies (state and non-state partners) to the affected individuals and families from professional, evidence-based practice and to understand future needs, interventions, and solutions to existing challenges facing these families. 2) Children were purposively sampled to understand their first-hand accounts. Since children are the primary subjects of the study, it was essential to involve them to provide the researcher with insight to understand their direct lived experiences, perceptions, and feelings when their parents are imprisoned and identify the specific challenges they face due to this, their ways they are coping and what are their needs when one or both of their parent(s) are imprisoned. This child-based perspective was critical. 3) Caretakers were sampled to understand the challenges they encounter while offering care to children of imprisoned parents, to obtain knowledge of the significant needs of children of imprisoned parents, examine the ways caretakers and children cope with resultant effects, and to know the support systems they rely on or lack as they care for children. Lastly, 4) Ex-inmates were sampled to obtain a complimentary perspective on the long-term effect of imprisonment, to understand their reintegration challenges and identify needs, offer recommendations to facilitate the transition and navigate the further risk of the crime of familial disruption.

There were twenty-one (21) participants in this study. As much as (Crouch and McKenzie, H. (2006) argued that a small sample of less than twenty (20) could also enhance validity, in this regard, this sample was ample enough to enable a significant inquiry. The following criteria were used in selecting the participants:

The participant can either be male or female.

Be a social worker based in Soroti.

The participant should be a child in Soroti.

The participant should be a caregiver in Soroti.

The participant should be an ex-inmate living in Soroti.

4.3 Research Locale

This research was conducted in Soroti, Uganda.

4.4 Semi-structured Interviews

Bryman (2012) describes semi-structured interviews as requiring the interviewer not to limit the frame of questions but to ask general questions about specific topics. The semi-structured interviews made this study flexible in how it provided room for the researcher to probe based on the direction the respondents took.

Mindful of a nature and sensitive of this research issue, semi-structured interviewing based on the nature of its fluidity and flexibility among researcher and particioant, it was coducive in allowing for participants freedom for relaxation and reflectation in addressing the topical issues. The participants could reflect and give wide-ranging answers to chose from about their experiences without deviating from the main topic necessary for analysis.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethics and the code of research conducted by all researchers stand at a critical position for the practical realization of good research. Achieving the objectives of research credibly and effectively requires not only expertise from the researcher but also dependable ethical conduct.

Prison authority will be reached and notified as a formal introduction, explaining the purpose and objectives of the study and seeking approval to conduct the research. Observing participants' rights as important research subjects is essential. Participation among respondents shall be voluntary without any degree of coercion, based on informed consent to minimize the risk of incomplete process or missing data. Consent of the participants will be sought at stage one, and should they feel that they do not want to

participate or continue out of scepticism, one will be made to feel free to withdraw or not to participate with no coercion.

The rights to confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed, and the data and identity of participants shall be saved and stored for analysis and research purposes only, after which it shall be deleted and destroyed and not shared with untrusted third parties, following data protection laws, unless under extreme risk to the participants. The right to information shall be guaranteed to the participants, adhered to, and respected, given the nature of the study. Participants shall be provided with information on the research purpose and objectives that will enable them to deepen their knowledge and understanding comprehensively and make an informed decision before participating in the research study. The investigator's contact information may be shared with participants to aid communication throughout the study. Separate, distinct semi-structured interview protocols will be used to collect data (administered to the various participant categories) to collect socio-demographic data.

4.6 Data Collection and Analysis

In-person interviews with each respondent lasted from 12-48 minutes. During the interviews, the respondents discussed the effects of parental incarceration, coping strategies, and ways to improve the welfare of the children of incarcerated parents.
Each interview was audio-recorded, and verbatim transcribed. Transcripts and coding were reviewed. Using an "analysis of themes" method. According to Tashakkori (2007) thematic analysis allows the researcher to deeply delve into the into the complexity used by practitioners using theoretical lenses. This analysis method enabled a quikened identification and analyzing of data using existing and emerging thems in the raw data collected. According to Riessman (2008), thematic narrative analysis is often used. It focuses on the content of "what" has been said. Themes from the body emerged. Hereunder are the following steps for thematic analysis, to wit:

First, familiarizing oneself with data means transcribing, reading and re-reading, and noting initial ideas. A revised transcript was then made from the original transcripts. Expressions such as " uhmmm", "ahhh", "yeah", "hahaha", that did not make sense were

ckeaned during the process. It is also essential to note that unnecessary discussion, repetition, and irrelevant information were deleted from the transcripts. However, the portrayal of events was preserved. Secondly, generating initial codes: This means coding exciting and commonly occuring thems relevant to each code. Thirdly, themes were reviewed to check if the themes worked with the coded extracts of the general data set. Fourh, providing theme names, which entailed defining and refining the specifics of each theme as reported in the story of respondents "identifying, analyzing and reporting themes " aligning with the research topic Braun and Clarke (2006). And lastly, producing the report in line with the research questions.

The researcher chose thematic analysis due to the freedom of flexibility that it offers which doesn't depend on theory or epistemology Braun & Clarke (2006). Since the objective was to examine the effects incarceration of parents has on their children and their families, it suited more to the essentialist/realist epistemology of thematic analysis – which focuses more on reporting participants' experiences, meanings and realities (ibid.). After transcribing and translating the data, the researcher was immersed in the data. Immersion here means that the researcher read the data severally and thoroughly and became familiar with it. As the researcher reads the data, he notes common patterns in the data set (Razonabe, 2023). After getting grips with the data, the researcher uploaded it into the MAXQDA software for coding. MAXQDA is software that provides a platform for organising and analysing qualitative research data. Thus, the researcher entered the coding phase with a general idea of what the data says. Using MAXQDA, the researcher could highlight and categorize common patterns into nodes. Once the researcher uploaded the data into MAXQDA, the researcher could re-read the transcripts in the software; thus, going back and forth with the data and coding was flexible (Razonabe, 2023).

4.7 Dissemination

Where necessary, this research report and findings shall be shared with the university department and faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Uganda Prisons Services, and/or the line department, following sharing agreements for library reference and the benefit of future studies.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the results and analysis of the qualitative data. The findings are also presented and discussed in light of previous research findings and available literature, where applicable, to identify similarities and differences between this study and previous studies and literature.

The chapter presents the background of the study participants, findings, analysis, discussions, and a summary of the findings, which are organized according to the study objectives. Table 1: Representation of the themes, subthemes, and emerging themes

5.1 Respondents Characteristics

A total of twenty-one (21) participants took part in this study. This included eight (8) social workers, three (3) caretakers, five (5) children, and five (5) ex-inmates. The participant's distribution of the participants according to gender and age was as follows;

Table 5.1: Showing Distribution of Study Participants According to Gender

S/No.	Participants Category	Male	Female
1.	Social workers	7	1
2.	Caretakers	3	0
3.	Ex-inmate	4	1
4.	Children	4	1
	Total	**18**	**3**

Source: Primary Data

From Table (5.1.1) above, there were seven (7) male and only one (1) female social worker who participated in the study. This means most of the social worker participants were males. All caregivers who participated were male, accounting for three (3). Among the ex-inmates who participated, there were four (4) males and only one (1) female. This

means more male ex-inmates participated in the study than females, where only one (1) female ex-inmate participated. Lastly, four (4) males participated among the children and young people and only one (1) female. The distribution of the study participants according to their age is shown in Table (5.1.2) below:

Table 5.1.2: Showing Distribution of Study Participants according to the Age Groups

S/No.	Participants Category	10-19 Years	20-29 Years	30-39 Years	40-49 Years	Above 50 years
1.	Social workers	0	2	3	3	0
2.	Caregivers	0	0	1	1	1
3.	Ex-inmate	0	1	2	2	0
4.	Children	3	2	0	0	0
	Total	**3**	**5**	**6**	**6**	**1**

Source: Primary Data

From the table (5.1.2), there were two (2) social workers aged between 20-29 years, three (3) aged between 30-39 years and three (3) aged between 40-49 years. Among the caregivers, there was one (1) aged between 30-39 years, one (1) aged between 40-49 years and one (1) above 50 years respectively. There was only one (1) ex-inmate aged between 20-29 years, two (2) aged between 30-39 years, and two (2) aged between 40-49 years, respectively. Lastly, among those categorized children, there were three (3) aged between 10-19 years and two (2) aged between 20-29 years.

5.2 Findings

The study found three (3) primary themes, sixteen (16) sub-themes, and two (2) emerging themes were generated under the main themes. With the findings, an attempt was made to answer the research questions posed in the study: 1) what effect does parental incarceration have on children's welfare in the family? 2) What coping mechanisms and support systems do caregivers employ to navigate the challenges associated with parental incarceration in their families? 3) How can the welfare of children and families with parents in incarceration be improved?

The transcripts referenced to support the findings because they captured a detailed description of participants' accounts, and the body of the presentation of the findings and analysis are structured following the main categories of the research objectives: 1) the effect of Parental incarceration on the lives of children and their families; 2) the Coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by caregivers; and 3) the ways to improve the welfare of children and families with parents in incarceration. An effort was made to show the most significant knowledge and understanding necessary for drawing conclusions and recommendations according to these established research objectives. From the findings, there are three (3) primary themes- the effect of Parental incarceration on the lives of children and their families, the Coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by caregivers and the ways to improve the welfare of children and families with parents in incarceration. Table 5.1.3 represents the themes, subthemes, and emerging themes.

Table 5.2: Showing Presentation of the Findings

S/No	Main Themes	Sub-Themes	Emerging Themes
1.	Effect of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of Children and their Families,	• Social effect • Psychological effect • Emotional effect • Educational effect	• Financial • Health
2.	Coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by caregivers	• Counselling • Support groups. • Skilling • Support from NGOs • Small business • Playing	
3.	Ways to improve the welfare of children and families with parents in incarceration	• Material support • Education support • Rescue, Rehabilitate, Restore and Re-integrate. • Counselling support services • Referral Service Support • Psychosocial Support	

The analysis and discussion of the above findings are discussed in the following sections and sub-sections.

5.3 Analysis and Discussion

5.3.1 The Effect of Parent incarceration on the Lives of the Children and their families

From the analysis, the following themes were found, and they present the effect of parental incarceration on the lives of children and their families. The findings revealed four (4) sub-themes: Social, Psychological, Emotional and Educational and two (2) emerging themes: financial and health. The understanding of the effects of parental incarceration on children, according to (Poehlmann et al., 2010), is intricately tied to the specific situations these families were entrenched in before, during, and post-separation. According to Williams et al. (2018), the interplay of family circumstances like structure, the family cohesive strength in its members for collectivist societies, the age of the family members, the economic situation of both parents (the imprisoned and the caretaker) before imprisonment, as well as any instances of parental incarceration matters a lot (Williams et al. (2018). Studies have asserted that the potential repercussions on the overall welfare and development of children and stability of the family that the incarceration of parents could pause these corrosive effects and place incarceration as a stressor that impacts the close relational dynamics, emotional and psychological well-being of its members profoundly restructuring the family's life course based on the fragility of some families. Specific family dysfunctions and social inequalities created may negatively influence various aspects of the lives of children and other family members, potentially leading to worsening long-term effects on the living conditions and well-being relative to the distance and location of the prisons and the length of sentence of their parents (Arditti, 2016). Lastly, Parental imprisonment may have a lasting impact on the adult lives of the children affected by it, shaping their experiences and outcomes well into their later years; the effects are profoundly worse early in the child's life and even as they get older taken together as age-graded effects (Gifford et al., 2019). From the finding, the effect of parental incarceration on the lives of children and their families in Uganda, in the context of Soroti, is further discussed in the following illustrations

5.3.1.1 Social effects of Parental Incarceration on the lives of Children and their Families

Table 5.3.1.1: Showing Social Effects of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of Children and their Families

Categories	Sub-Categories	Coded segments
Social Effect	Family Disruption	*"…. It causes a lot of destabilization…. It is a stumbling block in families. It is one of the causes of family breakups because, without a man in the home, the woman can be taken advantage of…"[Social Workers: 28-28]*
		"…the families are broken up. They are broken because their loved one is not with them then in prison" [Social Worker: 43 – 43]
	Loneliness	*"I used to play with my friends, even eat together with them. But when they heard that my father is in prison, they all left me, They disappear. They don't want to play with me then" [Child : 31 – 31]*
		"... Loneliness in their families. They are lonely because their parents are not there. They… feel being lonely"[Social Worker: 27 – 27]
	Drug Abuse	*"I also got to do drinking, involved in drugs. ...that's how I used to manage stress*" [*Child: 41 – 41]*
		"*Most of the children, because of lack of mentorship, have resulted into drug addiction… they smoke opium, Indian camp, others going for Alcoholics or drug abuse"[Social Worker: 36 – 36]*
	Child abuse	"*Their children can be taken, especially if it is a girl child. She can be coerced. She can be sent off into marriage, she can be defiled, she gives birth or produces or gets pregnant" [Social Worker: 28 – 28]*
		"these children end up doing casual labour and then they are exploited and it becomes something very difficult" (Social Worker: 36 – 36]
	Property Grabbing	*" The land is grabbed because the children now remain vulnerable in their families; neighbors can encroach on the boundaries of their lands… they lose their house, the property… and it causes a lot destabilization within the family" [Social Worker, Pos. 28]*

	Stealing	*"…these children resort to robbery because now because there is nothing that they eat at home and there is no support that they get at home, so they resort to get or using now shortcuts to get something to eat. And leaving other shortcuts the other thing, also, is stealing" [Social Worker: 44 – 44]*

Source: Field Data

Family Disruption: In line with the study findings in Table 5.3.1.1, Marjore (2019) stated that the length of parental incarceration disrupts family structure (Marjore, 2019). When a parent is incarcerated, not only does a child lose their parent, but in many cases, someone is separated from their spouse. In addition, Siennick, Stewart, and Staff (2014) outlined four consistent findings regarding the effects of incarceration on divorce. These include that only incarceration during marriage leads to divorce, marriages are at risk of dissolving even after incarceration, the increased odds for divorce among those who have been incarcerated are double, and the effect increases with increased sentence length (Siennick et al., 2014). In addition, a study by Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (2015 revealed that imprisoned women reported several consequences arising from their imprisonment, including loss of home (35%), children being taken away (31%), family being broken up (25%) and (13%) husband leaving them (Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, 2015c).

Further, studies and experience showed that the prolonged separation and absence of the child's primary caregiver breeds separation anxiety, paranoia, feelings, loneliness, gloomy episodes, grief, and rejection among children and family members. In addition, Glaze & Maruschak (2008) 2007 reported that more than 1.7 million children who happened to have a Parent incarcerated in a state or federal Prison are at risk of developing behaviour. Many of these children experience significant socio-demographic risks. They are likely to live in single-parent, impoverished households characterized by residential mobility (Murray & Farrington, 2005).

Drug Abuse and Alcoholism: Drug abuse and alcohol consumption were also revealed by the findings: almost all the categories of participants reported this. For example, a child

who participated in the study reported that when his father was imprisoned, he got into drinking and used drugs to manage stress because of the prolonged absence of his father; such were the experiences elsewhere in Uganda with one or both parents being incarcerated. Farrington and Sekol (2012) argued that parental incarceration is associated with a higher risk for children's antisocial behavior. Their study further revealed that children of incarcerated parents can resort to drug and alcohol abuse (Farrington and Sekol, 2012). So, in this, there was evidence of an association between parental incarceration and antisocial behavior among the children in Soroti District Uganda, whom social workers reported having a lack of mentorship and getting involved in drug abuse and alcohol consumption.

Lastly, Stealing: The findings also revealed stealing as an effect of Parental Incarceration on Children. A study by (Murray et al. 2007), as cited by Herrera (2018), examined the antisocial and delinquent behavior of children ages (0-19 years) of incarcerated parents and compared them to children with parents without past incarceration history. The study found that twenty-five per cent (25%) of prisoners' children were presented as adult offenders compared to the control group of children who were never imprisoned, scoring with a twelve per cent (12%) risk ratio. The increased risk chances for criminal behavior, antisocial tendency, and delinquency phenomena among children and young people associated with parental crime and incarceration (Herrera, 2018)

5.3.1.2 Psychological effects of Parental Incarceration on the lives of Children and their Families

Table 5.3.1.2: Showing Psychological Effects of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of Children and their Families

Categories	Sub-Categories	Coded segments
Psychological Effect	Mental Disruption/Confusion	*:Psychologically, they don't think straightforward... they thinking like they have lost someone" [Social worker: 29 – 29)]*
	Stigma and Fear	*"The children have fear over themselves, they are worried and have stigma… people looked at him, that stigma, you know, sometimes they feel like even these children are like their parents"[Social Worker: 45-45]*
	Feeling disturbed	*"…the child not getting to see the parent is still left in a doubt that may be it is true because they don't get to see them. Yes, so this also disturbs the child" [Social worker: 28 – 28)]*
	Depression	*…and some of them even would want to commit suicide because they miss their loved ones… and So they live in regret and in depression"[Social Worker : 30 – 30]*
	Overthinking	*"Psychologically, they don't think straightforward…they are all the time wandering. And I mean thinking like they have lost someone and they keep it to themselves [Social Worker: 24 – 24]*

Source: Field Data

From the finding in Table 5.3.1.2, it was revealed that parental incarceration affects children through mental disruption or confusion, stigma and fear, feeling disturbed, depression and overthinking. Accordingly, the study reported that children who do not get to see their parents feel disturbed, and they begin to have fears over themselves, they worry, and most of the time, they are stigmatized.

Murray et al. (2009), in their study, assert that children of incarcerated parents were shown to be twice at risk of presenting with undesirable outcomes, behaving, and acting antisocially compared to their counterparts because of the stigma, the trauma of child-

parent separation, and the economic strain on those family members left behind (Murray & Farrington, 2008). In addition, Ainsworth (1962) noted that Children of prison inmates have a particular need for counselling and targeted therapy to address the challenges and stigma that come with the incarceration of their parent(s) (Ainsworth, 1962). This, therefore, means stigma and fear of losing a parent is prominent among children whose parents are being incarcerated

5.3.1.3 Emotional Effects of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of Children and their Families

Table 5.3.1.3: Showing the Emotional effect of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of the Children and their Families

Categories	Sub-Categories	Coded segments
Emotional Effect	Worries	*"… I feel very bad. Yeah. Feel very bad. I feel like killing someone" [Child: 25 – 25]*
	Aggressiveness	*"Children resort to aggressiveness. A child will state clearly and say my father has been taken…" [Social Worker: 40 – 40]*
	Stress	*"Children need treatment or food or something, and they have a lot of stress, become stressed, and many times they lose their appetite. The absence of their mother near them distresses them so much because Children always love being with their mothers" [Caregiver: 29 – 29]*
	Criminal feelings	*"And sometimes people feel like these children are left home because they wanted to. So they feel like these children are also criminals because they carry the blood of criminals…" [Social Worker: 55 – 55]*
	Regression	*"So the Children live in regret and in depression"[Social Worker: 24 – 24]*

Source: Field Data

Table 5.3.1.3 above revealed that children of incarcerated parents were emotionally affected by worries, aggressiveness, stress, criminal feelings and regression. According to Myers et al. (1999), Children with a parent in prison may experience low self-esteem, depression, disturbed sleeping patterns and symptoms of post-traumatic stress (Myers et al., 1999). Additionally, Parent-child separation in almost any circumstance is difficult for

children. Losing a parent to prison, however, can be especially traumatic (Human Rights Watch, 2002). Child experts agree that the loss of parents to prison can be a continuing emotional trauma for children. It can have a significant impact on the children's development, manifested in some cases by learning difficulties at school, aggressive behaviour, and involvement in crime (Human Rights Watch, 2002).

5.3.1.4 Educational effects of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of the Children and their Families

Table 5.4.1.4: Showing the Educational Effects of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of the Children and their Families

Categories	Sub-Categories	Coded segments
Educational Effect	School dropout	*"… It has even affected my education. I also wanted to continue, but I just remained in senior three (3). I was schooling. Yeah, it affected me a lot because, for two years, I didn't. I dropped out of school. I didn't continue with school" [Child: 24 – 24]*
		"Because of the imprisonment of my sister and his husband, the education of the children had to stop. The oldest son in their home finished senior four and was ready to join a technical school after that, but he is at home up to now, helpless, doesn't know what his education future is going to end when his mother was imprisoned…"[Child: 35 – 35]
		"the children were at school, only the two twins of five (5) years; the other child of two (2)years was still at home, not school-going. Now, in the event that their parent got incarcerated, he got missing in action incarceration, they would come back home, "Mummy. Daddy, where is Daddy? …..so, the school aspect had to just varnish like that because he could not stay at home)." [Caregiver: 55 – 55]

	Poor Performance in Schools	*"…the children's schooling, in a way, was affected possibly due to delays of payment of tuition; there are other necessities needed at school, which should be provided in time, but all that is not done at the right time. Visiting how much I can go there, but a child feels like the mother is always the right person to visit at school during that time" [Caregiver: 41 – 41]*
		"Their performance goes down, the performance goes down because when you miss class some days and then also they are sent back. Yeah, you fear interacting freely with the teachers. So really, the academic has gone down"[Caregiver: 36 – 36]

Source: Field Data

From Table 5.3.1.4 above, the findings revealed that parental incarceration affected the education outcome of the children when some dropped out of school and others experienced poor performance in schools. All the children who were interviewed reported that due to the imprisonment of their parents, they faced educational hiccups, and most of them had delays in completing school. Others had to drop out of school and could not further their education, as highlighted in the two children below. In addition, some caregivers also revealed that delayed payment of tuition, provision of other necessities at school, and not visiting children at school by their parents since she was in prison also affected the Children's education.

Several studies have found that parental incarceration is a risk factor for children's academic and school-based outcomes. Turney and Haskins (2014, found that elementary school children with incarcerated fathers were more likely to experience grade retention than their peers who had not experienced paternal incarceration (Turney & Haskins, 2014). In their sample of Children currently affected by their mother's incarceration, Hanlon et al. (2005) found that 49% of children aged 9 to 14 experienced behavioural problems at school, which led to their suspension, and 45% expressed little or no interest in school (Trice and Brewster, 2004). A close examination of various literature generally agreeably showed that most families with incarcerated parents encountered difficulty which tremendously affected child school enrolment performance and completion,

resulting in poor educational outcomes for the offspring of incarcerated parents for the most part due to a lack of basic education materials like books, pens, fees, food, shoes, and bags among others, compared to their peers, who present with reduced motivation, absenteeism, dissatisfaction, and lower child performance in school. Parental imprisonment poses significant challenges to the well-being and prospects of children and their families based mainly on the research findings above.

Relatedly, a study by Haskins and Turney (2014) that used the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study found that children who experienced their father's incarceration between the ages of one and five years old had a greater likelihood of being retained in kindergarten and third grade. Teachers reported proficiency, not test scores or behavioral problems, and explained more than half of the relationship between incarceration and early grade retention (Haskins and Turney, 2014).

The above argument suggests that it may not be the child's intellectual capacity or behaviour that leads to their grade retention, but instead, the biased treatment they may receive from their teachers. However, the little to no effect parental incarceration has on academic performance was also found in Nesmith and Ruhland's (2008) study that interviewed 34 children where 53% described themselves as doing "well" or "really well" in school, only one student reported they were struggling, and the remainder reported they were doing "okay" (Nesmith and Ruhland, 2008). However, the study by Contrary et al. (2012) found no effect of parental incarceration on the poor academic performance of the children within their sample (Loeber et al., 2012). Whatever other researchers may say and find, parental incarceration remains an obstacle to the academic excellence of the children of the incarcerated parent, including in Uganda, where this study is being carried out.

5.3.1.5 Emerging Sub-themes on the Effects of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of Children and their Families

From the findings, new sub-themes emerged: financial and health effects of parental incarceration on the lives of children and their families. These are further discussed and analyzed in the table below.

Table 5.3.1.5: Showing the Emerging Sub-themes on the Effects of Parental Incarceration on the Lives of Children and their Families

Categories	Sub-Categories	Coded segments
Financial Effects	Financial Drop	*"General financial challenges I am facing as a caretaker is due to the absence of the children's parents" [Caregiver: 160 – 160]*
		"There is financial drop, low income in the household. We cannot sustain the household livelihood" [Social Worker: 34 – 34]
Health Effects	Malnutrition	*The children will not be happy; they cannot play, and they cannot exercise. That's when a child becomes to be weak. And then you realize that they have lost weight, they are emaciated, they're stressed out physically. You can really see and say this child is malnourished, and the families cannot afford a balanced diet" [Social Worker: 30 – 30]*

Source: Field Data

From Table 5.3.1.5 above, the findings revealed that families that have their primary breadwinner, either a mother or the father, incarcerated faced financial drop and health problems, especially malnutrition, especially among the children. These findings were consistent with several other findings. Hardy (2018) argued that parental incarceration affects a family's income during and after incarceration, thus leaving families at a financial disadvantage even after incarceration (Hardy, 2018).

According to Marjore (2019), the length of parental incarceration disrupts family structure and diminishes available economic resources (Marjore, 2019). Additionally, a study that focused on how incarceration affects the family regarding the changes in their income and the potential for intergenerational mobility has found that when a father is incarcerated and, therefore, becomes unemployed, financial difficulties for the remaining family members may arise due to the loss of the family's primary earner (Hannon and DeFina, 2010).

On health, various studies have equally found that parental incarceration has health consequences on any family member. A study by Lee et al. (2014) that investigated the cardiovascular health consequences using a sample of American adults found out that

among women, having a family member in prison was related to obesity, heart attacks or strokes, having fair or poor health, diabetes, and hypertension (Lee et al., 2014). White et al. (2016) found an association between family member incarceration during childhood and having a heart attack in adulthood among American men (White et al., 2016). Lastly, a study by Gjelsvik et al. (2014) found a positive relationship between childhood exposure to the incarceration of a household member and adult self-reported health-related quality of life (Gjelsvik et al., 2014)

5.4 Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems Utilized by Caregivers

The findings revealed that caregivers utilized counselling, support groups, skilling, support from NGOs, startup of small businesses and playing as coping mechanisms by children and support systems to soothe the effect of parental incarceration on the children and families. This is explained and discussed further in the table below.

Table 5.4: Showing the Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems Utilized by Caregivers

Categories	Sub-Categories	Coded segments
Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems	Counseling and Guidance	"*Cancelling and guiding to these children, I remain home alone, telling them that their mom is coming, mom is coming" [Caregiver: 63 – 63]*
		"Sometimes, I have invited counselors around, judge counsellors, and some good neighbors around to come and talk to the children, saying that it is not all about getting. But letting them know that it is not the end of" [Caregiver: 51 – 51
		"We offer counseling to them… to relieve them to overcome stigma… And with the help of NGOs that are around, intervening to help, probably the children have been counseled and helped here and there" [Michael: 60 – 60]
	Social Support Networks/Groups	"*… Support those saving groups, so that at the end of the year or particular period of time, they benefit and they support their families" [Social Worker: 49 – 49]*

		"…Sometimes support groups give in what the little they have. Yes, communities… sometimes keep on advising. Sometimes, the community can identify which family has been affected in case they need support so the community can come up with Strategies to support. They can mobilize for support; relatives directly provide support because a relative is like a blood relationship" [Social Worker: 57 – 57]
		"*… affected families actually form groups, …a few are forming groups that these groups are intended actually to seek for support from any of the Organizations that would come in and help them"[Social Worker: 46 – 46]*
	Capacity Building and Skilling	*"… women can be empowered in their households, they can run a household when the husband is not there because there will be some income generated through income generation activities through skills they have acquired,…empower these families with knowledge, skills development…so that they can stand on their own"[Social Worker: 63 – 63]*
	Support from NGOs	*"Probably there are those that give a hand in, let's say, providing books, and whatnot for the child to be at school or to have all they need…..through the organizations around that always get to the communities and share some of these ideas with them. Probably there are some who set up a business for some of them, especially the mothers who always stay back" [Social Worker: 45 – 45]* *".....there are those NGOs that can come in and render help and give support to these children and their family*" [*Social Worker: 64 – 64]*
	Starting Small Businesses	*"… I would like to start a smaller business so that it takes care of my wife, my family, and then another thing…" [Ex-inmate: 92 – 92], "*
		"… I sell bread with my young sisters and brothers just like that to live on…" [Child: 29 – 29]
	Playing	*"… engage them in playing most cases when I'm at home, I make sure that if I don't give them fun. So, so much so that I don't allow them to get them to start thinking about their missing parent…" [Caregiver: 55 – 55]*

Source: Field Data

From Table 5.4, the findings revealed different coping mechanisms and support systems caregivers utilize to mitigate the adverse effects of Parental Incarceration. These are further discussed below.

Counselling and Guidance: The Social workers and Caregivers reported their use of counselling and guidance services to the children and families of incarcerated parents to overcome the challenges associated with their incarceration. In line with this finding, Halpenny et al. (2008), in their research "Children's perspectives on coping and support following parental separation", among children and adolescents (n = 60) of two age categories (8-11 years of middle childhood and 14-17 representing adolescents), found out that children were able to utilize different sources of support both informal (family, friends) and formal such as counselling/peer support services, school, and other prison services (Halpenny et al., 2008). Additionally, a study by Stephanie and Leena (2017) on children of imprisoned Parents and their coping strategies, school-based support and counselling scores ranged from 25% to 75% (Stephanie and Leena, 2017), indicating that counselling could be utilized as a coping strategy for children. Lastly, several studies found that school counsellors are responsible for creating an educational space where these children can feel they legitimately belong and can openly and honestly express their opinions and emotions (Brown, 2020); Brown & Barrio, 2017); Levkovich & Elyoseph, 2021); Lopez & Burt, 2013). In addition, Ainsworth (1962) reported that Children of prison inmates have a particular need for counselling and targeted therapy to address the challenges and stigma that come with the incarceration of their parent(s) (Ainsworth, 1962).

Social Support Networks/Groups: Findings revealed that social workers reported the use of Social Support Networks or Groups by the families and the children of incarcerated parents. They join social support groups such as savings groups, existing community groups, or support networks, and these community support groups mobilize to support these affected families. It was noted that affected families formed groups intended to seek support from organizations and well-wishers to help them.

Roohafza et al. (2014), Fiksenbaum et al. (2006), and Holan et al. (1995) found that social support can increase proactive coping among children and their families. Additionally, Deborah & Benenson (2014) argued that social network connections have the most decisive impact on those in challenging circumstances, such as children and families of incarcerated parents, orphaned children and those living in poverty (Deborah & Benenson,

2014). Additionally, some network members are significant for children and their parents or other primary caretakers on whom they can rely. These individuals are influential because of what they provide directly to children and how their support encourages and sustains parents, thus improving the quality of care parents provide (Deborah & Benenson, 2014). Lastly, Manby et al. (2015) argued that the social network support approach is accepted because it emphasizes the importance of social support for children with incarcerated parents. Children spending time with friends and talking to supportive people, such as family members, caregivers, friends and school professionals, is effective as it increases coping abilities and self-esteem among children (Manby et al., 2015)

Capacity Building and Skilling: The findings further revealed that capacity building and skills development for families affected by parental incarceration is an important strategy and coping mechanism. Julie (2016) urged a skills-training program for incarcerated parents (Julie, 2016). Similarly, according to Uganda Prisons Service (UPS) spokesperson Frank Baine, as quoted in Daily Monitor, on 21st September 2020, Uganda Prions supports over 20,000 inmates in adult learning, informal education, and vocational skills training. Skilling inmates and ex-inmates equips them with practical skills that will support them after prison (Daily Monitor, 2020). In addition, according to Eddy et al. (2008), an intervention with the potential to significantly impact not only the social and supportive interactions of an inmate with the adults and children in his or her family but also the behaviour of his or her children is parenting education and skills training programs that are specifically designed to help meet the unique parenting challenges inherent in serving time in prison and in being released back into the community from prison (Eddy et al., 2008).

Further, NGOs Support: The findings revealed that NGOs support the children and families of incarcerated parents in coping with education challenges by providing school books and setting up businesses for some of them. According to the New Vision (2020) report, Wells of Hope Ministries, a Non-Governmental Organization that looks after prison inmates, supports 158 Children, 66 boys and 92 boys (New Vision, 2020). The support includes a well-fare package for children, which includes blankets, mosquito nets, panties, shoes, scholastic materials, and clothes, which has contributed to improving the

health of these children. In addition, Scharff and Gampell (2011) also noted that in several countries, sessions for prisoners are organized by NGOs to raise awareness and enable parents in prison to discuss their Parental role (Scharff and Gampell (2011) and that over the years, a growing number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have developed working programs on their interventions in the areas of improving prison visits, helping families and persuading policymakers to consider the rights of prisoners' children (Schelter et al., 2016). This, therefore, tells what is being revealed by the findings that support from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) of any form is vital for children and families with incarcerated parents.

Small Business Startups: Again, findings further revealed that the Startup of a small business was one of the coping strategies used by caregivers, children, ex-inmates, children of the incarcerated parents and social workers to overcome shocks due to parental incarceration. Rubi (2023) argued that the most practical and affordable business opportunities are ventures that require minimal startup capital, have a low barrier to entry, and utilize the skills or knowledge an individual may have acquired during incarceration (Rubi, 2023). In addition, according to Ryder (2020), there are an estimated five million formerly incarcerated Americans and for many, finding a job after leaving prison or jail is a challenge. The unemployment rate among them is 27% as of 2018; small businesses need to impact them (Rubi, 2023). Accordingly, the finding revealed the need for the startup of small businesses for caregivers, ex-inmates, and children of incarcerated parents to earn a living and support their families.

Lastly, playing for the children of the incarcerated parents was revealed as one of the strategies for coping with the social, psychological and emotional of parental incarceration in their families. Brown and Gibbons (2018), using case illustration, argued that Child-Centred Play Therapy (CCPT) is responsive to both the developmental and cultural needs of Children with incarcerated parents (CIP) and also provides Children with incarcerated parents with a therapeutic environment to deal with their grief and move towards achieving growth and healing (Brown & Gibbons, 2018). Brown & Gibbons (2018) further argued that in addition to providing intervention and support to tackle the emotional and social needs of Children with incarcerated parents, Child-Centred Play

Therapy offers a supportive environment to express their grief and full range of emotions during parental incarceration while also allowing them to experience a sense of control (Brown and Gibbons, 2018). This is true to the revelation of the findings of this study. Lastly, according to Marjorie (2015), children of incarcerated parents devise means of coping that involve participating in games/sports to avoid discussion about their parents' imprisonment, minimizing neglect, and not minding the situation (Marjorie, 2015).

5. 5. The ways to improve the welfare of Children with Incarcerated Parents

The findings from the study revealed that material and educational support, Rescue, Rehabilitation, Restoration and Reintegration (4Rs), Counseling support services, referral support, and psychosocial support were some of the ways of improving the welfare of children with incarcerated parents. These are further presented and discussed below.

Table 5.5: Showing the Ways to Improve the Welfare of the Children with Incarcerated Parents

Categories	Sub-Categories	Coded segments
Ways to improve welfare of Children and incarcerated	Material Support	"*Findings revealed that children and families of the incarcerated receive material support in the form of clothes, mosquito nets and shelter to improve their welfare at the household level" [Social Worker: 124 – 124]*
		"… We also shelter the children in case we realize that they are in a terrible situation where they cannot stay at home, and they don't have shelter, where they don't have protection at home. So we give them the protection and the shelter" [Social Worker: 19 – 19]
	Educational support	*"Relatives also bring, some also bring buy books… help us with school needs and food supply so that the children go to school…" [Caregiver: 156 – 156]*
		"…We give sponsorship to the children of parents who are imprisoned; we give them basic school needs in the form of books, clothing, the uniform for them to access school" [Social worker: 60 – 60]

	Rescue, Rehabilitation, Restoration and Reintegration (4Rs)	*"… First of all, we reintegrate these children back to their families. Then we … kind of do correctional services to these children. We rehabilitate these children. We make sure that these children are corrected and rehabilitated, we reunify them with family members" [Social Worker: 59 – 59]*
		"…after we have taken them through 4Rs (Rescue, Rehabilitation, Restoration and Re-integration) ….the ones that have passed through us and we have taken them back and probably we find that the family is still in the same state that the parent or the father is still in prison" [Social Worker 3: 43 – 43]
	Counseling support services	*"…they need counseling from us, the counselors… one of the interventions we are trying is cancelling and guidance to them … the counseling is the form that they see free stigma they receive stigma…we provide counseling to the family" [Social Worker: 60 – 60]*
		"… These Children, at the same time, we provide guidance and counseling together with their family and their households so that they can know that this is the right way to follow" [Social Worker: 59 – 59]
	Referral Support	*"We do referral and connectivity, all linkages…." [Social Worker:17 – 17]*
		"… also we also sometimes link them to the churches. There is referral pathways" [Social Worker: 48 – 48]
	Psychosocial support	*"Psychosocial support like social support… and then we also offer spiritual support to them, pray with them… Communities where they come from, take some time to share with them …" [Social worker: 65 - 65]*
		"We make sure that we collect them and begin to share with them and talk to them. Give them this positivity, that this person is not a spoiled person or is not coming back a bad person, so they can be received, welcomed back..." [Social Worker: 61 - 61]

Source: Field Data

Material Support: In line with the findings in Table 5.5 above, Poehlmann et al. (2009) in a population-based study utilizing family reports and a longitudinal family survey with a sample size of 4,898 (N=4,898). Their findings revealed that children suffer from unmet

material (Geller et al., 2009). Based on this finding, it is essential to provide material support to the children of incarcerated parents to improve their welfare. However, in Uganda, extended family society and alternative transfer of parenting responsibility to grandparents who usually offer lesser care and remedy to residential and fundamental needs of children with incarcerated parents are preferred for these children in their custody. Lack of contribution to the families of incarcerated parents is sometimes seen as abandonment. Prison restricts the parent's ability to contribute financially to family life and financially burdens the family. Many families must cover the offender's expenses and legal fees, particularly during remand. Support initiatives must aim to mitigate the adverse effects of imprisonment on carrying out the parental function (Philbrick et al., 2014).

Education Support: In addition, findings also revealed that the children and families of incarcerated children are given educational support in the form of books, sponsorship, clothing, and uniforms to access education. Caregivers and social workers revealed that these bits of help are sometimes obtained from relatives, family friends, and organizations working with these children and their families. According to Jones (2006), children of incarcerated parents may struggle academically due to a lack of basic educational materials like books, pens, fees, food, shoes, and bags, among others. The absence of a primary provider in the family because of imprisonment creates a gap. The secondary provider will not adequately meet the needs of the children due to other overwhelming demands from his or her own family, particularly for extended family assistance. Children and families of incarcerated parents face unique challenges that may impact their welfare. It is crucial to address these needs to ensure the well-being of the children and maintain family connections so that the children can stay at school. Providing secondary access to financial assistance programs, such as welfare, food stamps, or housing assistance, can be crucial for their well-being at this point of need. This will help them cater to the educational needs and support and keep their children in school to attain education and secure their future academically.

In Uganda, efforts have been made to promote human rights, improve prison conditions, and offer educational and rehabilitation programmes for incarcerated parents (Republic of Uganda, 2015; Uganda Prisons Service, 2018). Lastly, as noted by Vacca (2004), while

supporting education for children with incarcerated parents, the impact of parental incarceration on children's outcomes at school is significant to consider, given the long-lasting implications of school success for adult adjustment across a variety of domains, including employment, physical health, substance use, incarceration (Vacca, 2004).

Again, findings further revealed that the 4Rs (Rescue, Rehabilitation, Restoration and Re-integration) are one of the ways used by social workers to improve the welfare of the children of incarcerated parents. According to Child Restoration Outreach Uganda (2021), School-going children are placed in schools nearest their homes during restoration and reintegration programmes. Other children are resettled with vital items like mattresses, blankets, or a goat for an income generation project, depending on the prevailing situation in the home (Child Restoration Outreach Uganda, 2021). Children from the streets are prepared to enter formal and non-formal schooling by participating in catch-up education. The children studied basic literacy and numeracy skills and science, arts, and crafts during their rehabilitation class. However, reintegrating children into families is hardly ever a walk in the park; sometimes, the children are not wanted! Other times, the physical conditions in the home are simply not good enough for the child to live under (Child Restoration Outreach Uganda, 2021).

Counselling: From the study, findings revealed that social workers provide counselling to Children with incarcerated parents. In line with these findings, several studies have revealed that the children of incarcerated parents who have been made to become secondary-primary caretakers in their families taking on adults' logistical and emotional responsibilities circumstantially during their parents' absence (Murray & Farrington, 2008). This pre-exposes them to parentification trauma and other adverse childhood experiences (ACE), creating a heavy care burden for the lead child when children take up the responsibility of parenting without the necessary support and resources. The limited access to crisis intervention agencies to offer targeted efforts and services like counselling and other support services, which would otherwise help alleviate their suffering, further contributes to a worsened burden of (PTSD) and other adverse effects. There is a need to urgently provide stability and safety, reassurance, and emotional group counselling to children and these families. Providing counselling services and support groups to them

and their families can help them cope with these emotions. Increasing access to mental health resources to them shall help them navigate the emotional challenges of having a parent in prison.

In addition, the study findings revealed that the children are sometimes referred for support by Social workers as a way to improve their welfare. According to Roberts (2012), information and referrals to caregivers about the agency of support should be given where necessary. Referrals come either from the school if a child has been identified by staff, or in some cases has self-identified, or directly from the family who then permits the school to be informed and by school counsellors when the child's particularly those whose behavior suggests that something is wrong (Roberts, 2012). Children are often referred by their school counsellors or social workers for better services to overcome the challenges of parental incarceration.

Lastly, the findings revealed that the children were offered psychosocial support to improve their welfare. The psychosocial support given is spiritual support, such as positively talking to them. Additionally, incarcerated parents are given psychological support before being released, and also the children are offered psychosocial support by social workers to prepare them to come to their community. Children often face several mental health issues both in the immediate wake of a parent's incarceration and the subsequent years. Therefore, caseworkers and caregivers must establish a safe space for these children. Incarceration of a child's parent could seriously affect a child's psychological and psycho-emotional development and limit a child's facility for positive social interaction. Therefore, based on the revelation of the findings, the children need psychosocial support that can help soothe and remove trauma from them so that their welfare can be improved. However, according to John et al.(2019), open communication with caregivers, imprisoned parents, and extended family is critical to overcoming the effect of parental incarceration (John et al., 2019),

CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

The summary of the findings, conclusion, and recommendations for the study are presented in this chapter. The findings of the previous chapter (4) constitute the summary linked to the study objectives, the conclusions derived from the entire study, and the recommendations.

6.1 Summary of Findings

Findings show that most study participants were males in all the participant categories (social workers, caregivers, Children and ex-inmates).

The joint effects of parental incarceration rated highly among the participants were social, physiological, emotional and educational effects. There was the emergence of two other (2) sub-themes that came in as affecting children and their families as a result of parental incarceration. These were financial and health effects. Socially, study participants rated family destruction, loneliness, drug and alcoholism and property grabbing highly as affecting children and their families when either parent is in prison. Psychologically, mental disruption, distress or disturbance, fear and stigma and depression were rated highly by participants. Emotionally, stress, worries, trauma and aggressiveness were rated highly among the study participants. Lastly, on education, school dropout and poor performance were the only reported to have affected the education of the children after their parents' incarceration. Among the common coping mechanisms and support systems utilized by caregivers, counselling, Social Support Networks or groups, Capacity building and skilling, and support from NGOs were rated highly by the study participants.

Lastly, on the ways of improving the welfare of the children with parental incarceration, the study participants rated highly material support and education support. The study participants rated the 4Rs (Rescue, Rehabilitate, Restore and Re-integration), Counseling support services, Referral Support services, and psychosocial support services at the same level.

6.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sought to examine the psychosocial effects of parental imprisonment on the Lives of Children (Young People) and their Families in Soroti, Uganda. Based on the study findings, it can be concluded that:

Parental incarceration has a considerable potential to cause adverse social, psychological, emotional, educational, financial and health effects not only to those parents in custody but to their victimized children and families, creating disrupted families, causing trauma in children and society of stressed, abused, depressed children who unfortunately may be pushed to trauma internalization and externalization as shown in the results above. Urgent, deliberate action strategies are needed and must be put in place to mitigate these adversities as they are likely to cause more family disruption (family breakups), make children adopt delinquent behaviors such as drug abuse, alcoholism, stealing (theft) and families of imprisoned parents can lose their property or land through encroachment. Parental imprisonment is associated with high rates of mental health problems among children. It causes fear and stigma, resulting in high levels of school dropout rates and poor academic performance and leading to a drop in family finances or resources as the primary income earner (s) are imprisoned.

Further to this, counselling and psychosocial support networks and capacity-building skilling for the caregivers and the victimized children should be made accessible and, encouraged and supported to mitigate the adverse effects of parental incarceration in Uganda among children and families of incarcerated parents as it widely needed as expressed by social workers and other participants shown in the findings above.

It is essential to improve the welfare of the children of incarcerated parents. The provision of material and educational support, as well as other welfare needs, is not enough; there is a need for long-term sustainable welfare solutions for the children and their families. This, therefore, calls for a continuous combination of the 4Rs (Rescue, Rehabilitate, Restore and Re-integration) and Counseling support services to the Children and their families.

6.3 Research Contributions and Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following are the key research contributions and recommendations to mitigate the effects of future Imprisonment of Parents on the children and families left behind.

1. Always ensure that while enforcing a parental arrest, it should not be done violently or in the presence of children. The violence of an offender(s) (mothers or fathers) done in a non-dignified manner has a traumatizing effect on the children and other members of the family. It is prudent that arresting officers be sensitive to the interest of children to consider the post-traumatic adverse childhood effects that may affect children's mental, social and academic well-being and stability, especially after witnessing the arrest. The arresting officer and prison authorities must decide to inform the children and provide an understandable explanation about their parents' situation, which involves making all the necessary arrangements before or after the arrest to ensure the after impacts are mitigated.

2. The State and legal authorities should make deliberate efforts to aid children in understanding legal proceedings to enable them to explore alternative sentencing methods with lesser adverse outcomes for children and families of offenders. The Judiciary must prioritize alternative non-custodial mechanisms and reformative rehabilitation measures like community service for petty-crime offenders to ensure non-separatist measures instead of custodial rehabilitation, which has familial disruption risks. Emphasis must be in the interest of children's and family welfare.

3. It is essential that prison services offer conducive environments that help families retain contact and facilitate inmate, child, and family communication through encouraging various means of communication, like the use of phone calls, text messaging and letter correspondences periodically to continued maintenance and strength of family relationships and ties. All efforts geared towards supporting prisoners in maintaining contact with their children can significantly reduce the emotional strain of separation, as supported by research findings.

5. Make visitation a user-friendly experience for children of incarcerated parents to foster strong bonding and continuous child-parent attachment. Creating spaces where inmates can interact with their children in a homely-like environment through availing play therapy tools, equipment like toys, balls, etcetera for the children to interact appropriately with prison staff, imprisoned parents and other children and visiting families can ensure the psycho-socio-emotional and spiritual well-being of both parents, children, including for children living in prison.

6. Inclusive education programs for children and families of incarcerated parents. With recognition of the efforts by the State through universal primary and secondary education access to her citizens and hands by individuals and private education support programs by CBOs and NGOs on this front, it is vital to acknowledge the impact on the academic performance of children created by the arrest of a primary provider is immense. As these children are often "*forgotten victims*" of crime, of their innocence, it is crucial that more effort and funding by governments, CBOs, and NGOs in designing more inclusive tailored education support opportunities like scholarships, which ensure more expansive access to scholarship opportunities and scholastic materials to the highly vulnerable affected children and families.

7. Support reunification and integration programs for inmates who complete their time. This ensures that they can start life reasonably enough from the moment they are released into the community through material and financial support, skilling, and input provision to address financial challenges, facilitate adaptation, coping and smooth integration for maintained well-fare for ex-inmates, children, and the caregivers post-imprisonment, alleviating economic strain reducing risk to theft and the chance of reoffending.

8. There is a dire need for the expanded establishment of family crisis centres to cater to the needs of vulnerable families and children of imprisoned parents. Well-wishers and others capable of managing such cases can rally funds at the forefront under Community-based organizations and other Non-government Organizations for the interventive programs to advocate and provide psychosocial services for these families.

6.4 Areas for Further Future Studies

The following are the recommended areas for future or further research.

1) The role of Prison Services in ensuring the maintained well-being of families of inmates.
2) The Effectiveness of Play Therapy as a tool for relationship building and social-emotional development for Imprisoned Parents and Their Children.
3) Community Service and Out-of-Court arrangements for petty crime as an Alternative for Custodial Rehabilitation

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Caretakers

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CARETAKERS.

Dear participant,

I welcome you to this session; I am **Stephen Eyamu**, a master's student of Social Work with Children and Youth at the Catholic University of Ruzomberok, currently researching the psychosocial effects of parental incarceration on children and their families in Uganda. Please be informed that your participation is voluntary and entirely based on your consent. Your participation shall be vital in providing information relevant to this study by answering the questions below. The responses from this interview are confidential and will be used for this research only.

SECTION A. Caretakers Demographic Information:

- Age
- Gender
- District
- Relationship to the child

Information about the child:

- Number of children
- Age
- Gender
- Family structure (nuclear or extended)
- Duration of the parent's imprisonment.

2. Initial Reactions and Coping Mechanisms:

- What was your initial reaction to the imprisonment of the children's parent(s)?

SECTION B. Effects of Parental Imprisonments on Children:

(a) Emotional Effects.

- How did the children react to the news of the father's or mother's imprisonment?
- Have you observed and noticed any emotional changes in the child since the parent's imprisonment? Probe for signs of anxiety, depression, anger, or withdrawal.

(b) Changes in Behavior and Relationships.

- What behaviour changes have you observed in the children in terms of their social interactions or relationships with peers and family members after this happened?
- Have there been any other disruptions in the children's routine or activities due to the imprisonment of the parent? *If yes, please describe.*

(c) Stigma.

- What was/is the reaction and behaviour of peers and neighbours towards you now that the parent was imprisoned?

- Have you and the children experienced any perceived discrimination, stigma, or social judgment and other repercussions due to parental imprisonment? *For example (labelling, pointing of fingers, teasing, etc.)*

(d) Educational Challenges:

- How has the imprisonment of the parents affected the children's schooling?
- What is your observation of the children's academic performance, including attendance?
- What are the specific struggles with supporting the children's academic success?

(e) Financial and Practical Challenges.

- What are the general financial challenges you are facing as the caretaker due to the absence of the children's parent?
- How has this affected your access to daily needs, housing, healthcare, and education resources for the children?

2. Communication with the Imprisoned Parent.

- How often does/do a child communicate with their imprisoned parents?
- By which means of communication do you and the children reach their imprisoned parent? (e.g., letters, phone calls, visits)
- What emotions of the child do you observe during this communication?

SECTION C. Coping Strategies, Mechanisms, and Interventions.

- What are some of the coping mechanisms you employed by both the caretaker and the child to deal with the situation?
- How have you ensured that the children could navigate the challenges you talked about? (Attending church, counselling, sports, leisure, socialization clubs, etcetera?
- How have relatives, friends, and community members been of help to you and the children in enabling you to cope with the challenges you mentioned?

SECTION D. Support Needs, Services, and Resources:

- What support services and resources do you and the children need to improve their well-being? For example (financial assistance, emotional support, childcare services, and community programs.
- What areas of support do you feel would be most required to help you and your family?
- Are there any gaps in support and barriers to accessing resources?
- Are there any challenges you face in accessing the support and resources you need?

Reflection and Closing Remarks:

Are there any reflections on the interview and additional insights or concerns that you need to highlight, if any? Thank you for your participation.
Offer resources and contact information, if necessary.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Ex-inmates

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EX-INMATES

Dear participant,

I welcome you to this session; I am **Stephen Eyamu**, a master's student of Social Work with Children and Youth at the Catholic University of Ruzomberok, currently researching the psychosocial effects of parental incarceration on children and their families in Uganda. Please be informed that your participation is voluntary and entirely based on your consent. Your participation shall be vital in providing information relevant to this study by answering the questions below. The responses from this interview are confidential and will be used for this research only.

SECTION A. Demographic Information:

1. Age.
2. Gender.
3. District.
4. Length of time spent in custody.
5. Number of children.
6. Ages of Children.
7. Gender of children.
8. What was the nature of your family structure before, during, and after incarceration?
9. Did you ever have similar experiences of imprisonment with your parents before?

Pre, During and Post-Incarceration Family Dynamics:

1. How was your relationship with your children and family before your incarceration?
2. How was your relationship with your children and family during and after you were incarcerated?
3. How were you communicating with your family? (Ask about communication frequency and medium).
4. What are the major challenges you have observed in your relationship with family members over time?
5. How did you feel emotionally about yourself and your family during and after you were imprisoned? *(Did you feel worried, fearful, ashamed)* how did you feel?

SECTION B. Impact of Incarceration:

1. How did your imprisonment/has affected the children and family?

a) Emotional and psychological effects.

b) Social interaction and behavioural changes

c) Financial effects

d) Children's schooling, enrolment, and academic performance.

2. What were the challenges faced by the family in maintaining contact during your period of incarceration?

SECTION C. Coping Strategies and Mechanisms:

1. What were some of the strategies your children and family members used to cope with the challenges arising from incarceration?
2. How did these strategies help your children and family members to adapt and cope with the challenges arising from your incarceration?
3. Did you ever access any form of counselling, community resources, or re-entry programs and other external support during this period while you were incarcerated?
4. What were your experiences and challenges in reconnecting with your children after release?

SECTION D. Support Interventions and Areas of Improvement.

1. What are the major needs of children and their families when their parent is incarcerated?
2. In what ways should individuals and community members help improve the lives of children and families affected by incarceration?
3. In your opinion, what government or NGO support services and systems should be put in place to improve the lives of children and families of inmates in the future?

Reflections and closing remarks

Are there any reflections on the interview and additional insights or concerns that you need to highlight? I thank you for your participation.

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for Social Workers

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Dear Respondent,

I am **Mr. Stephen Eyamu**, a master's student in Social Work with Children and Youth at the Catholic University of Ruzomberok. I am currently researching the psychosocial effects of parental incarceration on children and their families in Uganda. Please be informed that your participation is voluntary and entirely based on your consent. Your participation shall be vital in providing information relevant to this study by answering the questions below. The information collected from this interview is confidential and will be used for this research only.

SECTION A: Demographic information:

1. Name (optional)
2. Age
3. Gender
4. District
5. Position in the organization.
6. Training and Educational attainment.
7. Services or programs involved in relation to this issue.
8. What is your experience and the nature of your work with children and families affected by parental imprisonment (How has it been like?)? What is the process, if you may?

Assessment of Needs:

1. How do you assess the specific needs of children with incarcerated parents?
2. What are the most common emotional, social, or psychological challenges faced by these children?
3. How do you determine the level of support needed for each child and family?

SECTION B: Effects of parental imprisonment:

a) Effects on Children:

1. What is your understanding of parental imprisonment and its potential impact on families and young people from your experience working with families in this situation?
2. From your observation, how has incarceration of a parent(s) affected children and family's well-being (i) physically, (ii) emotionally and psychologically, (iii) Social and social interactions, (iv) economically, (v) academically in terms of enrollment, performance, school completion and (vi) Spiritual life? *Please describe.*

b) Effects on Families:

1. How has parental imprisonment impacted family relationships from your observation and work with these individuals or family groups?
2. What are some of the housing, financial, and legal challenges families face?

SECTION C: Coping Strategies, Mechanisms and Resilience:

a) Coping among Children and Young people:

1. How/what ways have the affected children and young people been able to cope with the (i) emotional and psychological challenges, (ii) health challenges, (iii) economic challenges, (iv) school and educational challenges, and (vi) social challenges when their parents are imprisoned/separated from them?
2. What specific success stories and coping strategies have you observed to be effective for these children?
3. From your experience with these cases, what are some of the negative, unhealthy practices children resort to in helping them cope with the challenges of parental imprisonment, and what were their implications?

b) Family Coping:

1. How have the affected family members/caretakers been able to cope individually or collectively?
2. In what ways are these families ensuring maintained communication with their imprisoned parents?
3. What interventions or strategies does your office/organization employ to help these families cope?

Challenges and Barriers:

1. What are the existing systemic and administrative barriers faced by children and their families in accessing effective support that needs to be addressed?
2. How do societal stigmas, social judgments, and misconceptions about parental incarceration impact the families you work with?
3. Identify the ethical challenges and barriers faced by social workers when working with families affected by parental imprisonment.

SECTION D: Support Systems, Services, and Interventions:

1. What is the role of informal support systems for example, (i) friends, (ii) relatives, (iii) community networks) in providing support and assistance to affected children and families?
2. What support services offered by your office are available for families affected by parental imprisonment (i) to the children and (ii) their family members, if any?
3. What interventions or strategies have you found to be the most successful in mitigating the negative effects on young people and their families in your organization and

practice?

SECTION E: Future Directions and Recommendations:

1. What is the role of social workers and other professionals in supporting families affected by parental imprisonment?
2. Based on your experience, in what areas can (i) friends, (ii) family members, (iii) NGOs, (iv) the government, and the community support children and families affected by parental imprisonment to enhance support and resilience of young people and families affected by parental imprisonment? Please discuss.
3. Are there any policy changes or initiatives you believe would be beneficial in addressing this issue effectively?
4. What are the unmet needs of these groups that require future interventions based on your observation?

Reflections and Closing Remarks:

We have come to the end of this session. Thank you for taking time off to participate in this interview. Are there any additional insights or clarification that you wish to add? If necessary. Thank you again. For further information, please feel free to reach out to me for further clarifications, questions, or discussion.

Provided contact information, if necessary.

Appendix 4: Interview Guide for Young People (17-24) Years

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (17-24) YEARS

Dear participant,

I welcome you to this session; I am **Stephen Eyamu**, a master's student of Social Work with Children and Youth at the Catholic University of Ruzomberok, currently researching the psychosocial effects of parental incarceration on children and their families in Uganda. Please be informed that your participation is voluntary and entirely based on your consent. Your participation shall be vital in providing information relevant to this study by answering the questions below. The responses from this interview are confidential and will be used for this research only.

SECTION A. Demographic Information:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Level of education
4. District
5. Relationship to the imprisoned parent
6. **Understanding the Situation:**

- Can you tell me about your experience with having a parent who is imprisoned?

- How did you feel when you first learned about your parent's imprisonment?

- How has having a parent in prison affected your daily life and routines?

SECTION B. Effects of Parental Imprisonment:

a) Emotional Impact:

- What emotions do you experience as a result of your parent's imprisonment?
- Have you noticed any changes in your emotional well-being since your parent was incarcerated?
- How do you typically cope with the emotional challenges of having a parent in prison?

b) Impact on Social and Peer Relationships:

- How do your friends or peers react when they learn about your parent's imprisonment?
- Have your relationships with friends or peers changed since your parent's incarceration?
- How did you feel talking to others about your parent's situation?

c) Educational impact:

- Were you schooling when you heard that your parent had been imprisoned?
- Are there any specific ways the imprisonment of your parents has affected your academic performance, enrollment, and school completion?

SECTION C. Coping Strategies and Mechanisms:

- What are some of the ways you cope with the stress or difficulties of having your parent in prison?
- What specific activities or hobbies do you find helpful in managing your emotions?
- Have you sought support from anyone, such as family members, teachers, or counsellors?
- Have you been able to access any support or resources from friends, relatives, or organizations to help you cope with your parent's imprisonment?
- What kinds of support do you think have been most beneficial in your situation?

Communication with the Imprisoned Parent:

- How often are you able to visit or communicate with your parent who is in prison?
- What other methods of communication do you use to stay in touch with your parent?
- Does communication with your parents help, and how has it helped your emotional well-being?

SECTION D. Support Needs and Ways for Improvement:

- What are some of the biggest challenges you face because of the imprisonment of your parent?
- Are there any specific needs or support services you feel are lacking in your situation?
- Are there any organizations or programs you're aware of that provide support for affected children, and which one did you participate in?
- In your opinion, what could be done to improve support for young people with incarcerated parents?

Reflections and Closing Remarks:

Anything else you would like to share or your final thoughts about your situation? Thank you for participating and sharing your experiences. Offer resources and contact, if necessary.