DEVELOPING THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATION FOR FAITH-BASED REENTRY PROGRAMMING IN THE UNITED STATES

A Qualitative Examination of the Experiences of Formerly Incarcerated Muslims and a Cross-Disciplinary Analysis of the Literature

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ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION TITLE: Developing the Theoretical Foundation for Faith-Based Reentry Programming in the United States: A Qualitative Examination of the Experiences of Formerly Incarcerated Muslims and a Cross-Disciplinary Analysis of the Literature

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Against a backdrop of high incarceration and staggering recidivism rates, faith-based reentry programming has emerged as a solution to assist the successful reintegration of former prisoners in the United States. Despite increasingly popular partnerships between the government and faith-based organizations in the reentry context, the theoretical and evidentiary basis for this type of programming remains weak. Moreover, almost no evidence exists on the application of faith-based reentry programming to cultural and faith minorities, specifically American Muslims, who make up a significant segment of the incarcerated population. In accordance with evidence-based practice, this dissertation develops a theoretical foundation for understanding, developing, and evaluating faith-based reentry programming. The literature review component examines existing theories in criminology, sociology, and evidence-based practice regarding the process of desistance, the relationship between religion and crime, and the process by which faith-based programming affects re-offending. The qualitative research component interviews 37 "experts" on faith-based reentry programming for a niche population—namely, formerly incarcerated African-American converts to Islam. These experts include formerly incarcerated individuals in three cities, administrators of two existing faith-based programs, researchers, and policymakers. Findings from the literature review and qualitative research are synthesized to produce a theoretical framework for understanding and evaluating faith-based reentry programming generally, and this framework is used to design a sample program for the population interviewed. The research reveals that voluntary faith-based programming may be an effective way of promoting long-term desistance among the reentering African-American Muslim population given their unique challenges and needs, but several practical challenges remain. Finally, the dissertation recommends ways in which faith-based programs may partner with government while remaining effective, abiding by the law, and addressing infrastructural and capacity-related needs.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction and Research Outline 8
1.1 Introduction.....8
1.2 Contextual Background 15
1.2.1 Background on Reentry 15
1.2.2 Background on Muslims in the U.S. and its Prisons.....20
1.2.3 Faith-based Reentry Initiatives 26
A. What Does It Mean to be "Faith-Based"? 26
B. Government Partnership with Faith-Based Organizations 33
C. Faith-based Programming in the Criminal Justice System 38
1.3 Justification for Research.....40
1.4 Brief Outline of Research 43
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....45
2.1 Overview of Existing Theory.....45
2.1.1 Theories of Desistance.....45
A. Individual-centered Theories.....47
Maturation and Aging.....47
Psychological/Developmental.....48
Rational choice/Deterrence.....50
B. Group and Institution-focused Theories.....50
Life Course 50
Social Control and Social Capital.....52
Social Learning.....54
Social Ecology 55
C. Conceptual and Methodological Issues with Desistance Theories.....56
2.1.2 Religion, Crime, and Desistance.....60
A. Overview.....60
B. Theoretical Frameworks.....61
Social Bonds, Social Control, and Social Capital.....61
Symbolic interactionism 65
Deterrence and Rational Choice 65
C. Critique of Research and Methodological Issues 67
Measures of Religiosity 68
Omitted Variables.....72
Defining outcomes.....81
Causality 81
Applicability to Adults and Prisoners.....82
Conclusion: Theorizing the inverse relationship between religion and crime.....82

2.1.3 Theory of Faith-based Reentry Programming 84
A. Evidence Base on Effectiveness of Faith-based Reentry Programming 85
Methodology of Search 85
Search Results 87
Search Results – Description 88
B. Critique of Research 101
How faith actually operates in the reentry program is unclear 101
How faith affects offending is unclear 102
Causation 102
Causal Process between Faith and Offending 104
Defining "Faith" 110
Faith in an FBO 110
Methodological limitations 112
C. Applicability of Literature Review Findings to Muslims 116
D. Creating a Theoretical Framework 122
Chapter 3: Original Qualitative Research: Methods and Background 125
3.1 Methodology 126
3.2 Research Questions 128
3.3 Justification for Qualitative Methods 129
3.4 Description of Qualitative Methods Used 131
3.5 Sampling 135
3.5.1 Groups for Analysis 135
3.5.2 Sampling Strategy 140
3.6 Ethical considerations 143
3.7 Questions and instruments 143
3.8 Pilot research 144
3.9 Reflexivity considerations 146
3.10 Data description 149
3.11 Analytic Approach 149
3.12 Quantitative Data 151
3.13 Ethnographic Observations and Interviewee Profiles 153
Chapter 4: Results and Analysis of Qualitative Research 157
4.1 Data Analysis 157
4.1.1 Challenges facing formerly incarcerated Muslims during reentry 158
A. Basic needs 159
B. Housing challenges – transitional and drug treatment homes 160
C. Housing challenges – family dynamics 162
D. Food 163

E. Lack of support from family 164
F. Lack of comfort at the masjid (mosque) 167
G. Difficulties in finding Muslim brotherhood 168
H. Challenges of navigating a new world 173
4.1.2 Need for faith-based reentry program 175
A. Individual-centered Benefits 176
Increasing Knowledge about God, Spirituality, and/or Islam 176
Improving One's Mental Health, Self-esteem, Self-control, and Outlook on Life 180
Establishing Order and Discipline in One's Life 183
Developing Employable and Leadership Skills 185
B. Peer-related Benefits 187
Muslim Brotherhood 187
Family-like support 188
Checks on Behavior 189
Peer Education about Islam and Spirituality 192
Mutual Understanding 194
Mentoring 196
C. Program-level Benefits 198
Characteristics of Program Staff 198
Protective Program Environment 204
4.1.3 Programmatic needs and challenges 209
A. The Ideal Program 209
B. Partnerships 213
C. Location of ideal program 215
D. Implementation Challenges 218
4.1.4 Placing Findings in Context 221
A. Measurement of religiosity/faith 223
B. Family dynamics 224
C. Identity transformation 228
D. Protective prison-like environment 231
E. Shaming and community relations 233
F. Partnerships 234
4.1.5 Limitations and Questions of Generalizability 235
A. Differences Across Sites and Groups 235
B. The African-American Convert Experience 236
C. Other Limitations 239
D. Biases 242
E. Generalizability and theory 245

Chapter 5: Developing a Theoretical Framework 248
5.1 Problem Theory 249
5.1.1 Caveats and assumptions 257
5.2 The Broader Theoretical Framework 261
5.3 Program Theory 264
5.3.1 Target group 264
5.3.2 Intervention points and change techniques 265
5.3.3 Measuring change and likely impact 275
5.4 Practicalities of measuring change 279
Chapter 6: Policy Implications 289
6.1 Government-FBO Partnerships 290
6.1.1 The Case for Partnering 290
6.1.2 Types of partnerships 293
6.1.3 Requirements for Federally-funded FBOs 296
6.2 Legal Concerns with Government-FBO Partnerships 298
6.3 What Partnering Might Look Like In Practice 302
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Future Steps 307

Figures

Figure 1: MRC Diagram of Key Elements of Development and Evaluation Process (Craig et al., 2008, p. 8) 11
Figure 2: Development of a Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Operation of Faith-Based Reentry Programming: Outline of Dissertation 14
Figure 3: Diagram of Words Used in Literature Search 87
Figure 4: Theoretical Framework for Process by which FBOs Reduce Recidivism 124
Figure 5: Risk Factors for Reentering Muslims 250
Figure 6: Protective Factors for Reentering Muslims 254
Figure 7: Faith Pathways Illuminated by Qualitative Research 262
Figure 8: Abridged Version of Theoretical Framework 263
Figure 9: Sample Risk Chain 265
Figure 10: Example of short-term and long-term features of ideal program 278
Figure 11: Sample Logic Model (Fischer & Stelter, 2006, p. 33) 284
Figure 12: Sample Logic Model for Muslim Reentry Program 285

Tables

Table 1: Green and Sherman's Description of Faith-Involvement in FBOs 27
Table 2: Classification for Defining a FBO: Four Loci of Faith 32
Table 3: Examples of Faith-Based Programming in Prisons 40
Table 4: Measures of Religiosity and their Definitions 70
Table 5: Direction of Religion-Crime Relationship Found in Literature Reviews 83
Table 6: Comparison of Religiosity in FBOs and Individuals 85
Table 7: Breakdown of Literature Review Results 88
Table 8: Characteristics of Evaluations of Faith-Based Reentry Programs 91
Table 9: Research Related to Muslims and Crime 118
Table 10: Research Group Breakdown 127

Table 11: Description of Sources and Methods (adapted from Mason, 2002) 132
Table 12: General Breakdown of Interviews 149
Table 13: Descriptive characteristics of formerly incarcerated participants 151
Table 14: Sample Profiles of Interviewees 156
Table 15: Glossary of Islamic Terms Used by Interviewees 158
Table 16: Summary of Findings from Qualitative Analysis 222
Table 17: Points of Intervention and Intervention Examples 267
Table 18: Description of Faith-based Program for Reentering Muslims 274
Table 19: Data and Sources for Outcome Measurement 286

Chapter 1: Introduction and Research Outline

1.1 Introduction

In the United States today, about 2.3 million adults are incarcerated in federal and state prisons and jails, and about 4.9 million adults are on probation or parole (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009). The vast majority of these individuals—95% according to one estimate (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013) — will reenter society at some point in their lives. Every year, some 700,000 individuals are released from prisons nationwide (Sabol, West, & Cooper, 2009) and this number is expected to rise (Petersilia, 2005). The magnitude of the reentry issue, moreover, extends beyond its breadth. The average former prisoner has received inadequate assistance during reentry into society (Travis, Solomon, & Waul, 2001; Travis, 2000). He has encountered difficulty in securing housing and employment, establishing healthy family relationships, and receiving substance abuse and mental health treatment (Petersilia, 2003). In part due to these challenges, recidivism rates are high. Two-thirds of prisoners released will be rearrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within three years of release, and nearly 80% will likely be rearrested within a decade of release (Langan & Levin, 2002; Freeman, 2003). More recently, about half of released prisoners will return to prison for new crimes or parole violations within three years of release (Baer et al., 2006).

The challenges of reentry, furthermore, are not limited to the former prisoner himself, encompassing his family, community, and larger society as well. A recent study found that 54% of inmates are parents with children under 17, and that 2.7 million children have an incarcerated parent (Pew Charitable Trusts,

2010). Studies have found that children with an incarcerated parent are more likely to perform poorly in school, to suffer aggression, anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems, and to engage in antisocial and criminal behaviors themselves (Krisberg, 2001; Murray, Janson, & Farrington, 2007). A recent meta-analysis substantiated the association between parental incarceration and increased likelihood of antisocial behavior among children, particularly in the most rigorous, randomized studies (Murray, Farrington, & Sekol, 2012). Increased recidivism exacerbates these family challenges. In addition, high reconviction rates translate into thousands of new victimizations every year. A study of former inmates released in 1994 found that 46.9% of released prisoners were convicted of a new crime and 25.4% were resentenced to prison for new offenses in the year following release (Langan & Levin, 2002). These collateral consequences, moreover, are overwhelmingly concentrated in poor, urban communities that already bear a disproportionate load of social and economic disadvantages (Petersilia, 2000).

The cycle of imprisonment, inadequate reintegration into society, and subsequent reincarceration—compounded by the record numbers of individuals exiting prisons and the millions collaterally affected—makes the reentry issue of utmost importance today (Hercik, 2004; Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004). Against this backdrop, faith-based reentry programming has emerged as a solution to assist the successful reentry of former prisoners (Frazier, 2011; Johnson, Larson, & Pitts, 1997; Kerley, Matthews, & Schulz, 2005; Roman, Whitby, Zweig, & Rico, 2004). But the theoretical and evidentiary basis for this type of programming is weak; even its definition is unclear (Maruna, 2004; Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006). Indeed, faith-based reentry programming suffers from Maruna, Immarigeon, and LeBel (2004)'s criticism of "current reintegration practices"

generally—that they "seem to be operating in a theoretical vacuum, with no clear explanation for how the process is supposed to work" (p. 8). Moreover, very little theoretical and empirical research exists on the application of faith-based reentry programming to cultural and faith minorities, specifically American Muslims,[1] who make up a significant segment of the incarcerated population—one-fifth, according to Read and Dohadwala (2003)—and who are the subject of increased scrutiny both within and outside of prisons (Committee on Homeland Security, 2011).

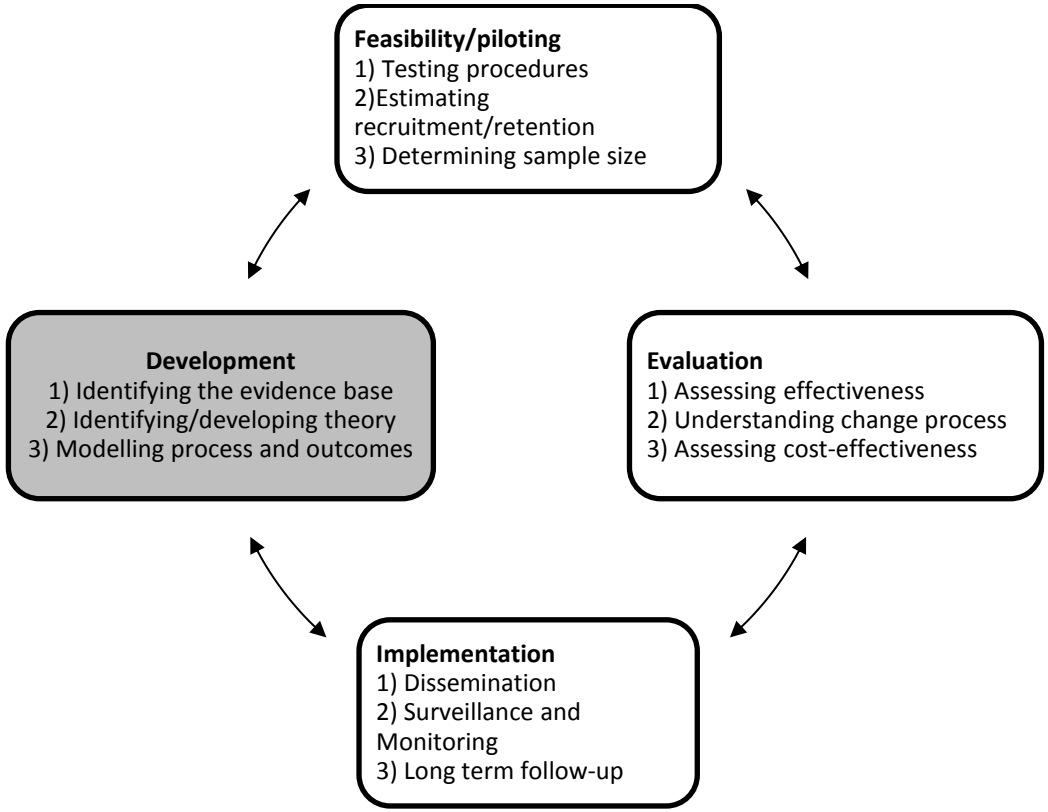
Evidence-based practice offers a solution to the "theoretical vacuum" problem facing reentry programs generally, and faith-based reentry programming specifically. According to the United Kingdom's Medical Research Council (MRC), a key element and often first step in the design and evaluation process of any complex intervention is "development," as Figure 1 reflects (Craig et al., 2008, p. 8). In particular, the MRC acknowledges that awareness of theory

> is more likely to result in an effective intervention than is a purely empirical or pragmatic approach. The rationale for a complex intervention, i.e. what changes are expected and how change is to be achieved, may not be clear at the outset. If so, a vitally important early task is to develop a theoretical understanding of the likely process of change, by drawing on existing evidence and theory, supplemented if necessary by new primary research, for example interviews with 'stakeholders,' i.e. those targeted by the intervention, or involved in its development or delivery. . . . There may be lots of competing or partly overlapping theories, and finding the most appropriate ones will require expertise in the relevant disciplines. (Craig et al., 2008, p. 9).

Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, and Day (2009) and Rothman and Thomas (1994) advocate the same theory-based approach to developing interventions. Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, and Day (2009) specifically refer to "problem theory" and "program theory" as two prerequisite concepts in the development process.

[1] The terms "American Muslims" and "Muslim Americans" are used interchangeably to refer to Muslims residing permanently in the United States. The phrase "reentering Muslims" refers to reentering Muslim Americans, unless specified otherwise.

Figure 1: MRC Diagram of Key Elements of Development and Evaluation Process (Craig et al., 2008, p. 8)



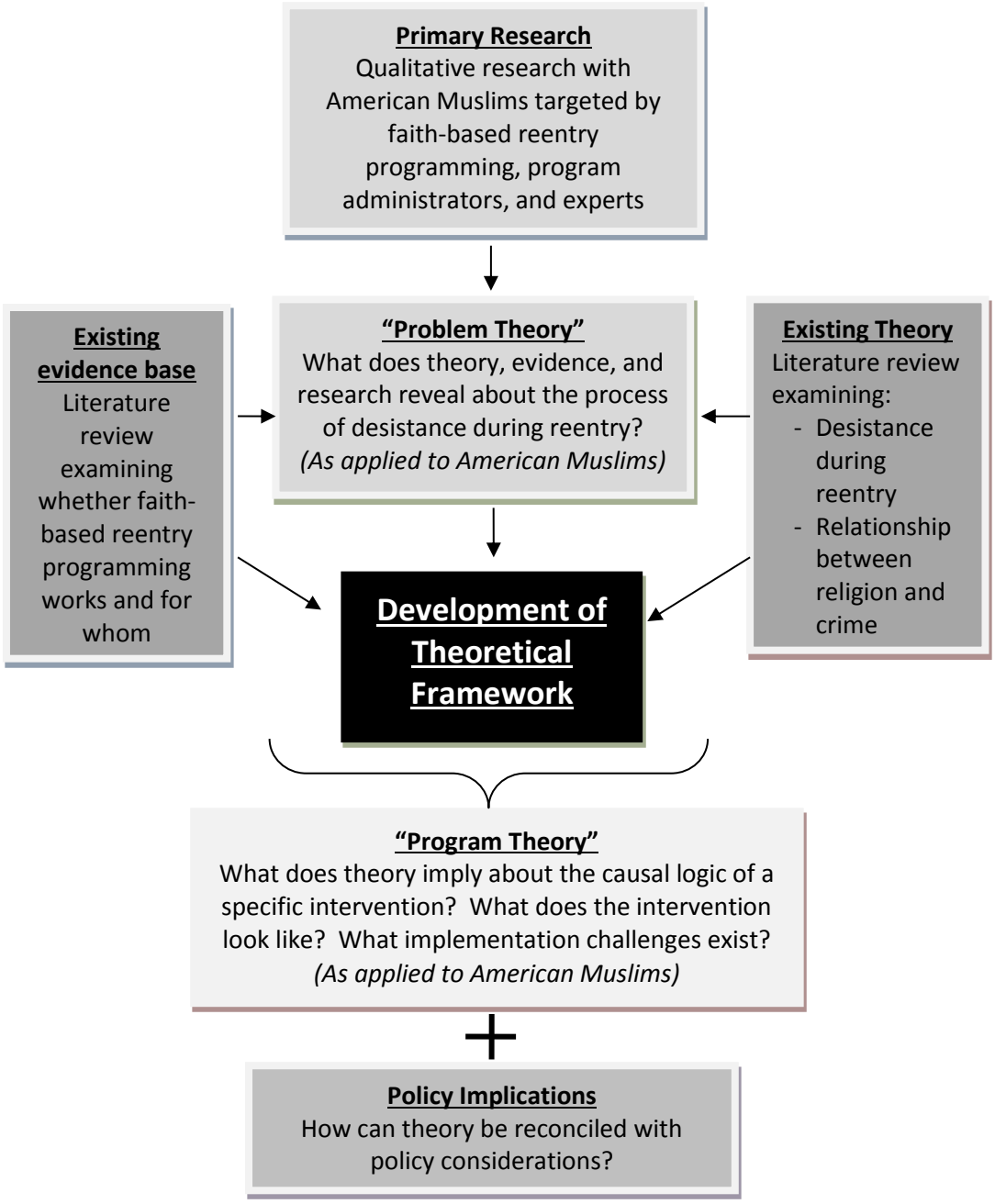
Problem theory analyzes a given problem and identifies risk and protective factors that work to, respectively, worsen or ameliorate the problem through a "risk chain" (p. 51). Recognizing these processes, problem theory allows a researcher to isolate potential "leverage points" for an intervention (p. 48). Once the problem is understood, program theory outlines the "causal logic of an intervention," often through a conceptual framework built off the risk and protective factors identified by problem theory (p. 47).

In accordance with this evidence-based approach, this dissertation brings the discussion on faith-based reentry programming back to basics. After assessing literature across disciplines and conducting original qualitative research on a critical minority population whose concerns are largely absent from any discussion on reentry, this dissertation develops a theoretical foundation for such programming and thereby directly remedies the "theoretical vacuum" concern. The importance of developing a theoretical foundation informed by both existing and original research cannot be overstated in the case of faith-based reentry programming, which is under-studied (Frazier, 2011; Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006; Hercik et al., 2005) and lacks a vital connection to theories of desistance (see Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004). American Muslims prisoners and former prisoners are even more severely under-studied and difficult to access.

The qualitative research aspect of this dissertation is critical to its goal of theory-building. As best practice dictates, developing an intervention requires an understanding of the outcome (here, reduced re-offending) "from a variety of system-level perspectives" (Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, & Day, 2009, pp. 29-30) including existing literature, "stakeholders" (Craig et al., 2008, p. 9) such as the

target population and intervention administrators, and experts. Qualitative research plays a significant role in this process. As Fraser et al. (2009) recognize, in the "process of designing and developing interventions," qualitative research has an important place (p. 26). Indeed, "[q]ualitative studies of intervention processes (e.g., extensive interviews . . . of program participants . . .) may be useful in sequencing intervention activities or reconfiguring intervention content" (p. 28). Figure 2 generally outlines the research involved in this dissertation and serves as a useful roadmap.

Figure 2: Development of a Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Operation of Faith-Based Reentry Programming: Outline of Dissertation



As Figure 2 outlines, the primary research component of this dissertation consists of original qualitative research with formerly incarcerated Muslims, including participants and administrators of two existing programs that deal with reentry for Muslims, and experts on faith-based reentry and reentry for American Muslims. This primary research informs "problem theory" for this minority population. The insights from this problem theory join the findings from the reviews of literature in criminology, sociology, and evidence-based practice to inform the creation of a broad, theoretical framework for understanding how faith-based reentry programs operate. One important use of this overarching theoretical framework is to help craft "program theories" that describe the causal logic of specific reentry programs. Such theories guide the development and implementation of these programs. In this dissertation, as an illustration of how to apply the theoretical framework, a program theory is developed for the American Muslim population targeted by the qualitative research. Finally, the theoretical framework is discussed in light of policy concerns and considerations.

1.2 Contextual Background

This section provides some background on the salient issues involved in this dissertation, namely: reentry, Muslims and Islam in American prisons, and faith-based reentry initiatives in the United States.

1.2.1 Background on Reentry

Reentry is considered one of today's most urgent national concerns (Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004) but to what exactly does the term refer? Most researchers agree that "reentry" refers to an individual's transition period

from being incarcerated to becoming a law-abiding member of society. For example, Gideon & Sung (2011) define reentry as "the natural transition from an institutionalized existence to a law-abiding and productive lifestyle in the community" (p. 403). Taxman (2004) refers to reentry as "the concept of rejoining and becoming a productive member of society" (p. 2). Frazier (2011) defines reentry as "the pro-social integration of ex-prisoners into the community" (p. 281) where "pro-social" implies law-abiding behavior (see Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

The task of reentering society is no easy one for former prisoners. Reentry presents a myriad of challenges, and "individual ex-offenders display behavioral outcomes co-determined by their prior rehabilitation experiences and ongoing progress in reintegration" (Gideon & Sung, 2011, p. 403). A key challenge during the process of reentry is obtaining and retaining employment, in part because of returning prisoners' low average education, limited work experience and skill sets, inability to access transportation, mental health and substance abuse problems, and reduced social capital and professional contacts due to long and repeated periods of incarceration (Baer et al., 2006; Gideon & Sung, 2011; Solomon, Johnson, Travis, McBride, 2004). Often, those ex-prisoners who have found employment do not have consistent or full-time work. In one study, 56% of respondents were either unemployed or working less than 40 hours a week four to eight months following release (Baer et al., 2006).

While those who have obtained a job are less likely to reoffend (Tarlow; Bloom, 2007; Solomon, Johnson, Travis, McBride, 2004; Baer et al., 2006), few prisoners receive training, skills, or employment placement assistance in prison prior to reentry. An Urban Institute longitudinal study in Maryland and Illinois

found that only a third of respondents participated in an employment readiness program in prison and 25% and 9%, respectively, participated in a job-training program (Baer et al., 2006).

Prisoners also have significant health-related concerns during reentry. A significant number of prisoners—30 to 40 percent according to one study—have been diagnosed with a mental or physical health conditions, some of which go untreated in prison (Baer et al., 2006). Upon release, prisoners lack access to health care services, in part due to inadequate pre-release planning and preparation and a lack of private or public health insurance (2006).

One of the most significant challenges facing reentering prisoners is securing housing. A lack of stable housing is directly related to increased rates of returning to prison post-release (Metraux & Culhane, 2004) and is due to the lack of affordable housing, legal and eligibility restrictions on tenancy in affordable housing, prejudice among landlords against renting to those with criminal history, and a lack of stable means to pay rent (Baer et al., 2006). The Urban Institute's study on reentry found that most former prisoners (above 60%) resided with family members or intimate partners following release. Those without this option have few alternatives—including "community-based correctional housing facilities; transitional housing; federally subsidized and administered housing; homeless assistance supportive housing, service-enhanced housing, and special needs housing supported through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and the private market"—most of which are limited or unavailable to former prisoners. A significant number—a majority in some states—have housing that is only temporary, lasting one to six months. Those prisoners with mental health needs have particularized housing needs, though such specialized

housing is scarce and research about its components is lacking as well (Baer et al., 2006).

Prisoners also face substance-abuse related problems upon reentry. A 1997 Bureau of Justice Statistics study found that 80% of state prisoners reported using drugs in the past, including 57% in the month prior to their current offense, and 52% using drugs or alcohol at the time of arrest. The numbers for federal prisoners were similar (70%, 50% and 49% respectively) (Mumola, 1999). The effects of substance abuse are serious. In a 2002 Urban Institute study in Illinois, 60% of drug-using respondents cited substance abuse as the cause of at least one family, relationship, employment, legal, or financial problem (Baer et al., 2006). Following release, past and continuing substance use was more extensive among those who were rearrested (2006).

Yet the number of prisoners who receive substance abuse treatment during incarceration is a fraction of those in need. Only 12% of state prisoners in 1997 received any treatment and only 28% participated in programming such as residential facilities, professional counseling, detoxification units and maintenance drug programs (Mumola, 1999). Certain states' prisons have capacity limitations on their substance abuse programming, limiting the provision of these services to a small fraction of those in need—only five percent of prisoners in Texas, for example, received services (Watson et al., 2004).

Reentry challenges also impact families and communities. As of 2010, 54% of prisoners were parents with minor children, and one in nine African American children had an incarcerated parent (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010). Studies have found that the incarceration of a parent can result in the disruption of spousal and parent-child relationships, family responsibilities, living arrangements,

emotional support systems, and family structure (Travis, Cincotta, & Solomon, 2003). Maintaining family contact through incarceration (via letters, phone calls and visits) can reduce recidivism rates (Sullivan, Mino, Nelson, & Pope, 2002; Hairston, 1998). Close family relationships is positively correlated with length of post-release employment (Baer et al., 2006) and negatively related to reoffending rates (Farrall, 2004). There is a growing evidence base for parenting interventions that specifically focus on incarcerated parents, including some randomized studies. For example, Eddy et al. (2008) developed a multi-component parenting program for incarcerated parents in Oregon and Eddy, Martinez, and Burraston (2013) found that, through a randomized controlled trial of 359 participants, a parent management training program grounded in social interaction learning theory improved outcomes related to parent adjustment, parent-caregiver relationships, and parenting.

Finally, reentry concerns disproportionately affect a small number of cities nationwide because of the high concentrations of prisoners who return to a few urban cities in each state, and to a few neighborhoods in those cities (Baer et al., 2006). For example, Chicago received more than half of returning prisoners in Illinois in 2001, and only six of Chicago's 77 neighborhoods accounted for 34% of the city's returning individuals (2006). Moreover, these locations of high return are usually characterized by social and economic disadvantage—high unemployment rates, percentage of female-headed households, and percentage of households under the poverty line (2006).

The sheer number of individuals returning from state and federal institutions each year coupled with the breadth and depth of the challenges outlined above has severe human, financial, and public safety implications. Policymakers

and researchers have thus taken unprecedented levels of interest in the reentry issue today.

1.2.2 Background on Muslims in the U.S. and its Prisons

This dissertation analyzes an under-studied population undergoing reentry: American Muslims. This sub-section provides background on Muslims in America and Muslims in prison, with a special focus on African-American Muslims since these individuals are over-represented in the incarcerated population.

Muslims in the U.S.

Estimates of the number of Muslims in the United States vary. The 2010 Religion Census, released by the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA), estimates that 2.6 million Muslims live in the United States. (ARDA, 2012). The measure was estimated from sampling mosques and inquiring about the mosque's "adherents," which includes adults and children who are "in any way" associated with the mosque (ARDA Appendix 1, 2012). The number represents an increase in the number of Muslims in the United States, and researchers have attributed this increase to a rise in immigration and in conversion (Neal, 2012). Pew Research demographers estimate about 1.8 million Muslim adults in the U.S. and 2.75 million Muslims of all ages in 2011, using survey and U.S. Census data (Pew, 2011). Other estimates place the number of American Muslims as high as seven million (Johnson, 2011).

While 63% of Muslim Americans over 18 are immigrants (Pew, 2011), the group is ethnically and racially diverse, with about 77 countries represented (Johnson, 2011). About 60% of native-born American Muslims are African-American (Johnson, 2011), though it is unclear what percentage of African

Americans are Muslim. Muslim Americans are also younger on average than their non-Muslim counterparts, with 59% of adult Muslims between 18 and 39, compared with 40% of the general adult population (Pew, 2011). Typically, immigrants and African-American Muslims live in different geographic locations, attend different mosques, and worship in distinct ways (Johnson, 2011). Mosques in general are geographically disperse and can be found in both large urban centers as well as small towns (Bagby, Perl, & Froehle, 2001; Johnson, 2011).

Overall, Muslims in the United States are more affluent, well-educated, and well-integrated than their Western European counterparts (Johnson, 2011). Forty-two percent of native-born African-American Muslims live together with at least one non-Muslim (Pew, 2011). Many young American Muslims are under-employed—37% of those under thirty, for example (Pew, 2011). On a community level, many American Muslims feel alienated and discriminated against in the war on terror, particularly native-born African Americans (Johnson, 2011). Sixty-one percent of native-born African-American Muslims say life has become more difficult as a Muslim in the United States since the September 11, 2001 attacks, compared to 51% of foreign born Muslims (Pew, 2011). A larger percentage of native-born African-American Muslims express feeling that American people are unfriendly towards them, compared to foreign-born Muslims (28% versus 9%). Both groups report being treated with hostility—i.e. viewed/treated with suspicion, called offensive names, singled out by airport security, singled out by police, or physically threatened or attacked (42% versus 37%, respectively). Seventy-two percent of native-born African America Muslims say Muslims are singled out by government anti-terrorism policies, which 55% say bothers them a lot (Pew, 2011), compared to 41% and 28%, respectively, of foreign born Muslims (Pew, 2011).

Limited information exists on the number or characteristics of Muslims in American correctional facilities.[2] Some commentators, without citing their methodology, claim that about 15-20% of the total prison population is Muslim (Read & Dohadwala, 2003). State facilities often do not report on prisoner religious affiliation and independent research is rarely permitted (Pew, 2012). Figures provided by the Bureau of Prisons in 2013 indicated that Muslims comprised 5.5% of federal prisoners who elected to provide their religious affiliation – an important caveat (Mehta, 2013). A 2004 Department of Justice report stated that about 6% of the federal prisoner population was Muslim, 85% of whom identified as Sunni Muslims (Department of Justice, 2004). Researchers have attempted to investigate the religious lives of inmates through other means, including contacting ex-prisoners and prison chaplains. My personal interviews with these groups for this dissertation have revealed that in some facilities, Muslims may constitute half or more of the total population (see also Frazier, 2011).

Various survey-based reports have agreed that Islam is the fastest growing religion in prison (Pew Research Center, 2012; Hamm, 2009). Researchers suggest that the majority of religious converts in prison turn to Islam—80% according to ISPU (2013) —and that a majority of male Muslims in prison are converts, but these estimates are based on surveys confined to a limited number of state-specific prisons (Ammar, Weaver, & Saxon, 2004; Hamm, 2009; Citizens Against Recidivism, 2010). A Pew-administered survey of 730 chaplains reports, however, that most respondents acknowledged Islam as the fastest growing religion in U.S. prisons (Pew Research Center, 2012). Hamm (2009)'s two-year

[2] American correctional facilities refer to non-military federal and state facilities.

prison study, which included chaplains from six states and thirty prisoners from Florida and California, found that prisoners convert to Islam primarily out of "spiritual searching"—"seeking religious meaning to interpret and resolve discontent," with the advice of parents, cellmates, and fellow gang members (p. 673). Friendship networks are thus critical to the conversion process (Hamm, 2009; Lofland & Stark, 1965). A New-York based organization, Citizens Against Recidivism, surveyed 233 incarcerated Muslims in New York and Indiana state prisons and jails. Of these Muslims, 77% were African-American, 91% reported that Islam played a very important role in their lives, 69% reported making all five daily prayers, 72% converted to Islam in prison, and 89% want assistance from the outside Muslim community during incarceration (though 82% report not receiving any).

Islam seems to have special appeal to prisoners because it tends to "find a significant segment of the prison society that feels victimized, oppressed, and angry" (Dix-Richardson & Close, 2002; see also Hamm, 2009; ISPU, 2013). This segment is often African American. Dix-Richardson (2002) calls it "common" for African-American men to convert to Islam, and Ammar, Weaver, & Saxon (2004) found in their survey of thirty Ohio prisons, over ten years ago, that most Muslim prisoners were African American, which this dissertation's research has corroborated. Islam has had a long and significant history in prisons among African-Americans. Smith (1993), in his study on the role of Islam in advancing prisoner rights in the 1960s and 1970s, observes that the religion appealed to prisoners then because it advanced self-determination, self-examination, and civil rights. Initially aligned for the most part with the Nation of Islam, Islam has become a general force seen among many African-American prisoners as a way to

make sense of issues of racism, oppression, spirituality, and empowerment (Dix-Richardson & Close, 2002). This appeal, along with the austere atmosphere of the prison and its deprivations, may account for the high rate of conversion to Islam (2002) and is not limited to African-Americans. Hamm (2009) also found that while Islam in prison unites Muslims across racial and gang affiliations, many Muslims still possess their prior "gang mentality" which divides some Muslims along sectarian lines and makes prison Islam a unique entity (p. 674), sometimes referred to as "Jailhouse Islam" (HSPI, n.d., p. 15). Interestingly, many of the themes related to conversion to Islam within prison—the increase in its prevalence, motivations behind conversion, power dynamics and "gang mentalities," high proportion of black converts, and the intersection of radicalization and conversion—appear in literature outside of the United States as well, particularly in the United Kingdom. For example, Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011) conclude that in Whitemoor, a prison near Cambridge, England: 1) conversions to Islam are quite frequent (over half of the Muslims in their sample were in-prison converts) and resulted, in part, from the desire to achieve meaning in life and a sense of brotherhood and protection; 2) power attached to being Muslim facilitates a gang-like dynamic within the prison; 3) the Muslim prisoner population is disproportionately black; and 4) both staff and prisoners worry about potential radicalization within the prison.

Any contemporary discussion of Muslims in U.S correctional facilities must also analyze the increasingly popular claims of radicalization among incarcerated Muslims. According to Hamm (2009), research on Islam in prison falls into two groups: the "alarmist" group warns of prisons as places of terrorist recruitment, though this research is methodologically cursory, while the

"reassuring" group finds that Islam assists prisoner rehabilitation (p. 670). The latter includes Zoll (2005), Thompson (2005), Useem (2007), and Rupp (2006), who have found no signs of terrorist recruitment nationwide or in Muslim-heavy prisons in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. The former includes Gaffney (2005) and Gartenstein-Ross (2005), who call attention to a real and significant threat in U.S. prisons, as well as the 2011 hearings by U.S. Representative Peter King, Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security. Representative King described the threat of "Islamic radicalization in U.S. prisons" as "not new" but "real and present" (p. 1). The slightly more moderate Homeland Security Policy Institute's report, *Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization*, found that "[t]he U.S., with its large prison population, is at risk of facing the sort of homegrown terrorism currently plaguing other countries," though the actual magnitude of the risk is unknown (p. 16).

Both the HSPI report and more methodologically rigorous literature such as Hamm (2009) agree that the presence of mainstream Muslims in the role of chaplain or faith leader/instructor can serve as positive and moderating forces on prisoners. In terms of reentry, "alarmist" literature finds that radicalization may not only continue but may worsen as the prisoner comes into contact with society. The statement of retired inspector general for New York's Department of Corrections, Patrick Dunleavy, expressed that radicalization

> matures and deepens after release through the contacts on the outside that the inmate made while they were serving their sentences in prison. Among those contacts are transition programs, which offer former inmates assistance in finding housing or finding work. Most of the programs for Muslims transitioning out of the prison system are sponsored by mosques that are local to the prisons. Many of these mosques have extremist leanings and are known to adhere to Wahabbi ideology. In addition to the transition programs, many of the sponsoring mosques also have volunteers or formal programs to provide religious instruction inside the prisons. Thus, contact between the outreach program and the inmate has already been

> established by the time the prisoner is released. The prisoner is already familiar with the program's personnel and ideology, and therefore their transition to the outside is facilitated by familiar hands (2011, p. 4).

However, moderating Muslim influences may help stem extremism (p.16). One of the HSPI report's recommendations is that Muslim prisoners receive reentry assistance to prevent them from being recruited by radical actors or acting on radical teachings they may have learned while in prison (p. 16).

1.2.3 Faith-based Reentry Initiatives

This section provides some background on faith-based initiatives in the U.S., and specifically on those initiatives that pertain to reentry.

A. What Does It Mean to be "Faith-Based"?

A key, primary question in any discussion of "faith-based" initiatives is defining what it means to be "faith-based." There is no single or agreed-upon definition for "faith-based," but rather a range of possibilities, each emphasizing different characteristics (Kramer, Nightingale, Trutko, Spaulding, & Barnow, 2002).

The recent emphasis on faith-based programming by the U.S. government, discussed below, suggests that the term "faith-based" may have an accepted meaning. But even the government's own "faith-based" initiatives offer no explicit definition of "faith-based" or criteria of a "faith-based" organization (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006; White House Press Secretary, 2009). Alternatively, examining federal regulations on what a faith-based organization is permitted to carry on doing despite receiving federal funds[3] includes: 1) retaining

[3] Restrictions related to the separation of church and state in the United States arise from the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Further discussion of this subject takes place in the penultimate chapter of this dissertation.

religious terms in the organization's name, 2) retaining religious art or decoration in its facilities, 3) selecting board members on a religious basis, 4) including religious references in its mission statement, and 5) hiring based on a religious basis except in cases where such hiring is statutorily forbidden (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009). These permissible acts indicate that the government does not object to its providers and grantees being situated in a religious facility, being staffed by members of a certain faith, being driven by a religious mission, or being outwardly designated as a religious organization by name. In addition, FBOs may "receive funding from religious organizations, have clergy on their boards, draw volunteers from congregations, include prayers among their activities, or encourage clients to reflect more deeply about their own faith and perhaps even to become members of a faith community" (Wuthnow, p. 138).

Several scholars have put forth classifications that attempt to define FBOs while accommodating their diversity, although few of these studies have dealt with operationalizing "faith" in the reentry context. Some of the most relevant classifications are discussed here, along with their strengths and weaknesses.

Green and Sherman (2002) describe six possible faith dimensions for FBOs; these six dimensions are organized in Table 1 under three headings that were created for this dissertation.

Table 1: Green and Sherman's Description of Faith-Involvement in FBOs

Less direct faith involvement	***Explicit, interpersonal faith involvement***	***Direct, critical faith involvement***

Not relevant Our faith commitments are not revealed in our work with clients in this program.	**Passive** Our faith commitments are revealed through the act of caring for our clients rather than by any explicit mention or religious or spiritual matters in the program.	**Invitational** Our faith commitments are explicitly mentioned to our clients and they are invited to inquire more fully about religious or spiritual matters outside of the program.	**Relational** Our faith commitments are explicitly mentioned to our clients and our staff seeks to establish personal relationships that involve religious or spiritual matters outside of the program.	**Integrated** Our faith commitments are an explicit and critical part of our work with clients, but our staff respects the rights of clients to not participate in the religious or spiritual aspects of the program.	**Mandatory** Our faith commitments are an explicit, critical, and mandatory part of our work with clients who choose to participate in the program.

Green and Sherman (2002)'s classification is helpful because of its breadth, incorporating a variety of ways in which faith is involved in service provision, as well as its basis in empirical research. To create these six categories, Green and Sherman surveyed 389 leaders of FBOs (both congregations and other faith-based nonprofit organizations), finding that about two-thirds of the FBOs did not mention faith in their activities ("not relevant" or "passive") and nearly all of the remaining organizations had faith as an optional part of their work. Congregations (i.e., churches) were more explicit about incorporating faith in their service provision but a majority of congregations still provided services without mentioning faith. Congregations also reported having staff available outside of the program to discuss religious matters or offer religious activities.

Similarly, Sider and Unruh (2004) developed a six-part typology of characteristics of FBOs, in which organizations or their individual programs may be classified in six ways depending on the degree to which faith is present—from secular (the complete absence of religious content or references in operations) to "faith-permeated" (the explicit presence of faith in all aspects). The authors performed case studies of fifteen Christian congregations in order to develop this typology.

Smith and Sosin (2001) provide another useful classification, describing three ways in which an FBO can be faith-based. They particularly note the variation among faith-related agencies along three dimensions:

1) The FBO is dependent on funding from religious sources (e.g. to the exclusion of government funding) [Resources]
2) The FBO is subject to the authority of religious organizations or individuals (e.g. perhaps formally tied to a church) [Authority]
3) The FBO formally or informally adheres to cultural norms of religious bodies through mission statements or through the convictions or staff and volunteers (e.g. emphasizing certain teachings or values of the religion) [Culture]

Smith and Sosin (2001) created this classification from empirical study, conducting interviews and analyzing characteristics of thirty-four agencies in Seattle and Chicago, and found that "many sampled agencies are loosely tied to faith in terms of resources, more tightly coupled in terms of authority, and moderately coupled with respect to culture." (p. 651). Smith and Sosin's classification is useful in illuminating the organizational and institutional ways in with faith is expressed in an FBO. At the same time, however, the classification neglects the involvement of faith or religious doctrine in the actual services and programs delivered by the organization. Similarly, Chaves (1994) offers that FBOs are linked to religion at the institutional level, not necessarily at the level of personal belief.

Smith and Sosin's (2001) classification focuses on the less-direct ways in which faith can be involved in an organization. The authors advocate the use of the term "faith-related" instead of "faith-based" to encompass a "broader universe of service organizations that are of interest to policy makers," including organizations that are not technically based in a single faith, such as interfaith organizations and mission shelters without formal ties to a particular denomination (p. 652-653). They describe faith-related organizations as including "a formal funding or administrative arrangement with a religious authority or authorities; a

historical tie of this kind; a specific commitment to act within the dictates of a particular established faith; or a commitment to work together that stems from a common religion." (p. 642). In this dissertation, the term "faith-based" is used because it is far more commonly used, and in practice covers the organizations that technically may only be "faith-related." Nonetheless, the "faith-related" discussion highlights several categories of organizations that would come under the FBO umbrella for practical purposes and therefore should be accounted for in any classification.

Jeavons's classification (cited in Hall, 2001) is helpful to examine as somewhat of an amalgam of the Green-Sherman and Smith-Sosin classifications, in that it identifies both institutional and service/programming-centered areas in which an organization may be considered to be faith-based. These areas are:

1) the organization's primary purposes and activities
2) its identity (i.e. the work it is committed to)
3) participants, resources, products, services, and decision-making processes
4) participation in formal or informal networks of other "religious" organizations.

Jeavons' third prong acknowledges that often FBOs explicitly incorporate faith into their services, and for this reason may be deemed faith-based. Similarly, McClain (2008) offers a three-part classification to explain how faith can be present in the operation of FBOs – as a motive, a method, or a message – and though she does not expand on these categories in detail, they can be seen as an abbreviation of Jeavons' first three categories. Her categorization is theoretical and not empirically based. Ebaugh, Chafetz, and Pipes (2006) offer a three-part classification as well, developed using a national survey of 656 faith-based social service organizations: 1) service religiosity (referring to the extent to which religion infuses staff-client interaction), 2) staff religiosity (referring to religious

motivation in hiring practices and among staff), and 3) formal organizational religiosity (referring to the extent to which the public face of the organization is explicitly faith-based).

A key concern with these classifications is that while they have sought to be diverse in terms of denominations sampled, they have looked exclusively or overwhelmingly at agencies in the Christian tradition. Smith and Sosin (2001) examined agencies only in the Jewish and Christian traditions. Ebaugh, Chafetz, and Pipes (2006)'s sample looked mostly at organizations in the Christian tradition. Sider and Unruh (2004) also looked only at Christian agencies. The question remains, then, to what extent the classifications described above can apply to non-Judeo-Christian organizations, and particularly for this dissertation, to Muslim groups. Nevertheless, they offer a very useful starting point and comparative framework with which to examine the work of Muslim faith-based organizations.

Because this dissertation seeks to develop theory for the purposes of guiding practice and policy, a new four-part classification of FBOs is introduced, which accommodates the diversity of FBOs and yet is more streamlined than other authors' categorizations. Importantly, the classification dedicates a category to "content," acknowledging that faith may be present in the form of religious teaching, instruction, or prosyletization in an FBO. According to this classification, a faith-based organization can be faith-based because faith is present in any of the following four areas:

1) its institutional *identity* or structure
2) the *motivation* or conviction of its staff
3) the *manner* in which services are delivered or transactions take place
4) the *content* of its services, as a *doctrine* imparted to participants

These categories are described in more detail in Table 2. This four-part classification will be used in the remainder of this dissertation to synthesize literature, analyze new data, examine legal and practical concerns, and develop policy recommendations.

Table 2: Classification for Defining a FBO: Four Loci of Faith

Category	Explanation
Identity/structure	Refers to incorporation of any religious hierarchies or institutional structures, agency location, mission statement, or funding streams
Motivation	Refers to the religious beliefs that drive FBO staff to serve others (e.g., the Golden Rule, "love thy neighbor," prophetic example, etc.)
Manner	Includes the faith-derived method in which services are delivered or transactions take place (e.g. ethics/prophetic example of dealing with others or making decisions) as well as, for example, the latent, shared understanding among clients and between clients and staff who share the same faith
Content/Doctrine	Refers to the content of any services provided, such as prayer, theology classes, developing a spiritual connection with God, etc. These activities can be thought of as "inherently religious" activities, as explained below.

Importantly, in order to be "present" in any of these four areas, faith need not be manifest. Faith may be manifest in some categories, and latent in others. For example, an organization can be neutrally titled or offer secular services (such as a health clinic), and faith may only appear in the motivations of staff or in the mission statement (e.g. the Salvation Army). There are also several organizations with a faith-based origin that no longer consider themselves "faith-based," such as the YMCA, though some local affiliates may retain the label (Kramer, Nightingale, Trutko, & Barnow, 2002).

Practically speaking, then, faith-based organizations are quite wide-ranging. They include programs and organizations that are deemed "faith-based,"

whether they refer to themselves as such or are referred to using the term by an outside group such as the government, include those that offer secular (e.g. a health clinic or legal assistance) or religious/spiritual programming (e.g. Bible or Qur'an studies), those that are funded by congregations or denominations or by the government and secular foundations, as well as those that with an explicit "faith" in their name or that are simply driven by faith principles in mission (see Hodge & Pittman, 2003; Branch, 2002; Leventhal and Mears, 2002; O'Connor, 2004; Sundt, Dammer, & Cullen, 2002).

Thus, faith-based criminal justice programs may or may not have an obvious focus on or relationship with faith or a particular religion. They may be deemed "faith-based" because they are run by a church, congregation, or non-profit organization with a faith-based mission (McGarrell, Giacomazzi, & Thurman, 1999), or they may "express faith" in the delivery of services and implementing the faith directly in everyday practices (Smith & Sosin, 2001, p. 652). Such services can include classes on theology, religious history, study of religious text, or drug treatment programs where faith plays a partial role ("Faith-based programming," 2003; McGarrell, Giacomazzi, & Thurman, 1999; O'Connor & Perryclear, 2002).

B. Government Partnership with Faith-Based Organizations

While government partnerships with FBOs have existed in some form for hundreds of years (Frazier, 2011), the last two decades have seen an increase in these partnerships in this context. On the ninth day of his presidency, former President George W. Bush created the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCIs) and Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives within the five major executive, grant-making executive departments: the Department of Justice, Department of Education, Department of Labor,

Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (Executive Orders No. 13,198 and 13,199). This act built upon the "Charitable Choice" provisions of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, which was designed "to permit religious organizations to accept certificates, vouchers, and other forms of disbursement under any federal welfare program on the same basis as other non-governmental providers without impairing the religious character of these organizations or harming the religious freedom of welfare beneficiaries" (Goldenziel, p. 360; Bush, 2001). Essentially, Charitable Choice put faith-based organizations on the same footing as other social service providers for government grants, contracts, and vouchers. FBOs were allowed to maintain their distinct religious identity (e.g. by retaining their religious mission) but could not discriminate against clients based on religion, and those wishing not to be served by an FBO were required to receive an alternative (Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, 2000; Frazier, 2011). In keeping with the U.S. constitutional commitment to church-state separation, faith-based organizations may not use government funding to inherent religious activities such as worship or religious instruction (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2004). Additional discussion on the legal and policy restrictions on government-FBO partnerships can be found in Chapter 6.

In 2002, President Bush also created faith-based centers at the Department of Agriculture and the Agency for International Development (USAID), and at the Department of Commerce, Department of Veteran Affairs, and the Small Business Administration in 2004, also by executive orders (Executive Orders No. 13,280, 67; 13,342, 69; 13,199, 66). The President justified the creation of the White House Office as essential to "eliminat[ing] unnecessary legislative, regulatory, and

other bureaucratic barriers that impede effective faith-based and other community efforts to solve social problems," and "ensur[ing] that the efforts of faith-based and other community organizations meet high standards of excellence and accountability" (Executive Order No. 13,199, 66). In practice, the White House Office of FBCIs acted in three primary ways: "by acting as a watchdog and advocacy group for the interests of FBOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), by conducting academic studies of governmental coordination with FBOs and CBOs, and by holding conferences to help FBOs and CBOs better partner with government" (Goldenziel, p. 362).

Less than two weeks into his own presidency, President Barack Obama affirmatively maintained this public-private partnership by announcing the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships (FBNPs) and creating eleven department-offices in total (White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2009). President Obama issued this executive order in recognition of the fact that "[T]he change that Americans are looking for will not come from government alone. There is a force for good greater than government. It is an expression of faith . . . ." (2009).

Since its creation, the White House Office of FBNPs[4] has been subject to vibrant discussion and debate. Proponents have seen the White House Office of FBNPs as validating an important partnership between government and faith-based groups and "leveling the playing field" so that faith-based groups have the same access to government funding as secular groups (White House Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, 2001; Towey, 2006). They assert, moreover, that faith-based initiatives are effective at producing results, and for their

[4] The acronym White House Office of FBNPs refers to the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships in general, including its former iteration as the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

effectiveness should be able to receive federal funding (McClain, 2008; Johnson, Tompkins, & Webb, 2002). Opponents, in contrast, assert that this new partnership violates the separation of church and state (Black, Koopman, & Ryden, 2004). The debate has been further fueled by the realities that faith-based organizations (FBOs) provide some $20 billion of private funds to serve over 70 million Americans each year (Johnson, Tompkins, & Webb, 2002), and that the federal government has spent significant amounts of money to fund the efforts of FBOs since the creation of the FBCI, including over $8.1 billion in 2008 alone (White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, 2008).

The key justification behind former President Bush's creation of the offices of the FBCI was the alleged effectiveness of faith-based organizations. He referred to faith-based work as "indispensable and transforming" and identified the "paramount goal" of the government's FBCI partnership as advancing "compassionate results, not compassionate intentions" (Bush, 2001, at foreword). This results-oriented approach emphasized that faith-based groups have "unique strengths" that allow them to achieve powerful and positive results that government cannot, said Bush, and for this reason government should support their efforts (p. 2). These "unique strengths" derive from faith, which can "put hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives" (p. 8).

It is important to note that while the Bush Administration used effectiveness to justify its FBCI partnership, it did not explain (nor seek to) the precise role of faith that was effective – whether, in the language of the four-part classification introduced above, it was the faith-based *identity* or structure of an FBO, *motivation* of its staff, *manner* of delivery of services, or the actual faith *doctrine* imparted to participants, though Bush's language in describing the

reasoning and implementation of the FBCI suggests that the faith doctrine itself (i.e. a set of religious beliefs) is at least partially responsible for the effectiveness of FBOs and their services (Bush, 2001).

While the Bush Administration openly asserted that faith-based services and organizations are effective, and for that reason deserve federal funding and support, the Obama Administration justified its Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships in subtler terms. Although President Obama has mentioned that government partnerships with faith-based groups have increased the effectiveness of various social efforts (Obama, 2010; Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, 2011), the administration has deemphasized the effectiveness of faith to transform lives as a doctrine, instead focusing on the role of faith to effect change by working as part of the identity of and motivation behind the energy and dedication of those operating and working at FBOs, pushing them to serve communities (White House Press Office, 2009). For example, President Obama said when announcing the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships,

> [T]he change that Americans are looking for will not come from government alone. There is a force for good greater than government. It is an expression of faith, this yearning to give back, this hungering for a purpose larger than our own, that reveals itself not simply in places of worship, but in senior centers and shelters, schools and hospitals, and any place an American decides. (2009)

He also stated, "few are closer to what's happening on our streets and in our neighborhoods than [faith-based] organizations. People trust them. Communities rely on them. And we will help them." (Obama, 2009).

Despite these differences, both presidents and their administrations have highlighted their faith-based initiatives and have justified creating them by emphasizing the alleged ability of FBOs to "improve the lives of people" (Obama,

2011). As described at length below, however, rigorous evaluations proving the effectiveness of faith-based programs are significantly lacking. Evaluations that exist (including, often, those reports cited by policy advocates and government officials, as just noted) frequently have significant limitations and no clear one-line conclusions. These limitations are conceptual, methodological, and practical, and include, for example, the difficulty in measuring religiosity and its variations, creating a proper control group, addressing self-selection bias, and isolating what variables are indeed responsible for apparent associations and/or causality. The sections and chapters that follow more fully address these limitations.

C. Faith-based Programming in the Criminal Justice System

Faith-based work has long been alive in the criminal justice system (Hercik, 2004; Frazier, 2011). Prisoners have a constitutional right to practice their religion while incarcerated, and faith-based programming is seen to fill a void in the provision of services to those incarcerated and upon reentry. Organizations that provide such programming are seen as "closer" to the clients they serve and therefore useful partners for the government (Hercik, 2004). They are also able to provide culturally competent services by virtue of being grounded in the community (2004). Such services include job training, mentoring, provision of basic needs (e.g. food, housing, clothing), and addiction treatment (2004).

While exact statistics on the presence of faith-based programs in the criminal justice system are difficult to find, in part due to the scant research attention given to the subject (see Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006), one survey of correctional facilities in 44 states found that 100% offered instructional faith-based programs and worship services ("Faith-based programming," 2003). Prayer groups, personal development classes, meditation groups, life skills classes,

prerelease programming, and religious festivals were found in 93% of facilities ("Faith-based Programming," 2003).

Yet faith-based services in the criminal justice system are not always organized. A 2004 survey of 193 prison wardens found that over half of religious services in prisons were unsupervised (HSPI Report, n.d.). It is unclear how many Muslim chaplains currently serve in U.S. prisons, but the number is clearly less than what is needed for the Muslim prisoner population (HSPI report, n.d.). The Homeland Security Policy Institute's report found that the recruitment of Muslim chaplains has been hampered by "the lack of recognized national religious organizations to administer the vetting process," which has resulted in "a reliance on [unqualified, unknowledgeable, or radical] religious contractors and volunteers, especially in state and local facilities" (p. 5).

Some state prisons offer separate housing units for certain faith groups, and others have implemented full-time Bible-based rehabilitation programming (Frazier, 2011). Sixteen states offer faith-based pre-release programming. Outside of prison, in the community, faith-based organizations – particularly churches – have created partnerships between law enforcement and communities and have historically provided prevention and treatment services (McGarrell, Giacomazzi, & Thurman, 1999).

The table below provides examples of some of the ways in which faith-based programming may occur in prisons. This table is not an exhaustive outline of prison faith-based services, but merely provides examples of the various ways "faith-based" programs might incorporate faith using the four-part classification system.

Table 3: Examples of Faith-Based Programming in Prisons

Description	Delivered by	Possible Types of Faith Involvement
Counseling	Prison-employed chaplain	Manner – the prison chaplain may use faith-based skills in the way he counsels or treats Motivation – the prison chaplain may be motivated to counsel prisoners for religious reasons Doctrine – the prison chaplain may teach faith-based principles during counseling
Counseling/mentoring, basic needs provision	External FBO	Identity – the FBO may be part of a church Manner, Motivation, Doctrine (see descriptions above)
Secular job training	External FBO	Identity, Manner, Motivation (see descriptions above)
Secular addiction treatment	Prison-external FBO partnership	Manner, Motivation (see descriptions above)

Faith-based programming outside of prisons—for example, in the context of "community corrections"—is discussed in Chapter 2.

1.3 Justification for Research

While an abundance of literature exists on faith-based programming and the interaction of faith/spirituality and criminal behavior, much less research has been conducted on the effectiveness of faith-based reentry programming (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006). Reentry policies, meanwhile, are generally lacking a firm grounding in theoretical explanations for why people desist from crime (Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004). Even building on what does exist, very little writing has been done on adapting discussions of reentry, faith, and desistance to Muslim Americans. Indeed, the limited research that exists on this topic urges further investigation "exploring why Muslims have such low rates of

recidivism" partly through "in-depth interviews with prisoners and ex-prisoners" (Read & Dohadwala, 2003, p. 28).

It should be noted, however, that scant evidence exists to support the assertion that Muslims have comparatively low rates of recidivism. Read & Dohadwala (2003) claim that "[a]ffiliation with Islam lowers recidivism rates significantly, with fewer than one in 10 Muslims being reincarcerated, compared to four in 10 Protestants and Catholics." (p. 3). Hasan (2002) claims, "Some studies show that the rate of recidivism among Muslims is lower than any other group" (p. 77). Bowers (2009) also asserts that "a 1997 study found the nationwide recidivism rate for Muslims to be just 8.21 percent, compared with 41.54 percent for all Protestants and 39.30 percent for all Catholics" (p. 197). All three of these sources cite the same study, Johnson, Larson, & Pitts (1997), an evaluation of the Prison Fellowship program in four adult male prisons in New York State, as their source for these numbers. The authors, however, have grossly misinterpreted these numbers, which are present in a table on descriptive characteristics of the data. In fact, Johnson, Larson, and Pitts (1997) simply describe the percentage of all inmates (both Prison Fellowship participants and those in the comparison group) who ascribed to these religious faiths. Thus, 8.21% of these inmates were Muslim. This is *not* the percentage of the Muslims in the study who reoffended. No such comparative recidivism numbers are given. These sources therefore provide no evidence, in fact, of a lower recidivism rate for Muslims, and to my knowledge no such evidence exists. Read & Dohadwala (2003) and Bowers (2009) both call, correctly, for additional research to illuminate the mechanisms behind Muslims' reoffending behaviors.

Several sources do cite primary, anecdotal evidence which supports the idea that Islam curbs reoffending, quoting directly from formerly incarcerated Muslims (e.g., Hasan, 2002; Bowers, 2009). However, the anecdotal evidence is not qualitatively rigorous, and does not justify comparisons of recidivism rates across faith groups. Nor does this evidence (or the quantitative evidence, if it were true) sufficiently indicate, as Read & Dohadwala (2003) assert, that Islam *causes* lower recidivism. A mediator or omitted variable may be actually causing a lower reoffense rate. For example, it could be conceptualized that those who *convert* to a faith have a lower likelihood of reoffending, perhaps through a strong attachment to their new faith which deters them from antisocial behavior. A comparison of converts (which may be more in number among incarcerated Muslims) across faiths would help test this hypothesis. Alternatively, some aspect of the Muslim experience (perhaps association with other Muslims or the mosque) could explain lower reoffending rates.

This dissertation addresses several deficiencies in the existing evidence base. By developing the theoretical basis of faith-based reentry programming for American Muslims, this dissertation provides insight into the perspectives of a minority population and adds rigorous qualitative analysis to the existing literature on the mechanisms through which faith-based programming may reduce crime. The qualitative grounding of this research is especially useful. As Shover (2004) writes, "at a time when increasing numbers of investigators know offenders only as coded categories in electronic datasets, the value of first-hand knowledge of them and their lives is considerable" (p. x).

More broadly, at a time where governments are searching for promising ways to reduce re-offending and re-incarceration, this dissertation will provide

relevant information on potential effects of faith-based reentry programming, the challenges facing FBOs, and how to more effectively design and evaluate reentry programming, particularly for often-overlooked minority populations. Indeed, the relevance of current literature and research on faith-based reentry programming to faith and cultural minorities is questionable. While definitions of faith-based programs and specific program types differ considerably, it is apparent that most of the theoretical and empirical discussion on faith-based reentry programming refers to the Christian faith or to a neutral spiritual component that often was inspired by the Christian faith. Since Muslims constitute a significant proportion of the U.S. prison population, about 20% in some areas (Zoll, 2005), a discussion on whether existing conclusions about faith-based programming (usually based in a Christian paradigm) can extend to Muslim and other non-Christian programming is increasingly relevant. This dissertation addresses this question and, perhaps more importantly, offers original findings from the experiences of a hard-to-access population that is a major presence in the U.S. criminal justice system.

1.4 Brief Outline of Research

The remainder of this dissertation will proceed as follows. The literature review will first review existing theory on desistance, the relationship between religion and crime, and how faith-based reentry programming might operate to curb crime. The review will then systematically examine the evidence base concerning the efficacy of faith-based reentry programming. Thereafter, findings from the original qualitative research will be reviewed. The results of the literature review and original research components will then be synthesized to develop a theoretical framework that incorporates problem theory and that can help develop

particularized program theory. Finally, legal and policy implications of this framework will be discussed. Figure 2 (from the Introduction) presents this outline visually and should be consulted proceeding forward.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview of Existing Theory

This section provides an overview of literature in criminology, sociology, and evidence-based practice. Literature regarding desistance from crime and the relationship between religion and crime, along with existing evaluations of and studies on faith-based reentry programming specifically, is analyzed. This review is not meant to be exhaustive, though it is certainly thorough. Rather, the aim of this section is to help construct a theoretical framework for understanding how faith-based reentry programs operate, how they may be implemented and evaluated, and the challenges they face. This framework will be supplemented by the qualitative research conducted in the following chapters and will inform the policy-focused discussion in the penultimate chapter.

2.1.1 Theories of Desistance

As Maruna, Immarigeon, and LeBel (2004) note, the problem of reentry policies and practices operating without theoretical basis can be remedied by looking towards the body of literature on desistance from crime. Desistance theory is a "natural fit" with reentry practice, since the former deals with why and how offenders subsequently avoid criminal behavior, and the latter seeks to assist individuals with doing the same (p. 10). Therefore, examining desistance theories is critical to the development of this dissertation's theoretical framework for faith-based reentry programming.

Criminologists have put forth numerous definitions of desistance over time. Past understandings have typically viewed desistance as simply the termination of offending (Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004). More recently, desistance has

been understood by reductions in the frequency, variety, or seriousness of offending (LeBlanc & Loeber, 1998, p. 162). Others have argued that desistance is the causal *process* that sustains non-offending (Laub & Sampson, 2001). Desistance literature has been riddled with conceptual questions including whether desistance is a process or an outcome (Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004, p. 18; Laub & Sampson, 2001, p. 11), whether it can be studied during the life of an individual due to its relationship with age (Farrington, 1979), and how it is distinct from shorter bouts of non-offending (Barnett, Blumstein, & Farrington 1987, 1989; Bushway, Piquero, Broidy, Cauffman, & Mazzerolle, 2001).

In response to this final concern, some have described desistance as not only a cessation of crime, but also accompanying changes in identity – i.e., a cognitive change in identity from "criminal" to "changed person" (Lemert, 1951; Maruna, 2001; Giordano, Cernkovich, & Rudolph, 2002). In support of this position, Maruna, Immarigeon, and LeBel (2004) argue that "long-term desistance does involve identifiable and measurable changes at the level of personal identity or the 'me' of the individual" (p. 19). In other words, while desistance may be understood as any cessation of or decrease in criminal behavior, it is long-term, sustained desistance—significantly less, or zero, offending—that matters most to policymakers, particularly in the reentry context. For this reason, for the purposes of this dissertation, desistance most relevantly refers to the type of recession in crime that an individual experiences as he changes into a law-abiding, productive member of society.

Various theories exist for understanding desistance, each identifying a distinct reason why individuals stop committing crimes. The major theories are discussed below along three dimensions: individual, group, and institutional.

Importantly, these dimensions are not mutually exclusive – that is, desistance processes operate simultaneously on a number of different levels. Laub and Sampson (2001)'s pivotal work, "Understanding Desistance from Crime," reviewed theory and data from 52 life-history interviews and 500 criminal histories of men (from birth to age seventy) and offered the following conclusion about the multi-dimensionality of desistance:

> From our analysis it appears that offenders desist as a result of a combination of individual actions (choice) in conjunction with situational contexts and structural influences linked to important institutions. This fundamental theme underscores the need to examine individual motivation and the social context in which individuals are embedded. The processes of desistance operate simultaneously at different levels (individual, situational, and community) and across different contextual environments (family, work, and military).

A. Individual-centered Theories

Maturation and Aging

Numerous scholars have theorized about the impact of aging and maturation on criminal behavior (Glueck & Glueck, 1974; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). The Gluecks (1974) find desistance to be an expected result of aging and particularly brought about by maturation, which is a complex concept that could be delayed and result in persistent reoffending. They disregard environmental changes as causes of desistance, focusing instead on offenders growing out of criminal behavior over time (1974, p.173).

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) also argue that crime declines with age, but disregard the intervening cause of maturation. Desistance, they say, is not affected by life events such as marriage or employment, situational influences, or institutional interventions, and there essentially is no such thing as a "career criminal" (Hirschi & Gottfredson 1983). They emphasize that the decrease in

crime after a peak age reflects decreasing frequency of offending (1983). However, empirical research has generally failed to support their hypotheses (Piquero, Farrington, & Blumstein, 2003, p. 383). Blumstein, Cohen, & Farrington (1988a) contend with Gottfredson and Hirschi's thesis, arguing that the drop off of crime with age may not reflect decreases in offending frequency but may instead reflect decreases in offender participation—meaning, some offenders may terminate their criminal careers entirely as they age (1988b).

Psychological/Developmental

Psychological and developmental theories of desistance focus on individual development throughout life, focusing on individual traits or experiences. Some of these traits are physiological. Gove (1985) argued that changes in psychological wellbeing, biological factors such as physical energy, strength, and the need for stimulation (Eysenck, 1964), can account for desistance with age. Biological and psychological variables show a similar peak-and-decline trend with age. Gove's argument recalls Eysenck (1964)'s work discussing socio-biological arousal theory, which argues that criminally prone individuals require more neurological arousal than others. Others have found a consistent relationship between low self-control and criminal behavior (Pratt and Cullen, 2000), attributing this relationship to biological factors (Wright and Beaver, 2005) —specifically the activity of the prefrontal cortex of the brain (Beaver, Wright, & Delisi, 2007; Aron, Robbins, & Poldrack, 2004) —rather than social factors (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

Similarly, Moffitt (1994) includes neuropsychological deficiencies in her theory of desistance. Life-course-persistent offenders display such deficiencies along with disrupted attachment relationships and academic failure since childhood, and their criminal behavior lasts through adulthood. She emphasizes

the constant interaction of personal traits and environmental factors that leads to little chance of desistance for these individuals. Another group of offenders – adolescence-limited offenders—have stronger academic performances and attachments, do not behave antisocially as children (lacking also neuropsychological deficiencies), and desist from crime after adolescence due to social reinforcement of the negative consequences of delinquency (Moffitt, 1994, pp. 30-33). The combination of the onset age of antisocial behavior, the "mastery" of pro-social skills, and the number and severity of the negative consequences of crime faced during adolescence determines when an individual will desist (p. 45).

Maruna (2001) also offers a theory of identity transformation that emphasizes that a change in thinking promotes a shift in behavior towards desistance. He argues that "long-term desistance does involve identifiable and measurable changes at the level of personal identity or the 'me' of the individual" (Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004, p. 19). After interviewing 55 men and ten women, Maruna (2001)'s qualitative research found that those who desisted experienced a change in self-concept, becoming a "changed person." These individuals felt greater control over and responsibility for their futures, found meaning and purpose in life, and were more focused on others (2001). Maruna (2001) favors looking at individuals as agents of change for themselves, instead of focusing on "turning points" or "triggering events" (Laub & Sampson, 2001; Laub, Nagin, & Sampson, 1998). He also identifies the process of "making good," by which former offenders find meaning in their past criminal actions and histories, reconciling these with new, prosocial identities (2001). Though grouped under the developmental category here, identity transformation theory may involve changes in self-concept that are not solely grounded in the individual himself, but rather

also interface with his social environment, thus sharing similarities with the life-course theories described below. Former offenders' self-image may be constructed by society's view of their worth and expectations for their success. At the same time, former offenders may seek to change society's view by acting in ways that make amends for their former crimes (Lofland, 1969; Maruna, 2001).

Rational choice/Deterrence

Rational choice and deterrence theories posit that offenders decide to start or stop offending due to an intentional weighing of the costs and benefits of committing crime (Clarke & Cornish, 1985). Braithwaite (1989) theorizes that shame can be a powerful deterrent to committing crimes, though stigma can also promote the exclusion of former offenders from mainstream society (Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004). Leibrich (1996) study of 37 New Zealand men also found shame to be the most commonly identified cost of offending. Public humiliation, personal disgrace, and private remorse were all identified by offenders as reasons that dissuaded them from offending (1996). Rational choice theories and the notion of shame as a deterrence has particular relevance in discussions of religion, as described in the next sub-chapter.

B. Group and Institution-focused Theories

Life Course

Life course theories posit that salient life events can alter criminal trajectories by influencing behavior. While similar to the psychology/development theories above, life-course theories incorporate aspects of individual development while also focusing on exogenous, environmental influences in life that are constantly in flux. The key principle underlying the life-course framework is that

social context influences individual choice-making and behaviors (Elder & Shanahan, 2006; Laub & Sampson, 2001). Sampson and Laub (1993) find that informal social controls and bonds are critical to desistance. Life events in adulthood impact informal social controls and social bonds and can therefore counteract trends visible in childhood. Specifically, Sampson and Laub (1993) conclude that attachment to the labor force and cohesive marriage – critical institutions of social control – explain desistance in adulthood, despite delinquency during childhood. In their reanalysis of the Gluecks' (1950) data on 500 delinquent and 500 nondelinquent white males, Sampson and Laub (1993) confirm this theory. They find that stronger ties to employment and marriage in adulthood correspond with less crime among both control and delinquent groups, regardless of childhood experience. Stable employment and good marriage are therefore "turning points" in the lives of these men. Moreover, the effect of marriage is gradual and cumulative, and depends on its quality (Laub, Nagin, and Sampson, 1998). Early cohesive marriages have a preventative effect that grows with time (1998).

Other studies confirm the effect of marriage on offending. Horney, Osgood, and Marshall (1995) analyzed monthly data over two to three years for high-rate offenders, finding that moving in with one's wife doubled the likelihood of stopping offending compared to moving away from one's wife. Farrington and West (1995) also conclude that marriage was associated with decreased offending, in both within-subject and between-subject analyses, which lends support to this being a causal relationship. However, even if marriage causes desistance, details of the causal process remain unknown. Using self-report data from the National Youth Survey, Warr (1998) concludes that marriage results in a dramatic decrease

in time spent with delinquent friends, which thereby promotes desistance. In contrast, Irwin (1970) adopts a qualitative research approach, resolving that an "adequate and satisfying relationship with a woman," along with employment and hobbies, contributes to desistance (p. 203).

Social Control and Social Capital

Social control theories argue that crime is the result of a lack of social control, which can be exerted by various social institutions, such as marriage, religion, the workplace, family, and peer groups. Social bonding theory posits that those with strong bonds to conventional social groups and individuals will be less likely to violate the law by virtue of being informally controlled (Hirschi, 1969). Thus, strong bonds with parents, schools and teachers, and pro-social peers can control delinquent acts and promote law abiding behavior.

Numerous studies have yielded support for the social control/social bonding framework. Sampson and Laub (1993) use data on the criminal activity of 500 nondelinquent (from Boston public schools, according to official records and numerous interviews) and 500 delinquent (according to the Massachusetts correctional system) white boys aged 10-17. These boys were originally followed to age 25 and 32 by the Gluecks (1950), who found that those with strong family influences – that is, those with stronger discipline, supervision, and emotional ties – displayed less delinquency. In their reanalysis of the Gluecks' data, Sampson and Laub (1993) and Laub and Sampson (2001) find that life-events such as marriage, employment, and military service serve as control agents that fostered desistance through the strengthening of social bonds.

Gaining employment and family formation have consistently been deemed two key correlates of desistance (Farrall, 2004, p. 58), and the term "social capital"

has also been used to explain this relationship. Farrall (2004) states that "these social institutions encourage desistance by increasing an individual's stock of social capital" (p. 60). Social capital generally refers to the "quantity and quality of resources (individual, group, or community) that people can access through the various social networks in which they are embedded," although specific definitions vary (Frazier, 2011, p. 294). For former offenders, employment can increase structured time, create significant relationships, enhance a sense of a legitimate identity and self esteem, and bolster financial security (Farrall, 2004, p. 64). Family ties can boost or supply structured time, self-esteem, social support and motivation to stop crime, advice, loans of money or items, friends, accommodation, and jobs (especially through parents) (Farrall, 2004, p. 64-67). Recognizing that a key problem in reentry is lack of social capital, such as a lack of connections through which to obtain employment regardless of skill level, Sampson and Laub (1993) posit that policymakers should help strengthen marriage and attachment to the labor force through counseling that builds relationships (Farrall, 2004, pp. 71-72), such as via probation officers who can work with families, helping individuals become better spouses and prepare for parenthood.

Similarly, Shover (1996) draws on qualitative interviews to conclude that criminal careers are influenced by the development of social bonds, activities, and rewards, as well as strengthened resolve and motivation to desist (p. 124). Bonds with pro-social others may be the result of marriage, job, or religion, while age and maturation may contribute to building resolve (1996). Warr (1998) also finds that marriage is associated with reduced crime, but instead explains the relationship by referencing social control more than social bonding or social capital. Specifically, marriage reduces exposure to delinquent peers. Spouses may control, dictate, or

replace each other's friends and, in doing so, reduce criminal behavior (Laub & Sampson, 2001, p. 47).

Social control may also be exerted by the community, which can take a lead role in conveying a sense of usefulness, belonging, empowerment and citizenship to ex-offenders while also encouraging them to take responsibility for themselves and for others (Bazemore & Erbe, 2004, p. 39; Taxman, Young, & Byrne, 2004, p. 252; Uggen, Manza, & Behrens, 2004, p. 262). Taxman, Young, and Byrne (2004) define community as "people who, by virtue of their natural (extra-legal) relationship with the offender, have the greatest potential impact on the offender's behavior, or are most affected by that behavior" (p. 250). "Community" has also been defined as a network of individuals with resources and connections that can promote reintegration (Bazemore & Erbe, 2004, pp. 42, 45). Taxman, Young, and Byrne (2004) thus advocate that reentry programming engage not only families, but also this community, by creating a role for community agencies in the reentry process (p. 251). One way to do so is through a restorative justice model, which "gives emphasis to the harm caused by offences" (for instance, through offender-victim mediation and group conferencing) and counteracts the "individualizing tendencies of offender-focused treatment and punishment paradigms" (Bazemore & Erbe, 2004).

Social Learning

Social learning theories embody the notion that association with noncriminal or pro-social friends and reinforcement that discourages criminal behavior can lead to desistance. Warr (1993) finds that exposure to delinquent peers, time spent with them, and loyalty to them changes with age, which helps explain the age-desistance relationship (sometimes entirely). Decreases in these

three dimensions correspond to decreases in crime. Warr (1998) also argues that the marriage-desistance relationship may be explained by social learning theory, in that marriage reduces exposure to delinquent peers, though the exact mechanisms of a causal relationship cannot be definitively stated.

Social Ecology

Social ecology theory describes the ability of communities to create norms and values, cultivate relationships of reciprocity and trust, and develop the "collective efficacy" of members so that they can intervene effectively to stop crime. "Collective efficacy" is defined as "social cohesion among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good" (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Focusing on the community as the relevant unit of analysis, researchers in this re-emerging field examine factors such as the collective "parental"-type supervision by neighborhood residents, their participation in voluntary organizations, and the strength of social and friendship networks (Wilson, 1996). These factors work in tandem to reduce crime. For example, with strong friendship networks and voluntary involvement, parents are able to effectively and efficiently communicate with each other to supervise the community's children collectively, heed signs of criminal activity, and intervene in a time and productive manner. Morenoff, Sampson and Raudenbush (2001)'s regression study using data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods shows that social ties and networks can inhibit crime by activating social control, cohesion, and engagement (which are more proximate correlates of lower homicide rates) (p. 553). The authors measured collective efficacy using survey data (of 8,782 residents of 343 Chicago neighborhoods) that asked

participants to complete a Likert-type scale to assess their responses to scenarios in their neighborhood (to assess "shared expectations for social control") and the strength of their agreement to various descriptions of their neighbors and neighborhoods (to assess "mutual trust/cohesion") (p. 524-525). Collective efficacy was a summary measure of these two measures (social control and cohesion). Other measures included the number of organizations reported in the survey, voluntary organizations (which also was used to measure social capital), and the number of friends and relatives (used to measure social networks) (p. 527).

C. Conceptual and Methodological Issues with Desistance Theories

A number of conceptual and methodological issues have arisen in the empirical study of desistance frameworks. First, outcome variables are often imprecise and difficult to measure. For example, what exactly does it mean to "desist"? (Laub & Sampson, 2001, p. 9). Because "desistance" is the *absence* of a certain behavior (i.e. crime), it is even more difficult to define. Further, for the purposes of reentry, the outcome measure may not be simply the absence of legally defined crime, but rather some measure of a productive, pro-social life. Once individuals have "desisted," they may not commit crimes under the law, but may not lead "productive" lives either. For instance, individuals may commit no crimes, but may be excessive alcohol drinkers or display little change in their antisocial behaviors (p. 9). As Shover (1996) finds, many men who "desist" have stopped offending in "only the narrowest, most bureaucratic meaning of non-recidivism," live "menial or derelict lives," or "die early of alcoholism or drug use, or by suicide" (p. 146). Similarly challenging is the task of defining desistance in a manner distinct from shorter bouts of non-offending (Barnett, Blumstein, &

Farrington, 1987, 1989; Bushway, Piquero, Broidy, Cauffman, & Mazzerolle, 2001).

A second methodological issue relates to data reliability. Many desistance studies collect data from self-reporting, which is only as reliable as the reporters' memories. With longer recall periods, memories fade, and it becomes difficult to estimate the occurrence, frequency, and intensity of criminal activity. Individuals' reports may also be untruthful, or may not be consistent with the researchers' definition of what constitutes an arrest (Piquero, Farrington, & Blumstein, 2003, p. 405). While official records help correct some of these concerns, they also introduce others. For instance, they only reflect *reported* crimes, masking nuances and errors in the incidence, frequency, description, and seriousness of crime.

Third, biases may result from relying on certain types of data, or from systematically lacking certain controls. For example, since those arrested may presumably be less adept at avoiding detection and probably commit more serious offenses than others, using arrest data may not present a representative picture of criminal behavior and may bias findings (Piquero, Farrington, & Blumstein, 2003, p. 406). Measuring and analyzing offending is potentially affected by bias at any stage of the criminal justice system. Using conviction rates to measure offending excludes from the sample those offenders who were not convicted. Similarly, using incarceration measures excludes from the offender sample those not sentenced to incarceration. Piquero, Farrington, and Blumstein (2003) also note the bias resulting from the absence of more serious offenders from self report data. This bias may be corrected by simultaneously using both self-report data as well as official records of arrest, conviction, or incarceration, in which serious offenders are overrepresented (p. 408).

Introducing controls into the data analysis may help combat potential bias. For example, critical to measuring desistance is controlling for actual "street time" in which the offender is free to commit crime and not incapacitated by being incarcerated or inhibited by being under community supervision. Piquero et al. (2001) found that controlling for street time critically affected measurement of desistance. Without such controls, they found 92% of the sample desisted, whereas 72% were found to desist with controls.

The role of age in the analysis may introduce bias as well. The relationship of age to offending also presents the issue of a "cutoff" age (Farrington, 1979; Barnett & Lofaso, 1985) – meaning, desistance found by a study may not be true desistance, measured over an entire lifetime, but rather desistance that has been found only during the observed years of life. To measure or analyze true desistance, one would examine the entire lifetime of an individual, and therefore consult data from individuals who are no longer alive. The question of follow-up period is critical (p. 9). Laub and Sampson (2001, p. 9) state that most criminological studies use a "fairly short" follow-up period of six months to two years, even though numerous studies including Vaillant (1996) and Nagin, Farrington, and Moffitt (1995) find that such periods are inadequate for predicting longer-term desistance. In Vaillant (1996), 45% of drug and alcohol users relapsed after two years of desisting, whereas 9% relapsed after five years of desisting, using a thirty-year period for follow-up.

Fourth, criminal career research is best conducted through longitudinal research designs, which may present several design concerns. For example, in a prospective longitudinal design study, age and historical events may be confounded (Piquero, Farrington, & Blumstein, 2003, p. 409), which may be

overcome by an accelerated longitudinal design approach, which in essence combines sample cross-sectionally as well as longitudinally. Piquero, Farrington, and Blumstein (2003) discuss numerous concerns with this approach, including high and nonrandom attrition.

Fifth, little attention has been given to the influence of ethnicity and culture on the process of desistance. While there have been studies on the link between religion and crime (discussed in the following subsection), few have examined how desistance might occur among minority ethnic and religious communities. Adam Calverley's (2012) recent book, *Cultures of Desistance* found that real differences exist across ethnicities and faiths. For example, desistance operated as a collective, family-focused experience for Indians and Bangladeshis in the U.K., but as a more individual experience for blacks. Few studies have examined desistance for Muslims at all, whether in the U.S., the U.K. or elsewhere. These studies are analyzed towards the end of the following subsection.

The literature on desistance is vast, but a general conclusion can be drawn. As Laub and Sampson (2001) state, certain factors have been consistently shown to be correlated with desistance, including aging, good marriages, stable work, and identity transformation. Several studies have looked at religion's role in desistance, but generally not as a part of the overall conversation on desistance. Rather, studies on religion's role in preventing crime have effectively formed their own category of literature, and are discussed below.

2.1.2 Religion, Crime, and Desistance

A. Overview

Like the literature on desistance, the literature on the relationship between religion and crime is vast, and generalizations about the findings of studies that seek to investigate the relationship are hard to make. Two key studies in this area are Johnson, De Li, Larson, and McCullough (2000)'s systematic review and Baier and Wright (2001)'s meta-analysis. Johnson, De Li, Larson, and McCullough (2000) conclude that most of the forty studies reviewed demonstrate a negative relationship between religiosity and criminal behavior, especially among the higher quality research studies (i.e. all of those studies that administered reliability tests and all of those that measured at least four dimensions of religiosity). Baier and Wright (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of sixty studies in which they found that religious beliefs and behaviors exert a statistically significant and moderately deterrent effect on individual criminal acts. Studies with smaller sample sizes and more female and non-White subjects found stronger effects. Importantly, the studies analyzed in Baier and Wright (2001) used both behavioral measures (e.g. church attendance) and attitudinal measures (e.g. belief in God) of religiosity. The meta-analysis does not distinguish between type of religious measure since the authors find that the type of measure does not affect the studies' approximations of the religion-crime relationship. Thus, the inconsistencies in the findings of studies on religion and crime may be due at least in part to differing research strategies, measurements, definitions, and analytic techniques. Nevertheless, despite any empirical shortcomings, studies on the relationship between religion and crime do offer a variety of theoretical frameworks to help understand the relationship between religion and crime. An overview of these theories is provided below.

B. Theoretical Frameworks

Social Bonds, Social Control, and Social Capital

Hirschi (1969) posits that those with strong bonds to parents, schools, and pro-social, conventional social institutions and groups are less likely to commit crimes. While Hirschi did not include religion in his original formulation of the theory, religious bonds may also strengthen an individual's bonds to society at large and thereby deter criminal behavior (Akers, 1997; Cullen & Agnew, 1999). Essentially, these bonds exert a type of social control over individuals. Religious institutions, like other social institutions, can instill values and engagement with larger society. These religious bonds are comprised of four components: attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs. Attachment (or salience) refers to the importance of religion in daily life (Stack & Kanavy, 1983), while commitment usually refers to membership in a religious group. Involvement refers to participation, measured often by church attendance or time spent in prayer. Beliefs include belief in God, hell, sin, and other tenets and values of the particular religion (Hercik, 2004, p. 8). These aspects of religion can help control individuals' negative behavior. For example, in terms of beliefs, those who are religious are more likely to believe in the difference between right and wrong, and in the moral legitimacy of criminal law. With regards to participation, church attendance provides a means through which bonds may be formed, which in turn imbues in individuals a sense of morality and identity, and links them to other individuals who have pro-social values and conventional beliefs. Both beliefs and peers, therefore, help deter crime (Hercik, 2004).

In addition, religion has great potential in terms of providing social capital. As Putnam (2000) states, "Faith communities in which people worship together are

arguably the single most important repository of social capital in America" (p. 66). Frazier (2011) states that "religion is a major factor in the formation of social networks and trust" (p. 294). Such networks and trust result in part from the people involved in faith-based institutions. Faith-based institutions are "often the single best source of volunteers in a community," providing faith counselors, mentors, and other volunteers who support ex-prisoners (p. 294).

Scholars have thus coined the term "spiritual capital" to refer to "the effect of spiritual and religious practices, beliefs, networks and institutions that have a measurable impact on individuals, communities and societies" (Spiritual Capital Research Program, 2005). Spiritual capital includes "a sense of purpose, self-esteem, a sense of discipline, a vision of opportunity, and a thirst for knowledge" (Fogel, 2000, p. 4). It can also refer to the "power, influence, knowledge, and dispositions created by participation in a particular religious tradition" (Woodberry, n.d., p. 6). As a repository of social capital, faith-based organizations can be "integral to ensuring successful and enduring reintegration outcomes among former prisoners and their families" (Frazier, 2011, p. 280).

Studies examining social bonding, social control, and social capital theories have produced mixed results, but in general, criminal behavior and religiosity are inversely related (Albrecht, Chadwick, & Alcorn (1977); Burkett (1977); Benda (1995); Evans, Cullen, Burton, & Benson (1997); Regnerus (2003)). Studies have examined the effect of parental bonding and religiosity on crime, with mixed results. Benda (1995) concludes that adolescent attachment to parents does not have an effect on delinquency. Pearce and Haynie (2001) and Regnerus (2003) find that parental religiosity (as measured by religious participation, religious salience, and private religious behavior) curb drinking, smoking, and more serious

offending. However, for boys, parent religiosity is linked to greater delinquency while conservative Protestantism is linked to less. Regnerus (2003) deduces that "persistent intensive religiosity in parents, while initially serving to foster the same in their children, may, among some, provoke a rejection of the parents' values at some point during adolescence" (p. 201).

Studies have also shown a variation in the religion-crime relationship based on the type of offense. Burkett and White (1974) observe that religiosity (measured by the frequency of church attendance) is significantly related to alcohol and marijuana use, but not to larceny, vandalism or assault. These results demonstrate that religiosity has a greater influence on victimless crimes. Similarly, Albrecht, Chadwick, and Alcorn (1977) note that religious variables have greater negative impact on nonviolent versus violent crimes, particularly on ascetic behaviors such as drug use, which are not always condemned in secular society but that violate religious morality principles. According to Cochran (1988), evidence fails to support the notion that religion has a differential impact based on type of offense. Cochran studied several types of deviant behavior based on self-reports, including drug and alcohol use, use or threat to use a weapon, vandalism, theft of items worth over $50, theft of items worth $50 or less, motor vehicle theft, assault, and pre-marital sexual intercourse. He measured religiosity by salience (self-reported importance of the individuals' church activities) and self-estimated level of religiousness. Cochran found that these measures of religiosity were negatively related to "ascetic" behaviors only slightly more than non-ascetic behaviors, thereby countering the Burkett and White (1974) hypothesis.

Benda (1995) also discerns no support for the idea that religiosity reduces ascetic behaviors more than nonascetic behaviors, where "religiosity" is measured

by asking about eight religious activities, including church attendance, time spent in prayer, studying the Bible, activities in church, financial contributions, sharing joys and problems of religious life, talking about religion with family and friends; and trying to convert someone. Benda (1997) finds that religion has an inverse relationship with alcohol use and criminal behavior (i.e. increased religiosity was associated with reduced alcohol use and criminal behavior), but no relationship with drug use. Similarly, Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, and Burton (1995) conclude that religiosity impacts all forms of adult crime, after analyzing surveys from 477 white respondents. The authors asked about 43 types of crime, including white collar crime, and religiosity was measured through religious involvement, attachment, and "hellfire" beliefs. The authors also measured secular social constraints such as quality of relationship with parents, respect for parents, fear of detection of illegal behavior, apprehension of law, probability of intervention by friends to prevent law breaking. Measures of socio-ecological context were also included, such as individuals' perceptions and census measures of neighborhood integration. The latter included the percentage of female-headed households, for example. Religiosity measured by participation had a direct correlation with adult crime, whereas hellfire beliefs and religious salience did not, when other controls were included. From studies such as Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, and Burton (1995) and Johnson, De Li, Larson, and McCullough (2000), it can be generally concluded that the inverse relationship between criminal behavior and religiosity may be more attributable to religious *behavior* than religious *beliefs*. Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, and Burton (1995) suggest that church-related activities serve as social controls for those who are active participants.

Symbolic interactionism

Another theory of religion and crime posits that humans act on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to objects and actions they observe – meanings that they derive from and modify through an interpretive process of social interactions with others in society Blumer (1939). This is known as "symbolic interactionism." Similarly, individuals may construct their relationship with God in the same way – a process known as "divine interactionism" (Pollner, 1989). These individuals may observe situations from the vantage point of God, or identify with the lives of figures in religious history, such as prophets. Often, divine relationships can be quite intense, and can be linked to improvement in coping (Frazier, 2011). Individuals may feel that with God's support they can control and cope with life events (Pollner, 1989; Mirowsky & Ross, 1986, p. 25). A relationship with God can also develop self-esteem, self-empowerment, new cognitive behaviors in problematic situations, and a sense of meaningfulness in life (Frazier, 2011, p. 297).

Deterrence and Rational Choice

Religion may also be related to crime through deterrence. Commonly referred to as "hellfire theory," individuals may refrain from criminal behavior because they fear spiritual punishment, such as God's anger or the hellfire (Hirschi & Stack, 1969). Similarly, they may be inclined to act in a pro-social manner in an effort to obtain spiritual rewards, such as paradise. Studies have examined the hellfire theory by examining the religious beliefs of individuals, and the extent to which they are deterred from criminal behavior because of their religious beliefs that such behavior is wrong. For example, Grasmick, Kinsey, and Cochran (1991) conclude that individuals who more strongly identify as religious or more saliently

involved in religious social networks are more likely embarrassed by deviant behavior. Individuals can thus be deterred from crime through a sense of informal punishment, i.e. shame.

Braithwaite's (1990) theory of shaming is therefore quite relevant in the context of the relationship between religion and crime. The theory posits that shame is the ultimate deterrent against crime. Shaming can be rehabilitative, in that it can increase accountability and a sense of responsibility towards others. "Reintegrative" shaming stresses the corrigibility of the act, but not of the actor (a "love the sin, hate the sinner" approach). "Disintegrative" shaming is stigmatizing, emphasizing that the actor himself ought to be rejected by the community. Braithwaite's theory highlights the importance of community and the feeling of belonging. One may be deterred from criminal behavior if one cares about what his pro-social community thinks about his actions. Religiosity in combination with shame can protect against criminal behavior, according to Jensen and Gibbons (2002). Increasing accountability to, and a sense of shame towards, one's community also helps explain faith-based organizations' use of restorative justice-type programs, which align with biblical concepts of justice and mercy (Grimsrud & Zehr, 2002). Faith-based approaches may, essentially, provide a control on criminal behavior by countering the attitude that criminal behavior is acceptable and the norm. If within one's community, family, and/or peers criminal behavior has become normalized, there is no sense of shame associated with these actions. Faith-based networks can provide a network in which pro-social behavior is the norm and is valued. Further, the "love the sinner, hate the sin" approach adopted by many faith communities aligns with "reintegrative shaming" theory and may

explain why such shaming in these communities could increase the likelihood of desistance.

A related theory is the reference group theory, which argues that individuals are situated within groups whose behavior and beliefs shape those of the individuals. Then, as reference groups become more religious, the group's attachment to morality becomes stronger, thereby increasing individual morality and in turn decreasing the likelihood of criminal behavior (Bock, Cochran, & Beeghley, 1987). Various theoretical "dimensions" have been proposed to explain how individuals perceive and interact with reference groups, including "normative," "informational," "utilitarian," and "value-expressive" (see Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Lessig & Park, 1978). Normative social influence refers to the desire to conform to expectations of a member of the reference group. Informational social influence causes an individual to accept information from that member as reality. Utilitarian influence guides an individual to act in a visible way that avoids punishment or seeks reward. Lastly, value-expressive influence occurs when an individual associates or disassociates with others in order to support his own self-concept. In any of these ways, reference groups can shape the behaviors of individuals and potentially promote law-abiding behaviors (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Lessig & Park, 1978).

C. Critique of Research and Methodological Issues

Examining the literature as a whole suggests a general inverse relationship between religiosity and criminal behavior. However, the literature does present methodological concerns that impact the conclusions that can be drawn about this relationship. (Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, & Burton, 1995; Clear, 2002).

One concern with studies on religiosity and crime is that they omit key variables, sometimes in their specification of "religiosity" itself. The studies therefore may find a relationship between religiosity and crime when there in fact is none, or may not be able to isolate the actual element of religiosity (e.g. beliefs, participation, etc.) that influences crime.

Measures of Religiosity

The issue of measurement is of critical importance in interpreting and evaluating these studies. Religion, by its nature, is complex and made up of multiple dimensions. Studies have varied greatly in both the types of religiosity they have measured, as well as *how* these types are measured. For example, studies may measure religiosity in terms of church attendance, salience (i.e. the self-reported importance of religion or God in one's life), or participation in prayer or Bible study. Some studies have combined measures of religiosity and measured multiple dimensions.

In their systematic review, Johnson, De Li, Larson, and McCullough (2000) examined the following six categories of religious measures:

1) Church/synagogue attendance
2) Salience
3) Denominational affiliation
4) Importance ascribed to and active participation in prayer
5) Independent study of sacred text
6) Participation in religious activities

As Johnson, De Li, Larson, and McCullough (2000) note, most studies weighing in on the religion-crime debate have analyzed only one measure of religiosity (Hirschi & Stark, 1969; Burkett & White, 1974; Stack & Kanavy, 1983; Tittle & Welch, 1983; Bainbridge, 1989; Olson, 1990; Welch, Tittle, Petee, 1991; Burkett & Ward, 1993; Stark, 1996; Richard, Bell, & Carlson, 2000; Johnson,

Jang, De Li, & Larson, 2000). Most of these, in turn, have used church attendance to measure religious participation or commitment (Hirschi & Stark, 1969; Burkett & White, 1974; Tittle & Welch, 1983; Grasmick, Kinsey, & Cochran, 1991; Stark, 1996; Johnson, Jang, De Li, & Larson, 2000). Among the forty studies examined in Johnson, De Li, Larson, and McCullough (2000)'s systematic review, 26 used church attendance as a measure, while 34 used religious salience as a measure of religiosity. Twenty-one studies measured religiosity with one or two of the six dimensions above, while only three incorporated all six dimensions.

One measure of religiosity has been church *membership*, rather than attendance. (Stack & Kanavy, 1983; Bainbridge, 1989; Olson, 1990; Pettersson, 1991). Church membership measures have allowed researchers to approximate the religiosity of a community and ascertain the religious impact on social norms (Stack & Kanavy, 1983). Obviously, church membership does not measure individual variation in participation/involvement, orthodoxy, and commitment, so it should be combined with other measures of religiosity for better approximations of religiosity (Davidson & Knudsen, 1977). Hirschi and Stark (1969) assert that assessing religiosity by church attendance provides a means to measure the promotion of moral values, the legitimacy of legal authority and law, and belief in supernatural sanctions.

Other measures of religiosity include religious salience and beliefs. Religious salience refers to the level of an individual's attachment or commitment to religion in daily life. This measure might be reflected in the frequency of prayer, listening to religious programs, and Bible study (Welch, Tittle, & Petee, 1991). Beliefs may refer to supernatural punishment (recall the hellfire theory),

the Golden Rule, the Ten Commandments, etc. (McGarrell, Giacomazzi, & Thurman, 1999; see also Smith, 2003).

As Sumter and Clear (2002) state, studies of religiosity and crime should incorporate multiple measures of religiosity in order to better approximate the complexity of religion for the purpose of determining its effect on crime. Several studies have incorporated multiple religiosity measures (for example, Albrecht, Chadwick, & Alcorn, 1977; Bock, Cochran, & Beeghley, 1987; Ellis & Thompson, 1989; Clarke, Beeghley, & Cochran, 1990; Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, & Burton, 1995; Jang & Johnson, 2001). Importantly, studies in Johnson, De Li, Larson, & McCullough (2000)'s systematic review that included at least four measures of religion all found that religion was negatively related to delinquency, as did all of the 13 studies that assessed the reliability of their religious measures. In contrast, those studies that used just one indicator of religion presented mixed results.

Table 4 below summarizes the various ways in which religiosity has been measured by scholars seeking to explore the religion-crime relationship. The table is not exhaustive, but rather seeks to provide an overview of the diversity of measures and their definitions. The measures have been generally placed in order of the degree of "internalization" within the individual.

Table 4: Measures of Religiosity and their Definitions

	Measure	Definition/Method of Measurement	Studies
→More internalized measures	Spirituality	Index of Core Spiritual Experiences, e.g. feelings of closeness to God, experiences that have proven God's existence; degree of spiritual experiences; inner peace	Chadwick and Top (1993); Hodge, Cardenas, & Montoya (2001)
	Religious beliefs	Beliefs in existence of God, God's control and interest in one's life, power of prayer, immorality (generally and of certain acts),	Albrecht, Chadwick, & Alcorn (1977); Ellis and Thompson (1989); Chadwick and Top (1993); Burkett and Ward (1993); Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, &

		God's punishment, life after death, Jesus, the Bible, the Devil, forgiveness	Burton (1995); Benda (2002)
→More internalized measures	Religious values	Assessing whether it is good for people to be devout in one's faith, always attending religious services, living religion in daily life, encouraging others to attend services and lead religious lives	Stark, Kent, & Doyle (1982)
	Religious influence	Self-estimation of influence of religion in daily life and behavior	Sloane & Potvin (1986); Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, & Burton (1995)
	Religious salience	Importance of religion or religious activities in one's life	Stark et al. (1982); Cochran (1988, 1989); Ellis & Thompson (1989); Cochran, Wood, Arneklev (1994); Richard, Bell, & Carlson (2000); Johnson, Jang, De Li, & Larson (2000); Jang & Johnson (2001); Johnson, Jang, Larson, & De Li (2001); Regnerus (2003)
	Religiousness /religious commitment	Self-estimation of religiousness or strength of religious commitment	Bock, Cochran, Beeghley (1987); Cochran (1988, 1989); Clarke, Beeghley, & Cochran (1990)
←More externalized measures	Religious involvement	Church membership	Stack & Kanavy (1983); Bock, Cochran, Beeghley (1987); Bainbridge (1989); Olson (1990); Clarke, Beeghley, & Cochran (1990); Pettersson (1991)
	Religious participation	Frequency of church attendance or participation in church-related activities	Hirschi & Stark (1969); Burkett & White (1974); Burkett (1977); Albrecht, Chadwick, & Alcorn (1977); Stark, Kent, & Doyle (1982); Tittle & Welch (1983); Sloane & Potvin (1986); Ellis & Thompson (1989); Bock, Cochran, & Beeghley (1987); (1989); Clarke, Beeghley, & Cochran (1990); Grasmick, Kinsley, & Cochran (1991); Chadwick and Top (1993); Evans, Cullen, Dunaway, & Burton (1995); Stark (1996); Benda (1995, 1997); Benda & Corwyn (1997); Hodge, Cardenas, & Montoya (2001); Jang & Johnson (2001); Benda (2002); Regnerus (2003); Johnson, Jang, Larson, & De Li (2001)
←More externalized measures	Religious participation	Private religious activity, e.g. Bible study, praying, attempting to convert others, financial contributions, talking about religion with others	Albrecht, Chadwick, & Alcorn (1977); Chadwick & Top (1993); Welch, Tittle, & Petee (1991); Cochran, Wood, Arneklev (1994); Benda (1995, 1997); Benda & Corwyn (1997); Benda (2002); Regnerus (2003)
	Religious integration	Assessment of how well one feels they fit into and are accepted into congregation	Chadwick & Top (1993)
	Parental/family religious participation	Frequency of parents' attending church, family engaging in prayer or other religious activity	Burkett (1977); Chadwick & Top (1993)

Omitted Variables

The fact that studies with a higher quality of research methodology and multiple dimensions of religion consistently find a negative relationship between religiosity and criminal behavior bolsters the argument that religion helps curb antisocial behavior, and that religiosity has multiple components (Johnson, De Li, Larson, & McCullough, 2000). Yet while the literature may generally point to an inverse relationship between religiosity and criminal behavior, the key outstanding question remains whether the relationship between religiosity and crime is a *causal* one at all. It may well be the case that some key variables are still being omitted from the analysis. These variables may be responsible for the observed negative relationship. Determining what factors are responsible for the relationship is a challenge, and many have offered hypotheses.

Arousal Theory

Cochran, Wood, and Arneklev (1994) and Ellis and Thompson (1989) argue that the relationship between religion and crime may be the result of socio-biological arousal theory (Eysenck, 1964), which asserts that criminals need more neural arousal than do law-abiding individuals. Easily bored individuals are less likely to attend church, and are more likely to commit crimes; thus, according to these authors, socio-biological theory can account for the negative relationship between religion and crime. Ellis and Thompson (1989) empirically examine this theory by asking college students about their religious beliefs (e.g. belief in God, morality, and hellfire punishment), religious involvement, levels of boredom during and comfort felt from church services, and thrill seeking.

The authors conclude that feeling boredom with church is associated with greater delinquency, and feeling comfort from church is associated with less delinquency. They find that the correlation of religion and criminal behavior is almost entirely removed once they controlled for boredom with church services. An obvious counterargument is that "feeling boredom" is not a proxy measure for neurological biological traits that should more validly be measured by examining the brain itself, and that a lack of boredom in church may not be the result of the absence of biological traits, but rather the result of religiosity itself (Johnson, Jang, Larson, & De Li, 2001).

Social Control

Similarly, other scholars have also asserted that the religion-crime relationship is spurious because of the absence of social control variables in the analysis. Benda and Corwyn (1997) find that measures of religion (namely, church involvement; time in prayer and Bible study, and financial contribution; and evangelism) are insignificantly associated with status offenses when elements of social control and social learning (namely, attachment to parents, peer association, modeling, reinforcement, and rationalization) are included. Their results push back on the argument that religion itself decreases crime. Similarly, Cochran, Wood, and Arneklev (1994) conclude that for juveniles, religiosity had an insignificant effect on juvenile crime after arousal theory variables (including thrill seeking, impulsivity, and physicality) as well as social control indicators (including self-esteem, parental control, commitment to education, and socialization) were controlled for. Indeed, the authors found that social control variables were more

significantly related and helped explain better all types of delinquent behaviors measured.

Accordingly, these authors have argued that the purported religion-crime relationship is a spurious one. That is, some other variable besides religion, such as boredom or social control, is responsible for the reduction in crime. Boredom and social control are therefore omitted variables that bias the results of religion-crime studies. To combat this bias, Benda and Corwyn (1997) emphasize that data sets used to analyze the religion-crime relationship must be large and representative and the analysis must include measures of social control as well as multiple measures of religion.

Negative and Positive Behaviors

It would be helpful in understanding *how* religiosity may be influencing crime to look at studies that have linked religiosity to other behaviors and beliefs. A substantial number of studies have also linked religiosity inversely with a range of "negative" behaviors. For example, Donahue and Benson (1995) find religiosity to be inversely linked to thoughts of suicide, attempted suicide, actual suicide substance abuse, premarital sexual involvement, and delinquency among American teens. Pearce, Little and Perez (2003) examined five dimensions of religion (church attendance, private practices, self-ranked religiousness, congregational support, and congregational problems), finding each dimension to be significantly associated with depression in the expected direction when analyzed separately. In their multiple regression analysis, however, only congregational support and congregational problems are significantly associated with high and low depression, respectively. Milot and Ludden (2009) examine a dataset of 683 rural adolescents

(from the U.S. Midwest) and observe that religious importance is a more prominent protective factor than school attendance against substance abuse, even after accounting for parental support. This finding directly addresses the idea that religiosity may simply be a proxy for parental involvement or support. Instead, the authors argue that religion provides a distinct and important social context for youth. They did not find a link between religiosity and depression or self-esteem. Religious importance is also positively correlated with higher motivation, and inversely with school misbehavior. Given that the authors only studied rural youth, most of whom were White and Baptist (who have higher levels of religious importance and involvement than average), the results are not generalizable to other religious and ethnic groups. Wright, Frost, and Wisecarver (1993) find religiosity associated with lower levels of depression and hopelessness. Others have linked religiosity with lower levels of teenage pregnancy and sexual intercourse, among youth (Whitehead, Wilcox, & Rostosky, 2001). In a longitudinal study of 1,182 ethnically diverse adolescents, Wills, Yaeger, and Sandy (2003) conclude that religiosity (religious importance) lessens the impact of life stress on substance use, both initially and over time.

Religion has also been directly associated with "positive" behaviors, skills, and attitudes among youth, including satisfaction with life, greater family involvement, better problem-solving skills regarding health (Varon & Riley, 1999); coping skills (Shortz & Worthington, 1994); better eating, exercise, sleep, and hygiene habits (Jessor, Turbin, & Costa, 1998); academic achievement and attendance (Muller & Ellison, 2001; Regnerus & Elder, 2003); and involvement in community service (Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1999). Additionally, religiosity has been positively correlated with happiness among both youth and adults

(Francis, Jones, & Wilcox, 2000) even in one study of Muslim Kuwaiti adolescents (Abdel-Khalek, 2007). Abdul-Khalek's (2007) study involved 499 adolescent secondary school students in Kuwait and used self-ratings to estimate religiosity, religious belief, and other measures. Religiosity and religious belief was left undefined for the students, which leads to the problem that different participants conceptualized "religiosity" or "religious belief" differently, or inaccurately measured their own measures of these variables. The study still demonstrates a significant positive association between religiosity and strength of religious belief with happiness, satisfaction with life, physical and mental health, and self-esteem. A significant negative association exists between religiosity and anxiety.

These studies, which generally use large samples and regression analyses, suggest that religiosity may exert a negative effect on criminal behavior through indirect avenues, operating through mediating variables that can be negative or positive. For example, religiosity may reduce anxiety, depression, or substance abuse, or enhance coping skills, self-esteem, or family attachment. In turn, these cognitive or behavioral changes may curb offending. However, these statistics-heavy studies have their limitations. Most focus on including only a limited number of independent variables, thereby leaving open the possibility that confounding variables account for any perceived relationship. For example, studies may show religiosity's positive association with academic achievement (e.g. Regnerus & Elder, 2003) but these studies do not account for health-related variables, such as healthy eating, which are separately and positively associated with religiosity (see e.g. Jessor, Turbin, & Costa, 1998). Further, these studies obviously cannot prove causality and do little to illuminate the pathways between related variables.

Community Religiosity

Another variable omitted from the analysis is community religiosity, which may statistically interact with individual religiosity. In other words, religiosity and delinquency are inversely related but only in communities where religiosity is the norm (Stark, Kent, & Doyle, 1982). That is, religion is a binding force so long as it infuses the individual's surrounding culture and his social interactions. Results examining this "moral communities" hypothesis have been mixed. Stark, Kent, and Doyle (1980, 1982) and Stark (1996) find support for the hypothesis by confirming that community level religiosity – not individual level religiosity – prevents crime. Using survey data from a large sample of 11,995 American high school seniors across the nation in 1980, and using geographical region to estimate religious climate, Stark (1996) observes strong negative correlations between church attendance and crime in regions where overall church attendance was high. As the author admitted, however, geographic region is not an ideal measure of community religiosity, as there is a great deal of variation in the religiosity of communities within large regions. Ideally, the analysis should be more localized. Similarly, Richard, Bell, and Carlson (2000) noted that moral communities had a positive effect on the recovery process for drug addicts. The authors recruited 190 participants from a Houston, Texas treatment center. The authors measured individual religiosity through religious salience, and examined two moral communities in the form of the church community and the self-help recovery group. Increases in church attendance were significantly related to decreases in drug and alcohol use, while increases in attendance in the recovery group were significantly related to decreases in alcohol use even independent of church attendance. The authors argued that the significance of church and help-group

attendance, rather than individual-level religiosity, supported the moral communities hypothesis. However, self-reported drug and alcohol use data may have been affected by underreporting. Further, it is questionable whether increases in church/group attendance adequately capture the moral communities hypothesis (that is, whether they show the religiosity of the community surrounding the individual). Attending a small church in the midst of a larger non-religious community might not capture the presence of a "moral community." Similarly, the authors did not address whether increases in church/group attendance might reflect an increase in *individual-level* religiosity.

Others, however, have not found support for the moral communities hypothesis. Tittle and Welch (1983) examine the link between religiosity, context, and criminal behavior, using a sample of 1,993 adults in Iowa, New Jersey, and Oregon. The authors measure religiosity through church attendance, criminal behavior through various specific crimes, and created religious (and other) "contexts" based on the responses of individuals. These contexts then provide the basis for various contextual measures, including perceived conformity and aggregate religiosity. For example, each religious affiliation (e.g. Catholic, Jew, Evangelical Protestant) constitutes its own "context," and the percent of people who specified a particular religious adherence indicated the aggregate religiosity of that context. All variables are self-reported.

The authors conclude that religiosity and criminal behavior are most strongly (and inversely) linked in contexts dominated by "secular social disorganization," normative ambiguity, low social integration, generalized perceptions of low peer conformity, and a high proportion of religious non-affiliates (Tittle and Welch, 1983, p. 674). Thus, the authors conclude that

religion's impact on crime is enhanced when conformity-inducing traits are *not* present in the larger society.

Tittle and Welch (1983)'s study, however, is problematic for several reasons, two of which are particularly salient. One problem with their approach is that the "context" variables are not independent variables, which violates basic principles of statistical analysis. Another problem is that aggregate religiosity fails to measure the intensity of religious commitment or involvement within the relevant sub-group, which is the proper estimation of a "moral community." Aggregate religiosity instead reflects the answers of individual participants, which hardly captures adherence on a group level. The study should thus be interpreted cautiously.

Another finding cited in opposition to the moral communities hypothesis comes from Benda (1995), who examines religiosity and delinquency among 1,093 public high school students in rural and urban communities nationwide. The author finds few statistically significant differences in individual religiosity across different communities (namely, Baltimore, Maryland, Little Rock, Arkansas, and rural areas of Arkansas). However, again, the study excludes measures of *community religiosity*, which would be more appropriate in order to test the moral communities hypothesis. Instead, the author simply looks at differences in religiosity's relationship with delinquency across geographic region. Though the regions are distinct, the analysis is not localized enough to be able to report on community-level religiosity. Further, the study only assesses students from six select public high schools, so its generalizability is limited.

The dynamic interplay between individual and community religiosity may be more important, conceptually, for those faiths that are "minorities" in some

sense. One may think that an individual of a minority faith may be more – or less – likely to bond to his faith in a way that is crime-preventing. Few studies, however, have examined either hypothesis. In one study of Mormon youth, moral communities are found to not play a role in reducing delinquency (Chadwick & Top, 1993). In other words, the link between religion and criminal behavior was as robust in contexts with a lower proportion of Mormons as it was in contexts with a higher proportion. The authors measured religiosity in multiple ways, including religious beliefs, personal and family religious behavior, religious participation, spirituality, and religious integration.

Spirituality

Even if the relationship between religiosity and crime is not explained by social variables excluded from the analysis – in other words, even if religiosity does reduce crime – discerning what dimensions of "religiosity" are responsible for the relationship is another challenge. Some scholars have been concerned that religiosity as an independent variable is less important than spirituality, and spirituality has been incorrectly excluded from analyses of religion's impact on crime. Several authors have argued that spirituality is a distinct phenomenon from religion, including Hodge, Cardenas, and Montoya (2001), Miller (1998), and Morell (1996). While religion refers to structured activities related to an institution, such as a church, including church events, Sunday school, etc., spirituality revolves around a personal relationship with God. Hodge, Cardenas, and Montoya (2001) asked juveniles how often they participated in church-related activities and events in order to measure religiosity, and measured spirituality by using the Index of Core Spiritual Experiences (INSPIRIT). The authors found that

spirituality was related to the use of marijuana and hard drugs but not to the use of alcohol, while religious participation affected alcohol use but not marijuana or hard drug use. The authors explain this difference in terms that echo the anti-ascetic behavior hypothesis: namely, that spirituality, which is a more internalized, personal phenomenon that relates to one's relationship with God can better explain decreases in the use of drugs, which represent violations of scriptural standards. Religion, compared to spirituality, is more of a social construct, and can better explain changes in behavior related to socially frowned upon behaviors such as drinking.

Defining outcomes

Just as religiosity is often inadequately specified in research pertaining to the relationship between religion and crime, outcome measures are also often inadequately defined. For example, studies have varied in the types of offenses they have measured, choosing to include or exclude drug or alcohol use, probation violations, or serious crimes, for example. For those studies pertaining to recidivism – that is, crime committed after release from prisons and jails, definitions become more unclear. "Recidivating" itself is an ambiguous term, which may refer to rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, or another variable (see Piquero, Farrington, & Blumstein, 2003).

Causality

As previously described, the conclusions about causality in the religion-crime debate are often premature. Studies that do find a negative relationship between measures of religiosity and criminal behaviors often cannot state that religiosity has caused the lack of offending, or even that religiosity has a negative *effect* on such behavior, without additional evidence. Most studies on religiosity

and crime are cross-sectional, which makes causal arguments even more difficult to make. Some studies have used methodology such as panel data in response, which has allowed for limited causal interpretations. Johnson, Jang, Larson, & De Li (2001) analyze three waves of panel data and used a multi-dimension variable for "religiosity," finding that religiosity directly reduces delinquency even after beliefs, delinquent association, and sociodemographic controls are included, in part because religious involvement increases disapproval of delinquent acts and the proportion of prosocial, conventional peers. Even in these cases, however, the exact causal pathway in which religiosity affects criminal behavior is not apparent, and causality should not be overstated. Johnson, Jang, Larson, & De Li (2001)'s longitudinal study provides strong evidence of causality, and others (e.g. Baier & Wright (2001)'s meta-analysis) claim a causal relationship, but none conclusively illustrate a causal relationship. Besides randomized controlled trials, which may be impractical in this context, qualitative data can help illuminate the nuances of the religion-crime pathway, as discussed below.

Applicability to Adults and Prisoners

Most of the studies on religion and crime discussed above used adolescent or college-age samples (e.g., Tittle & Welch, 1983; Benda 1995; Johnson, Jang, Larson, & De Li 2001). Thus, whether an inverse relationship also exists among adults, as well as among prisoners, is an outstanding question. Further analysis must include adults as well as prisoners to make any claims about these populations.

Conclusion: Theorizing the inverse relationship between religion and crime

From the above literature review on criminological and sociological literature on the relationship between religion, crime, and desistance, it is

abundantly clear that religiosity and criminal behavior (measured variably) are inversely related. Table 5 lists four literature reviews on religion and crime and the direction of the relationship between religion and crime found in the reviewed studies. For example, Baier et al. (2002)'s meta-analysis found that 77 of the 79 effect sizes found in sixty reviewed studies were negative, illustrating an *inverse* relationship between religiosity and crime.

Table 5: Direction of Religion-Crime Relationship Found in Literature Reviews

	Direction of Religion-Crime Relationship			
Study	***Direct/positive***	***No effect***	***Mixed effect***	***Inverse/negative***
Baier & Wright (2001)	0	2	0	77
Johnson, De Li, Larson, & McCullough (2000)	1	5	3	30
Sumter (1999)	0	5	0	18
Tittle & Welch (1983)	0	10	0	55

Research has suggested causality (e.g., Johnson, Jang, Larson, & De Li, 2001), hinting that religion can significantly assist in reducing or preventing crime (for example, see Albrecht, Chadwick, & Alcorn, 1977; Evans, Cullen, Burton, & Benson, 1997, Stack & Kanavy 1983; Stark, 1996). However, the exact mechanisms behind this relationship remain unclear, though some tentative statements can be made. First, religiosity has multiple dimensions – including religious beliefs, religious salience, and religious participation – and its various measures can exert distinct effects,. Second, religiosity can have a direct effect – that is, one that remains after controlling for other variables such as social bonding and social control variables – as well as an indirect effect – that is, one that is mediated, or eliminated, by other variables (Benda 2002; Benda and Corwyn,

1997; Jang and Johnson, 2001; Johnson, Jang, Larson, De Li, 2001). Third, this effect can hold despite the disorganization or immorality of an individual's setting (Jang and Johnson, 2001). That is, the religion effect can extend across contexts. A few key questions that remain for the purpose of this dissertation, then, are

1) Even if religiosity (however measured) exerts a negative effect on criminal behavior at the individual level, what is the evidence on the effectiveness of faith-based reentry programs themselves?
2) If these programs are effective, what accounts for their effectiveness?
3) What is the applicability of this research outside the Christian context, and specifically to Muslims?

These questions are addressed in the following two subsections, as well as Chapters 3, 4, and 5, which analyze primary research data.

2.1.3 Theory of Faith-based Reentry Programming

From the above examination on crime, desistance, and religion, religion has been shown to assist individuals in desisting from criminal behavior, and therefore may be useful in the reentry context (Hercik, 2004). On a theoretical level, religion may assist in preventing recidivism in a variety of ways, for example: by promoting pro-social values, developing a sense of responsibility and motivation, instilling a moral compass and a fear of punishment, and providing social support networks to assist with mentoring and fulfillment of basic and spiritual needs (Hercik, 2004). It is, for the most part, unclear exactly *how* religiosity promotes desistance, and particularly, how faith-based reentry programming might do so. As mentioned in the introductory section on faith-based organizations (FBOs) above, "religion" may appear in a variety of ways in an FBO. These ways do not directly match up to the measures of individual religiosity that we have seen from

criminological literature on the religion-crime relationship. Table 5 below compares how religiosity can be manifested in an FBO and in an individual.

Table 6: Comparison of Religiosity in FBOs and Individuals

Potential loci of faith in an FBO	**Examples**	**Measures of individual religiosity**
Identity/structure	Mission statement or vision	Spirituality Religious beliefs Religious values Religious influence Religious salience Religiousness/religious commitment Religious involvement Religious participation Religious integration Parental/family religious participation
Motivation	Religious beliefs of staff and reasons to serve those reentering	
Manner	Common understanding between clients and staff; interactions among clients sharing same faith	
Content/Doctrine	Prayer and theology classes	

Thus, the way that faith might operate in an FBO is distinct from the way it might operate in an individual, but the effects of an FBO are, indeed, ultimately on an individual. In other words, an FBO may utilize faith in a variety of ways, and these may (or may not) impact the religiosity level of an individual in a variety of other ways. This section seeks to illuminate the processes involved in the workings of faith-based reentry programming by systematically examining the existing evidence on faith-based reentry programming, and particularly whether, how, and for whom it is effective.

A. Evidence Base on Effectiveness of Faith-based Reentry Programming

Methodology of Search

The dissertation's literature review examined research in the form of studies, theoretical pieces, expert opinion pieces, policy reports, and other articles and media through an extensive search of existing academic and research

databases, internet search engines, and personal contacts in government, think tanks and research organizations, and community grassroots organizations. The literature review assessed existing evidence on the effectiveness of faith-based reentry programming, highlighting processes behind the effectiveness or lack thereof, gray areas, controversies, areas for further research, and the applicability of existing research and conclusions to a minority faith community (i.e. Muslims). To be clear, then, the primary research question for this literature search was "Is faith-based reentry programming effective?" Supplementary questions included "how" and "for whom."

The search strategy for this literature review involved three tiers:

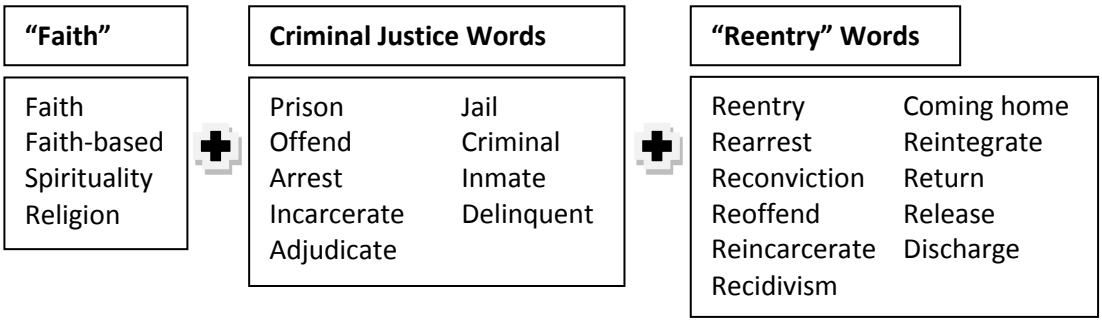
1) Searching academic and research databases, including:
    a. PsychINFO and Medline (accessed via OxLIP[5])
    a. National Criminal Justice Reference Service (accessed online via website and OxLIP)
    b. CSA-ASSIA (Cambridge Scientific Abstracts-Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts) (accessed via OxLIP)
    c. ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) (accessed via OxLIP)
    d. Social Sciences Citation Index (accessed via OxLIP)
    e. Sociological Abstracts (accessed via OxLIP)
    f. Social Services Abstracts (accessed via OxLIP)
    g. Dissertation Abstracts (accessed via OxLIP)
    h. Google scholar and Google
2) Examining relevant articles in bibliographies and reference lists
3) Locating relevant practitioner and grey literature, via:
    a. Internet (e.g. Google) searches, including online newspapers, magazines, new media, government and coalition websites
    b. Databases and registries:
        i. Blueprints for Violence Prevention (accessed online via website) (University of Colorado at Boulder, 2012)
        ii. National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) (accessed online via website) (SAMHSA[6] 2012)
        iii. Mentoring and Befriending Foundations' Resources Library (accessed online via website) (MBF 2012)
        iv. National Reentry Resource Center (accessed via website) (2012)

[5] Oxford Libraries Information Platform.
[6] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

c. Personal contacts with universities, non-profit organizations, charities, think tanks, and government departments, including Yale University, the Vera Institute of Justice, the Urban Institute, and the Department of Justice

The literature review was not restricted by the age or gender of study participants, geographic context, or publication date. Intentionally broad searches were used to initially gather resources, which were subsequently screened for relevance. The database search strategy combined a title keyword search of the words relevant to "faith" with a keyword search of terms pertaining to "criminal justice," as well as with a search of words related to "reentry." The diagram below summarizes the words searched.

Figure 3: Diagram of Words Used in Literature Search



The internet-based searches used the terms "faith" and "religion" alternatively with reentry/reenter, incarceration/incarcerated, jail, and prison to yield broad searches that were then screened for relevance. "Relevant" studies needed to involve faith in some way, include some measure of recidivism, and discuss the effectiveness of a given program or of faith-based programs in some way. Both in-prison and post-prison programs were included.

Search Results

The database searches yielded 754 results, 56 of which were deemed relevant. The bulk of resources pertaining to faith-based reentry came from non-

academic databases and searches, including from general internet searches, and from government and practitioner literature. While over a hundred sources were broadly "relevant," only a small number discussed the effectiveness or policy implications of faith-based reentry directly. The latter are broken down in Table 7.

Table 7: Breakdown of Literature Review Results

Topic	**Number of results**
Evaluations of effectiveness of faith-based reentry interventions, where at least one outcome measure was recidivism	16
Policy reports on faith-based reentry from think tanks and research groups	6
Government reports on faith-based reentry	9

To find any relevant literature specifically related to Muslims, database searches were conducted combining prison and criminality-related terms (listed above) and the words, Muslim or Islamic/Islam. These searches obviously extended the original focus on faith-based reentry programs specifically due to the dearth of any such programs that deal with minority (i.e. non-Christian faiths). The results of this search are described in the section on "Applicability to Muslims," below.

Search Results – Description

It is abundantly clear from the search results that faith-based organizations serve in a variety of criminal justice related areas, including prevention, diversion, prison/jail programming, and reentry; their services target multiple audiences, including children, adolescents, adults, families, and neighborhoods (Yoon & Nickel, 2008; Hercik, 2004). The majority of these faith-based criminal justice programs deal with prevention and interventions outside the reentry context

(Hercik, 2004). In the reentry context, faith-based programs address a range of issues, including housing, job training and placement, employment programs, mentoring, and addiction treatment (Wilcox, 1998; Hercik, 2004; Yoon & Nickel, 2008). Yet, overall, there is a dearth of research on the effectiveness of faith-based programming in the reentry context, and particularly research of high methodological rigor (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006; Willison, Brazzell, & Kim, 2010).

Table 8 provides a breakdown of the 16[7] evaluations that examine faith-based reentry programs, both within and outside of prison, and use some measure of recidivism an outcome measure.

Several studies dealing with faith-based programming in the criminal justice context assess programs that are physically situated in prisons or jails, with many of these seeking to rehabilitate prisoners to improve behavior both within prison and upon reentry. These programs have become more popular in recent years. In 2005, eighteen states and the federal government had some kind of residential faith-based programming (Department of Justice, 2005). While some studies have examined whether prisoners participating in faith-based programming had fewer disciplinary infractions and were more well-adjusted than non-participants (see Clear, 1992; Clear & Sumter, 2002), the evaluations discussed here concentrate on outcome measures related to recidivism (which vary). Table 8 below describes the 17 evaluations that met the relevance criteria in this dissertation, with more detailed discussions below.

In general, these studies follow the overall pattern in religion-crime literature previously discussed: namely, the evaluations provide some evidence of a

[7] This is the number of datasets rather than the number of actual published reports, because multiple reports sometimes cover the same dataset.

relationship between religious involvement and reduced reoffending. However, the studies are of varying quality and suffer from methodological weaknesses that prevent generalizing about the relationship between faith-based programming and recidivism.

Table 8: Characteristics of Evaluations of Faith-Based Reentry Programs

	Study	Location	Program	Control	Follow-up period	Result	Limitations
1)	Young, Gartner, O'Connor, Larson, & Wright (1995)	Washington, D.C.	Prison Fellowship Ministries two-week seminar	Matched control group	8-14 years	40% rearrest rate among participants; 51% among control group	Bias from self selection and selection from program administrators
2)	Sumter (1999)	12 U.S. prisons	None	None; comparison of religious versus nonreligious	Over 6 years	Belief in supernatural, and participation in religious programs related inversely to rearrest	Generalizability, causality, self-selection
3)	O'Connor, Erickson, Ryan, & Parikh (1996)	Sing Sing (NY)	Master's program in theology	Non-participants	28 months	Significant lower rearrest for ministry participants in first 28 months	Self selection and selection by prison administrators
4)	Johnson (2002)	Brazilian prisons	Christian-based prison facility	Secular facility with vocational training	3 years	Rearrests lower for faith-based facility's prisons	Self-selection, selection by prisons and program, need for success in initial 60 days; omitted variables/causality
5)	Denny (2006)	Kairos Horizon program in Oklahoma prison	Faith-based prison	None	1 year at maximum	No recidivism results reportable since only 7 participants released at time of writing, including no graduates	Insufficient sample size; self-selection; lack of control/comparison group
6)	La Vigne, Brazzell, & Small (2007) and Brazzell & La Vigne (2008)	2 Florida prisons	Faith and character-based institutions	Matched control group	12-26 months	No statistically significant difference	Self-selection
7)	O'Connor	New York	3 Prison	Matched comparison	1-7 years	No significant differences in	Self-selection

	(1995); O'Connor, Ryan, & Parikh (1996); Johnson (2004)		Fellowship ministry programs	group based on race and propensity score		rearrest rate; some small differences in rearrest among those with high attendance levels during first 3 years only	
8)	O'Connor, Ryan, & Parikh (1997)	South Carolina	Prison Fellowship program	Non-participants	Unknown	Participation predicted lower rates of prison infractions and recidivism	Self-selection
9)	Johnson & Larson (2003)	Texas	InnerChange Freedom Initiative	1) Matched group of those who met criteria but did not participate, 2) screened group who were eligible but did not volunteer or were not selected, 3) volunteer group who volunteered but did not participate	2 years	No difference in rearrest rate when participants compared to controls; significantly lower rate of rearrest among completers than comparison groups	Self-selection, selection by program staff and bias for completers
10)	Rose (2001)	England	Kainos Community, faith-based prison	All adults sentenced prisoners released from prisons in England and Wales in 1996 with some restrictions; control group's own predicted reconviction rates based on model	1 year	No statistically significant difference with either model	
11)	Wilson, Picheca, Prinzo (2005); Wilson, Cortoni, & McWhinnie 2009)	Ontario, Canada	Support network staffed by religious volunteers, for sex offenders	Matched group of non-participants	Unknown	Statistically lower recidivism rates than non-participants	Self-selection; unclear role of religion

12)	OPPAGA's FBCI study (2009)	Florida faith and character based institution and dorm	Several programs at institution, including Bible study groups and parenting classes	Those who requested transfer but were not placed in institution, or dorm	N/A	Slightly lower recidivism rate for those in institution, but not for those in dorm, compared to control	Self-selection, not purely religious programming
13)	Hercik (2004)	Florida prison	Kairos Prison program	Matched comparison group who were eligible but did not apply; Wait list control group who were eligible and did apply	2 years	No significant difference between treatment and control groups	Self selection for matched control group
14)	Wilson, Wilson, Drummond, &7 Kelso (2005)	Detroit, MI	Detroit Transition of Prisoners	Former inmates who applied but were turned down because they did not meet inclusion criteria	Un-known	Lower recidivism rate for (higher risk) treatment group than control group	Self selection, comparison of graduates with non-admits
15)	O'Connor, Su, Ryan, Parikh, & Alexander (1997)	Detroit, MI	Detroit Transition of Prisoners	Rejected applicants and random sample of non-applicants who were at pre-release centers involved in program	Un-known	Lower likelihood of returning to prison for escape among participants versus other groups, but only for those with three or more felonies. No difference in parole violation or new crime likelihood between completers and rejected volunteers.	Self-selection when comparing program completers to other groups. Omitted variables, since participants had greater church involvement than rejected applicants.
16)	Minnesota Dept. of Corrections (2012)	Minnesota	InnerChange Freedom Initiative	Matched comparison group of non-participants, using propensity scores	1-6 years	Participants reoffended less often and more slowly. Lowest recidivism rates for IFI completers and those who met with mentors within and outside of prison. Participation associated with significant reduction in hazard ratio for three recidivism measures involving new crime only.	Propensity score matched does not control for unobserved covariates arising from self-selection related to both selection to the program and recidivism

Five of the studies found no effect between participants in the program generally and the control group. Before addressing their limitations, the evaluations' results are discussed.

The most methodologically rigorous evaluation was conducted by the Minnesota Department of Corrections in its outcome assessment of their InnerChange Freedom program, in which multiple regression analyses were conducted to show various relationships between participation in the program and reduced recidivism (2012). The program is residential and lasts between 18-24 months prior to release. The program includes a values-based curriculum, mentoring from the outside community, small group Bible study, life skills discussion, religious, Christian-based programming, and post-release support for at least 18 months from a mentor and faith community. The control group consisted of a matched group of non-participants released from Minnesota prisons between 2003 and 2009, and propensity score matching was conducted. Multiple recidivism measures were used, including rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration (for new crimes), along with revocation for a technical violation of release conditions. The study found that white, younger offenders with a Christian affiliation, along with drug offenders and those with longer sentences, were more likely to enter the program. Program completers had the lowest recidivism rates of all groups. Participants were less likely and slower to commit a new crime than the comparison group. Younger, minority, and non-Christian prisoners (among others) were more likely to recidivate (using various recidivism measures). Among participants, those involved with mentors both in and after prison had significantly reduced measures of recidivism, though this may reflect non-program related factors (such as motivation) rather than the program's effects. The study's

interaction models did not yield consistent findings across recidivism measures. Overall, the study is methodologically more rigorous than others because it attempts to deal with the selection bias issue through propensity score matching, though this approach fails to address latent variables that are related to both selection and recidivism. Nevertheless, the study offers support for the authors' conclusion that "faith-based correctional programs can work, but only if they apply what is known about effective correctional programming" (p. 32).

Johnson and Larson (2003) also evaluate the InnerChange Freedom program, albeit in Texas prisons. The Texas program involved Biblical study, life skills training, community service, mentoring, and other activities both before and after release. The authors compare the IFI participants (177 in number) to three different comparison groups: a matched group who met selection criteria but did not participate, a group screened as eligible but who did not volunteer or were not selected, and a group that volunteered to be part of the program but who did not meet technical classification criteria regarding custody, sentence length, or city of return. The study finds that participants and comparison groups do not differ significantly with respect to two-year rearrest rates (36.2% for treatment and 35%, 34.9%, and 29.3% for the comparison groups, respectively) or two-year reincarceration rates (24.3% for the treatment and 20.3%, 22.3%, and 19.1% for the comparison groups, respectively). Those participants who completed the entire program were significantly less likely to be rearrested and reincarcerated in the two years following release, but these individuals excluded those removed from the program for disciplinary reasons and voluntarily, as well as those who did not complete six months of aftercare, three months of employment, and three months

of active church membership, all of which introduce potential issues of self-selection, described further in the following subsection.

Hercik (2004a) conducted an evaluation of the Kairos Horizon program, a residential in-prison program geared to foster trust, respect, community, and civic responsibility using restorative justice principles. The study concludes that participants did *not* have significantly fewer re-arrests than a matched comparison group (who was eligible but did not apply) and a waiting list control group (i.e. those who were eligible and did apply), but were out of prison slightly longer before being rearrested (3.5 months for the treatment group, and 1.4 months and 3.2 months for the comparison groups, respectively). Thus, while having the waitlist control group tried to avoid the self selection problem, the results do not display a significant difference in recidivism measures anyway.

Similarly, La Vigne, Brazzell, & Small (2007) conclude that prisoners in Florida's Faith-and Character based Institutions (FCBI) had lower re-incarceration rates six months after release than a matched group of prisoners in the general population. However, a later report notes that, after incorporating new data, no statistically significant difference exists in the rates of returning to prison among the FCBI versus the non-FCBI groups (Brazzell & La Vigne, 2008).

The above studies have featured faith-based programs in the form of housing units and in-prison programming. Another type of program that has been studied is discipleship training. Young, Gartner, O'Connor, Larson, and Wright (1995) analyze the Prison Fellowship Ministries' Discipleship Seminars, in which participants were sent for a two-week seminar to become trained as prison ministers. These participants had a recidivism rate of 40%, compared to 51% for

the matched control group. However, the selection bias concern in this study is significant (see discussion in following subsection).

Sumter (1999)'s study concludes that certain religious measures (including morality) are not related to rearrest rates, while self-esteem and belief in the Supernatural are significantly and inversely related to rearrest rates. Participation in religious programs reduces the probability of rearrest. Self-reported "religiousness" (measured by a religiousness instrument, the Prisoner Value Survey) is *not* related to rearrest rates following release.

O'Connor, Ryan, Erickson, and Parikh (1996) examined the Prison Fellowship program in New York prisons. The Prison Fellowship program involved a number of activities, including Bible studies, in-prison seminars, and life plan seminars. Bible-studies and in-prison seminars involved direct teaching of the Christian doctrine, reading of scripture, and/or worship. Life-plan seminars were not focused on spiritual growth, but involved pre-release planning and mentoring. All activities were taught by Prison Fellowship staff. The study finds no significant difference between the number of rearrests or time to rearrest among participants versus the control group. The control group was matched based on race and a propensity score that was calculated from age, religion, county, military discharge, minimum sentence, and initial security classification. Even after differentiating based on the level of participation among the individuals in the program, no significant difference in rearrest rates emerges. However, when the authors add measures of each participant's estimated risk of rearrest, those who were high risk and were highly active in the program were significantly less likely than high-risk, *low*-level participants to be rearrested. In other words, for the high-risk prisoners, the level of participation mattered. What this might mean,

particularly in light of possible self-selection biases, is unclear, but discussed further below.

Johnson, Larson, and Pitts (1997) reanalyzed the data used in O'Connor (1996) with slight differences. The quasi-experimental design of the study matched participants in the Prison Fellowship program in these prisons (specifically, any one of the three activities above) with non-participants from the prisons. The authors conclude that prisoners who were more active in Bible studies (i.e. having attended ten or more) had lower rearrest rates in the year following release, controlling for participation. However, the groups did not differ significantly with regards to committing serious prison infractions. Notably, the matched samples were about 8% Muslim, 41% Protestant, and 39% Catholic, as well as 47% black, 12% white, and 40% Hispanic. Johnson (2004) used additional follow-up data, concluding that high level participants in Bible studies were less likely to be rearrested two and three years following release, but finding that this effect disappeared after three years of release. When comparing participants and non-participants in general, there was no significant difference in median time to rearrest or in reincarceration rates.

Similarly, a study in England of a faith-based prison by Rose (2001) found a lack of statistically significant difference in the reconviction rate of those who participated in the program with two comparison groups: one of prisoners released from prisons in England and Wales generally, with a few restrictions, and the other of the same participants using a statistical estimation of their predicted reconviction rates based on various characteristics (e.g. sex, age at first conviction, offense category, etc.). In both comparisons, the rates of reconviction within a year of release were not statistically different between groups.

Very few studies have examined *post-release* reentry programming – that is, programming not offered within prison. This scarcity may be due to the limited possibility of implementing and controlling a rigorous experimental design with former prisoners outside of prison, or due to a consideration that randomization during reentry might be unethical. One study of the Ridge House, a halfway house in Reno, Nevada that offers substance abuse treatment and employability training, concludes that religion had some influence over program satisfaction and drop-out rate, and that religiosity did not predict program outcomes (Roman, Wolff, Correa & Buck, 2007). However, the authors recognize significant limitations to their study, and recommend that further research be done on both theoretical and empirical levels regarding how faith can decrease crime (2007).

Wilson, Picheca, and Prinzo (2005) evaluated the Circles of Support and Accountability program in Ontario, finding that participants had a significantly lower violent recidivism rate compared to the comparison group (15% versus 35%) which was matched on various similarities in terms of their incarceration, treatment, and risk category histories. A follow-up study published four years later also found lower rates of recidivism (Wilson, Cortoni, & McWhinnie 2009).

O'Connor, Su, Ryan, Parikh, and Alexander (1997) analyzed data from the Detroit Transition of Prisoners program, which was an aftercare program that targeted prisoners at higher risk of reoffending. The study finds that for those with three or more felonies, program participants were less likely to return to prison for escaping from the pre-release center than a group of rejected applicants and randomly selected non-applicants from the pre-release centers involved in the program. For those with less than three felonies, participants were more likely to return to prison than rejected volunteers and as likely as the non-applicant group.

Those who were not discharged from the program were as likely as the rejected volunteer group to return to prison for a parole violation or new crime.

Many programs, both within and outside of prison, report that they reduce recidivism rates, without explaining details of the methodology through which they come to this finding. This failure is true even of government programs. Since prisoner reentry has been an intervention area specifically targeted by both the Bush and Obama Administration's partnership with faith-based organizations, some government reports also suffer from a lack of detail in the evaluations of the programs. For example, in 2004, the Bush Administration announced the Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI), which funded such organizations' mentoring, job training and placement, and other transitional programming (White House, 2008). About $20 million was granted by the Department of Labor to certain faith-based and community organizations that dealt with reentry, and the administration cited the following facts to support the initiative's success:

- nearly 16,000 ex-offenders placed in jobs
- a 69% job retention rate
- a one-year recidivism rate of 15% for PRI participants, versus the national average of 44% (White House, 2008).

President Obama's Fatherhood Initiative, one of four priority policy areas for Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, also incorporates faith-based prisoner reentry programming (Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, 2010; Gordy, 2010), but actual evaluations of the program seem non-existent. The Bush Administration's figures on job retention and recidivism rates seem promising, but the report from which they came provides very few details about how these numbers are calculated. For example, outcomes such as "staying out of trouble" and "not recidivating" are not defined, and it is unclear evaluators used any control groups, what these groups looked like,

or how the treatment group was selected (and how selection bias was addressed). Therefore, it is difficult to determine how effective these programs really are.

In general, it is premature to say whether faith-based reentry programs are more effective than non-faith based programming or no programming, or what the effects of faith in such programs are (O'Connor, 2005; Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006). Better methodology, larger sample sizes, and a more consistent definition of "faith-based" is necessary to enhance the body of research (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006). Indeed, numerous criticisms about existing research make drawing conclusions regarding effectiveness quite difficult.

B. Critique of Research

Literature on faith-based reentry programming is handicapped by the following challenges.

<u>How faith actually operates in the reentry program is unclear</u>

When the studies reviewed above present their findings, they usually try to draw a connection between participation in the faith-based program and a measure of recidivism. The conclusions that many have tried to draw from these studies is that faith-based reentry programs either work or do not work, and thus religion is or is not a useful tool in rehabilitation and reentry (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006; Johnson, 2008; Volokh, 2011). What this type of conclusion ignores is that simply because a program is faith-based does not mean that *personal religiosity* (or its development) accounts for any reduction in future criminal behavior. As discussed previously, faith may be represented in a faith-based program in a number of ways, including the program's identity (e.g. mission/vision; funding), staff and volunteer motivation to serve, the manner in which clients interact with

each other and with staff, and the content of the activities themselves. Any—or none—of these components may be responsible for an observed effect (assuming the study is otherwise methodologically sound).

In fact, it may be more likely that the "faith" in a faith-based program is present not in the content of activities but in more latent ways. Willison, Brazzell, and Kim (2010) examine five measures of "faith" in a program: 1) mission and vision, 2) program identity, 3) faith and spiritually-based activities, 4) staff and volunteers, and 5) key outcomes. The authors concluded, from their survey of 48 faith-based programs, that the respondents

> were more likely to report that faith and spirituality manifested in abstract elements such as staff and volunteer commitment to clients, program principles, and the program model than concrete program activities. This suggests the manifestation and influence of religious principles or spirituality is subtle and the relationship between program participation and outcomes requires additional examination. (p. 6).

Because of the at-best unclear role of "faith" in faith-based programs, evaluations of such programming are often limited by their vagueness (or underspecification) about the precise way in which their programs are faith-based.

How faith affects offending is unclear

Causation

Some studies have suggested that participation in a faith-based reentry program reduces future criminal behavior. However, causation in these studies has been quite difficult to prove. Even if causation can be deduced, moreover, *how* faith affects offending is unclear. Johnson, Larson, and Pitts (1997)'s study is illustrative. The authors found that prisoners who participated in ten or more Bible studies had lower rearrest rates than matched non-participants. It may be possible, for example, that Bible study reduces criminal behavior, but it may also be the case

that those who are least likely to reoffend are most likely to actively participate in Bible study in the first place. The lack of clarity about the direction of the causative arrow is closely linked to the problem of selection bias, described more fully below.

A variety of other variables cloud the causal process in these studies as well. Factors that should be included in any analysis include the intensity of involvement in the program, each prisoner's criminal risk level, race, and involvement in other educational, behavioral, or substance abuse programming, along with interaction effects between faith-based programming participation and these variables. These variables have been shown to be statistically significant in several evaluations (O'Connor, 2003; Sumter, 1999).

In addition, to truly discover the ways in which the "faith" in faith-based programming works to reduce recidivism, one must be able to identify the impact of the program's other, evidence-based qualities. As the Minnesota Department of Corrections' evaluation of the InnerChange Freedom Program stated, "faith-based correctional programs can work, but only if they apply what is known about effective correctional programming" (p. 32). The extent to which the faith-based program includes or focuses on high-risk offenders, targets criminogenic factors, focuses on action-oriented behavioral interventions, and provides a continuum of care, monitoring, and staff sensitivity – all best practices – should be noted (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006). How the faith aspect of the program works alongside these characteristics should be analyzed precisely to illuminate the causal pathway between faith-based programming and recidivism.

Causal Process between Faith and Offending

If there is a causal process between faith and offending, a separate, critical question is how this process operates specifically in the context of faith-based organizations. Mears, Roman, Wolff, and Buck (2006) offer eight potential ways in which faith may impact offending, where "faith" is an umbrella term for religion, religiosity and spirituality: 1) direct, 2) indirect, 3) interactive, 4) conditional, 5) threshold, 6) symmetric, 7) nonlinear, and 8) negative.

First, faith may *directly* affect offending. For example, increased rates of attending religious services or faith classes may reduce offending. However, while it may be the case that a higher level of faith or religiosity itself reduces an individual's offending behavior, researchers typically would delve further into the causal effect, asking *why* this relationship exists and suspecting that faith is acting through some other factor, such as a perceived increase in accountability. Mears, Roman, Wolff, and Buck (2006) note, though, that "simply because a factor, such as faith, may achieve its effect indirectly through another factor, the influence is no less causal [but] simply is more temporally distal in its causation" (p. 357).

The *indirect* effect of faith on offending has received more attention from researchers (Smith, 2003). Under this theory, faith decreases offending or recidivism by working through a mediator (Benda & Corwyn, 2001), such as improved sense of responsibility, fewer delinquent associations, improved family relations, or increased willingness to seek further services. Smith (2003) hypothesizes three categories of such mediators, through which faith decreases offending (specifically among youth): 1) moral order (moral directives, spiritual experiences, and role models); 2) learned competencies (community and leadership skills, coping skills, and cultural capital); and 3) social and organizational ties

(social capital, network closure, and extra-community links). Moral directives refer to religious teachings of moral behaviors that help individuals behave in a pro-social way by exerting a type of social control. Moral directives help frame spiritual experiences, which can in turn reinforce religious identities. Religion can also provide peer mentors and role models, who demonstrate how to behave positively and provide an incentive to maintain moral behavior. Although Smith (2003) focuses his analysis on youth, his conclusions may extend to adults as well.

Beyond establishing a moral order, religion teaches distinct skills that improve wellbeing. For example, youth learn leadership skills by organizing community activities, and these skills assist in academic, professional, and civic ventures later on. Religion also imparts skills that help individuals cope with and resolve stressful and difficult life situations. For example, the belief in God's eternal justice and control over one's life, and in divine sources of strength and resolve, along with prayer, meditation, and other practices, help individuals deal with difficult circumstances. Individuals may also gain cultural capital through practicing religion, learning valuable skills and lessons related to music, history, religious education, ethics, theology, and other areas, that may give these individuals an advantage over non-religious others, helping them converse more proficiently in social settings or perform better academically. Another type of skill, unacknowledged by Smith (2003) but addressed by others, are "soft skills" that individuals may gain through religious involvement, which may decrease offending via employment, i.e. "soft skill training in basics such as attitude, customer service, and motivation can influence hiring decisions" (Tarlow, 2010, p. 349).

Finally, religion may assist an individual with establishing ties with social and organizational entities. Importantly, religion may increase an individual's stock of social capital. Through one's involvement in a religious organization, one may forge valuable networks with adults and youth alike, who can provide care, accountability, information, and links to opportunities and resources. Some of these networks may provide oversight and information to parents to help prevent antisocial behavior among youth, and help reinforce positive parenting (see for example, Fletcher, Newsome, Nickerson, & Bazley, 2001). Other networks can provide links to a broader non-local community, both within and outside of the particular faith, through national religious organizations or simply by virtue of being part of the faith group. In the Muslim community, for example, these links could be in the form of participation in national conventions and interfaith activity through a national group such as the Islamic Society of North America, or the sense of camaraderie felt through common gestures such as the greeting "assalaamu alaikum" which is said to any Muslim anywhere, whether stranger, acquaintance, or confidant. Other researchers have suggested indirect mechanisms through which faith promotes pro-social actions, some of which overlap with Smith's (2003), including improved moral commitments and association with non-delinquent peers and adult role models (Jensen & Gibbons, 2002; O'Connor, 2004, 2005; Roman, Whitby, Zweig, & Rico, 2004).

Levin (2009) puts forth a five-part theoretical typology of the ways in which faith can "heal" and promote health, drawing from literature on psychology and physiology. The five mechanisms, below, may also be indirect ways in which faith can reduce offending:

1) Behavioral/conative – faith may motivate adopting healthy behaviors such as not smoking and abstaining from drugs

2) Interpersonal – faith can connect one to like-minded individuals and to the divine, establishing bonds of support and encouragement, which in turn can promote health
3) Cognitive – faith can establish a mental framework through which an individual deals with life's challenges
4) Affective – faith can engender emotions that alleviate the harmful effects of stress
5) Psychophysiological – faith can provide hope and develop optimism

While Levin (2009) notes that these typologies are not empirically-based, but rather theoretical, several are derived from large bodies of literature that do include empirical studies (for example, studies on the relationship between faith, lower stress levels, and health).

A third type of effect between faith and offending is interactive; that is, the effect of faith may be moderated by another factor (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006; Benda & Corwyn, 2001). For instance, faith may decrease offending more in particular populations – such as those who are receiving supplementary services including job placement assistance, career development training, education, or housing. Such factors may be moderators if increased religious involvement or participation in faith-based services corresponds with increased commitment to excelling in other programs or increased motivation to positively change one's life's direction, such that those who are involved in adjacent service programs experience a more pronounced decrease in offending. Or, participation in faith-based programs may increase moral commitment (see Smith, 2003), which can then decrease offending "but much more so when the beliefs are supported by the ability to put them into action in, say, a work environment" (Mears, Winterfield, Hunsaker, & Moore, 2003, p. 357).

Fourth, faith may exercise a conditional effect on offending. Unlike the interactive effect, in which another factor may moderate the faith effect, with a conditional effect faith may actually *only* decrease offending if another factor is

present. For example, involvement in faith-based services may decrease offending only among individuals who are also involved in other service programs, such as employment-related or educational services. If faith exercises a conditional effect, researchers must tackle two critical questions: 1) *why* a conditional effect exists, and 2) *how* the conditional faith effect leads to decreased offending (e.g. whether the magnitude/intensity of faith programming bears on the magnitude/intensity of the outcome) (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006).

A fifth possible effect is a threshold effect, in which faith exercises an effect on offending only after a certain threshold level of "faith" has been achieved. Several studies, including with Muslim inmates, have found evidence for such a threshold effect—particularly when faith programs or individuals have reported that a certain epiphany or realization point (e.g. about the presence of a higher power or the accountability of man) must be reached before an individual experiences a significant enough personal change to result in improved behavior (i.e. decreased offending) (O'Connor, 2005; Dix-Richardson & Close, 2002). Support for this hypothesis may be found in studies that control for participation in religious activities and find that high *levels* of participation are associated with reduced criminal acts (e.g., Johnson, Larson, & Pitts, 1997; O'Connor, 1996), though admittedly these studies may be criticized as self-selective. If these studies were not self-selective, a possible implication of the threshold effect is that mere participation in faith-based programming is not enough to reduce recidivism. Instead, programming must help individuals attain a specific level of religiosity (measured by beliefs, activity, commitment, salience, spirituality, or some other measure) to truly decrease offending. Thus, those who argue that it is irrelevant or unhelpful to policymakers whether high-level participation reduces recidivism (see

Volokh, 2011) are ignoring the fact that this result (provided it is validly concluded) may shed light on *how* faith operates in a program—i.e. indirectly and at a threshold level.

Sixth, faith may affect offending *nonlinearly*—meaning, "reductions in criminal behavior may be greater as people move from being nonreligious to somewhat religious, and less as people move from being somewhat religious to very religious" (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006, p. 358). The relationship may be exponential, becoming slowly more or less pronounced as the individual's faith level increases. For example, we can envision a relationship in which faith has the most immediate and intense impact on an individual early on, and the effect of faith on behavior/offending tails off as the individual's level of faith increases.

A seventh type of effect is symmetric or asymmetric. A symmetric relationship works in both directions—e.g. an increase in faith decreases offending, and a decrease in faith increases offending. An asymmetric relationship, in contrast, works only uni-directionally—e.g. an increase in faith decreases offending, but no reverse effect exists (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006).

Finally, theory suggests a possible *negative* effect of faith on offending, though little research has been conducted on this possibility (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006). The negative effect may be the result of faith services causing a sense of powerlessness or having participants admit their sins, which theoretically may frustrate or disappoint participants into reverting to offending (2006). Since this dissertation deals with Muslims and Islam, another possible "negative" effect that has been mentioned in the literature and by practitioners in government and non-profit sectors is "Islamist radicalization" causing offending (Hamm, 2007).

Defining "Faith"

Another critique of the literature on faith-based reentry programming concerns the definition of "faith." The elements of "faith" that actually exert any alleged effect on criminal behavior must be isolated. As discussed previously in the discussion on religion and crime, "faith" has a variety of dimensions, including commitment, beliefs, salience, and spirituality. Which of these dimensions is actually involved in the causative process must be explored, as it is often neglected in quantitative analyses. Moreover, it is inappropriate for researchers to assume that comparison groups—such as non-participants—are "non-religious." Both participant and control groups should be assessed for "religiosity."

Faith in an FBO

Finally, it is critical to note that even theoretically, the potential efficacy of faith-based reentry programming need not be explained by the perceived inverse link between religion and offending. That is, the reduced recidivism that some studies find associated with faith-based reentry programs may not have anything to do with religious doctrine itself. As described previously, effects may result from the other ways in which faith is represented in an FBO—i.e. the identity of the organization, the motivation of staff, or the manner in which staff delivers services or intra-participant interactions occur. Indeed, many faith-based reentry programs deliver only secular services. A program's success in reducing reoffending may be because of completely secular components, such as administrative efficiency or the program's ability to provide more, or more effective, programs (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006; Blank and Davie, 2004). In other words, there are several "indirect" ways in which a faith-based organization may reduce offending, aside

from the "direct" effect of working through the theological *content* of certain programming.

Evidence from various types of programming, including transitional job and vocational programs (Redcross, Bloom, Azurdia, Zweig, & Pindus, 2009; Seiter & Kadela, 2003; Mackenzie & Hickman, 1998), drug rehabilitation programs (Rhodes, Pelissier, Gaes, Saylor, Camp, & Wallace, 2001), mentoring activities (Dubois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002), cognitive behavioral interventions (Andrews & Bonta, 1998), and halfway houses (Seiter & Kadela, 2003), suggest that these programs may help reduce recidivism. Though several of these program evaluations lack methodological rigor (e.g. randomized selection, control groups) (Petersilia, 2004), they may represent indirect avenues through which faith-based reentry programs can reduce offending. For example, a faith-based program that targets former offenders and offers substance abuse treatment taught through a religious framework might reduce offending not through the faith element of the program itself but through its substance abuse program. Figure 4 below illustrates some of the ways in which faith-based organizations might reduce offending.

For these questions about process—i.e. how an individual's involvement in a faith-based reentry program may affect their likelihood of later offending—qualitative research may help fill the knowledge gap. Yet few qualitative studies have tackled the issue of how faith-based reentry programs operate, and particularly how they might affect recidivism measures. The qualitative studies that do exist are not of particularly high quality and seem to be done only to supplement more detailed quantitative studies. That is, their methodology, sampling strategies, and analysis methods are not described in detail (e.g. Brazzell

and LaVigne, n.d.; Johnson and Larson, 2003). For example, Johnson and Larson (2003)'s study on the InnerChange Freedom Initiative found that, from 125 interviews, participants felt that they transformed spiritually due to their participation in the in-prison faith-based program. The authors highlighted five themes that were salient in the narratives of participants: 1) a new identity; 2) spiritual growth; 3) a prioritization of faith over the prison code; 4) a positive outlook on life; and 4) the desire to give back and help others. The authors suggest that these themes align with various desistance theories, particularly the idea that participants created a new identity and a positive outlook (see Maruna, 2001). However, the study does not describe in detail the analytical methods employed or the limits of their sampling strategy.

Methodological limitations

Many of the studies analyzing the effectiveness of faith-based programming to curb offending present issues of bias. Very few use random sampling, so self-selection bias is a problem (see, e.g. Johnson, Larson, & Pitts, 1997). Volokh (2011) argues that nearly all of the studies on in-prison faith programming are tainted by the self-selection problem. For example, Johnson (2002) compared the rearrest rates of a Brazilian faith-based facility with a Brazilian secular facility and found that 12% of high-risk prisoners were rearrested after three years in the former, versus 38% of the high-risk prisoners in the latter. However, prisoners were required to apply to the faith-based facility, and were only selected if they had the motivation and commitment to change. This study's results are thus limited by a selection problem—both self-selection among applicants and actual selection of participants by the program. That is, it may well be the case that those who choose to enroll in voluntary, open-to-all faith-based

programming are less likely to offend to being with, compared to those who do not participate in such programming, and thus the recidivism rates of the former are lower. This problem also applies to programs that explicitly select individuals with a religious commitment or motivation to change – such as the program explored in O'Connor, Erickson, Ryan, and Parikh (1997). In that study, participants in the theological program at Sing-Sing had a 9% rate of rearrest compared to 37% of non-participants. However, participants were selected by the program through a competitive application process that assessed references, educational level, and willingness to change. One can imagine that the difference in recidivism rates had nothing to do with the actual program, but perhaps instead reflected the differences in educational achievement, interpersonal skills, and willingness to change that were already present, pre-program, among participants. A similar criticism can be made for other studies, such as Young, Gartner, O'Connor, Larson and Wright (1995), in which prisoners were selected to participate in a discipleship seminar.

Self-selection bias also plagues studies that assess the level of participation of individuals in a faith-based program—for example, differentiating between those highly active in Bible studies and those less so (Johnson, Larson, and Pitts, 1997). In addition to self-selecting into the program in the first place, participants may also be "self-selecting" into the sub-group that participates more. The lower recidivism rates associated with the higher-participating group may reflect pre-existing non-observable characteristics, such as the motivation to change.

It is important to recognize that selection bias exists regardless of how the treatment and control groups are matched, as long as the matching is done on observable characteristics. Some studies, for example, have used propensity scores to match prisoners, but these studies have also calculated propensity based on

observable characteristics. The relationship between participation in a faith-based program and recidivism cannot therefore be validly assessed when important characteristics such as motivation to change, pre-existing religiosity, self-control, etc. are not measured and dealt with in the selection process. One study that has incorporated measures of non-observable characteristics including motivation for change and pre-existing religiosity is Camp, Daggett, Kwon, and Klein-Saffran (2008). The study looked at prison misconduct rather than recidivism, but its independent variables are important to look at. Namely, the authors developed a "probability of participation" using variables that included: a scale measuring motivation to change, spiritual experiences, religious participation, religious affiliation, feelings of self-worth, risk of being in custody, prior incarceration, age, ethnicity, race, sex, level of education, marital status, and months of current incarceration so far. While "motivation to change" was not measured objectively but rather by self-reports—which may be the most practical way to measure it—its inclusion is critical to addressing self-selection bias. Indeed, it may be argued that self-approximations of motivation to change are an entirely appropriate, because they actually gauge one's *belief* in one's motivation, which is what ought to be measured.

In these studies, one cannot deduce causation between enrollment in a faith-based program and non-offending. Even if the data reveals a correlation between the two, omitted variable(s) may explain the relationship. For example, the variables discussed in the discussion on desistance – such as social control, neuro-arousal, and social learning – may account for the relationship. Randomization would help address these issues of bias but existing studies have not incorporated randomization into their methodology. This may be because of

the practical difficulty or ethical issues involved with using random assignment. Indeed, random sampling is particularly difficult in the criminal justice context because of the interest in, and often requirement of, attending programming; randomization may be seen as unethical or unjust. Some degree of self-selection is often unavoidable for any intervention, particularly for those that exist prior to (or mainly outside of) being evaluated. The design of a control group thus takes paramount importance in designing a rigorous evaluation. A practical solution may be to randomly select participants and the control group from a group of volunteers, who themselves self-select.

Volokh (2011) discusses three other ways to deal with the selection bias issue, including instrumental variable analysis, comparisons of an entire prison before and after the introduction of a faith-based program, and using rejected volunteers as a control group. The last option has been used by some studies (e.g. O'Connor, Erickson, Ryan, & Parikh, 1997; Johnson & Larson, 2003). However, it only truly avoids the selection bias problem if volunteers are selected on a random basis, i.e. selection criteria are not correlated with reduced propensity to recidivate. For example, O'Connor, Erickson, Ryan, & Parikh (1997) use a comparison group of rejected applicants, some of whom were rejected because they had insufficient prior church involvement. One can imagine that higher church involvement might be correlated with reduced likelihood of recidivism, so the rejected applicant pool is still not an ideal comparison group.

Another criticism of the literature on the effectiveness of faith-based reentry programs is that their follow-up periods are limited, and the studies therefore cannot suggest much about the lasting impact on recidivism. In other words, even if a program was evaluated rigorously and was found to decrease

recidivism (however measured) in two or three years following release, this is no indication that individuals involved have permanently desisted. It is, of course, difficult to obtain follow-up data from individuals who have been released from prison.

C. Applicability of Literature Review Findings to Muslims

Literature on the effectiveness of faith-based reentry programming is relatively scant, especially compared to literature on the relationship between religion and crime in general. Yet both camps of literature suffer from the same critique of generalizability: namely, that because both operate overwhelmingly within a Christian or Judeo-Christian paradigm, their findings are not generalizable to non-Judeo-Christian faiths. For example, subjects of studies and survey respondents have been Christian, FBOs have often been framed and analyzed in terms of their adherence to a Christian institutional structure, religious commitment has often been measured by asking about church attendance or participation, and religious beliefs have been critiqued through the lens of Christianity – e.g. beliefs in Jesus, sinning, the hereafter, etc. A few studies have collected data and controlled for non-Christian faiths. For example, the Minnesota Department of Corrections study on the InnerChange Freedom program found that Christian prisoners were more likely to participate in the program, that non-Christian prisoners were more likely than Christian prisoners to be reconvicted, and that minority participants in IFI were more likely to be reincarcerated than the control group (2012). These results suggest, albeit inconclusively, that different faiths and ethnic groups (particularly non-Whites and non-Christians) may respond variably to faith programming.

Another study, conducted by the Urban Institute, involved a survey of 48 faith-based programs but included a very small number of Muslim programs, though the study did cite statistics that Muslims constitute 20% of the incarcerated population. The exact number of Muslim programs in the study was not mentioned, but the authors did mention that 82% of the respondents were from a Christian tradition. Further, the study found that the Muslim groups in the sample were characterized in part by the fact that faith was strongly represented in all facets of their organization – i.e. in their mission/vision, activities, identities, staff and volunteers, and outcomes, which was not the case for many other organizations (Willison, Brazzell, & Kim, 2010).

Thus, the extent to which conclusions regarding the religion-crime relationship can apply to other faith groups, specifically Muslims, is an open question. In research conducted for this dissertation, only 33 studies pertained in any way to the relationship between Islam and crime, and several of these were from non-academic and partisan sources, particularly on the topic of Muslim radicalization and terrorism. These studies break down as listed in Table 9. To find these studies, the keywords "Islam" and "Muslim" were added to the general search strategy. Most studies (for example, 600 out of 625 database results) were not particular to Muslims, but rather discussed faith or religious groups generally. Of those studies dealing with Muslims directly, half dealt with therapy and cultural sensitivity issues related to Muslim clients, and the remainder dealt with global issues in Muslim-majority countries.

Table 9: Research Related to Muslims and Crime

Topic	Number of articles/reports	Examples
Incarcerated Muslims in the U.S. (focusing outside of the context of radicalization and terrorism)	8	Ammar, Weaver, & Saxon (2004), Ammar & Weaver (2006); Dix-Richardson and Close (2002); Citizens Against Recidivism (2010)
Incarcerated Muslims in the U.K.	11	Bolognani (2007), Lambert (2008), Quraishi (2008), Quraishi (2005), Beckford, Joly, Khosrokhavar (2005), HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2010); Liebling, Arnold, & Straub (2011)
Muslims and reentry in the U.K.	4	Beckford, Joly, Khosrokhavar (2005); Spalek & El-Hassan (2007); Spalek (2002)
Radicalization in U.S. prisons	13	HSPI Report (n.d.), Hamm (2007); Hamm (2009), Ballas (2010), Post & Sheffer (2007)
Muslims and reentry in the U.S.	1	Read and Dohadwala (2003)
Muslim offenders outside of the U.S. and U.K.	5	Khosrokhavar (2004), Quraishi (2005); Cuthbertson (2004)

As Table 9 describes, only one study pertains directly to Muslims and reentry in the U.S. That study, Read and Dohadwala (2003), examines Islamic organizations' reentry activities, noting that 60% of U.S. mosques engage in some sort of prison outreach, and activities provided by Islamic organizations include religious classes, family counseling, reentry support groups, halfway houses, and toll-free contact numbers. The report finds that Islamic rehabilitation programs seek to improve the re-entry process in four ways:

1) by "enhanc[ing] social networks among ex-prisoners, families, and communities"
2) by "provid[ing] economic success strategies for ex-prisoners and their families"
3) by "strengthen[ing] networks among faith-based organizations"
4) by "foster[ing] leadership development among clergy, laity, and members" (2003, p. 17).

The report – a policy brief – describes ways in which Islamic organizations are attempting to achieve these objectives. In terms of enhancing social networks,

some Islamic organizations hold religious classes that discuss economic and emotional stability, child and family relations, and Islamic concepts and practices, among other topics. Other organizations facilitate regular correspondence between prisoners and community members (e.g. via letters), hold regular support groups and/or counseling sessions for prisoners and their families, administer halfway houses, or provide toll-free numbers to assist ex-prisoners during reentry. To enhance economic success, some Islamic organizations provide job training and placement services, and some participate in interfaith symposiums and conferences to develop interfaith networks and leadership among community members (Read & Dohadwala, 2003). Notably, this report lacks details on its methodology and on the generalizability of the ten Muslim reentry programs it examines. It also does not critically examine the effectiveness of these efforts. Indeed, the report does not cite any studies of Muslim reentry programming or raise substantive criticisms of the efforts to inform policy decision-making. Thus, the key contribution of the report is that it provides an initial foray into the obscure area of Muslim-focused reentry programs, describing some of the foundational concepts at the heart of understanding how Islam exists in prison and the role Muslim organizations play in the reentry process.

Nine studies pertained to Muslims and crime in the United States in general. These studies have generally fallen into two camps: one focusing on the experience of predominantly African-American Muslim converts, and the other on "radicalization" and the recruitment of terrorists in U.S. prisons. For the most part, the latter literature, which was discussed in detail in the Introduction, is not particularly helpful for the purposes of gaining a more nuanced and general understanding of incarcerated Muslims. Perhaps its key contribution is that

radicalization is not a dominant trend among Muslims either within or outside of prison, as many "alarmists" contend (Hamm, 2009). Literature in the former camp has illustrated the history of Islam's rise in prison and has described characteristics of Muslim prisoners, including high rates of conversion during prison and high levels of practice, such as praying five times a day, praying the congregational Friday prayer, fasting during Ramadan, etc. (Ammar, 2004; Citizens Against Recidivism, 2010).

Literature on Muslims, crime, and reentry in the U.K. outside the radicalization context has been slightly more abundant, perhaps because of the greater disproportion of Muslims in prisons (versus in society generally) in the U.K. or because of the attention paid to Muslims living in the West post-9/11. Muslims grew from 3% to 12% of the prison population between 1997 and 2008 (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 2010). A thorough report using surveys and representative interviews with 164 Muslim men as well as prison chaplains found that Islam plays a major role in Muslim prisoners' lives, though prisoners report feeling a lack of institutional understanding and mistrust (2010). Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011)'s exploration of staff-prisoner relationships at HMP Whitemoor dealt in some detail with the perceptions and experiences of Muslim prisoners, though this was not an explicit goal of the project. Through observation, group dialogues, and individual interviews with prisoners and staff, including 23 Muslim prisoners, the authors explained various aspects of the Muslim experience at Whitemoor, noting, for example, the powerful appeal of Islam in prison, the gang-like presence of some Muslims and the notion of "Muslim brotherhood," and the concern among staff and prisoners about the radicalization of Muslim prisoners. Although these qualitative results are not *ex ante* generalizable to the American

context, many of Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011)'s findings parallel those independently found in this qualitative study, as described further below.

Outside of the prison context, some research in the U.K. has found that drug use has been on the rise among British Muslims and a lack of cultural/faith understanding and family support amidst severe stigma contribute to offending among British Muslims (Jayakody, et al. 2005; Rooke, 2006; Gray, 2003; Mosaic, 2010; Uddin, Bhugra, & Johnson 2008). These studies use both quantitative (i.e. surveys) and qualitative (i.e. focus groups, interviews, and action research) methodologies. Of note, some of these qualitative studies have found Muslim community members very hesitant to discuss the problems of drugs and offending and to participate in related studies despite the assurance of anonymity (Jayakody et al., 2005; Uddin, Bhugra, and Johnson, 2008). This finding may not translate to the African-American Muslim community, but does suggest that research methods and approaches may need to be particularly sensitive when dealing with minority Muslim communities. Thus, while research about reentry initiatives for formerly incarcerated British Muslims is scarce, related literature may also lend helpful suggestions.

Bolognani (2007) noted that Muslim communities could play – and have played – both a positive (i.e. crime inhibiting) and negative (i.e. crime promoting) role, through sermons and preaching (i.e. at Friday prayer) and religious education in mosques and *madrasahs* (Islamic schools). In the positive role, these activities could serve as social controls (p. 362). Through qualitative interviews and focus groups, the author concluded that for Muslims in the Bradford Pakistani community in England, Islam provided youth with notions of right and wrong, and was conceived as the primary aid in crime prevention through the "inner change"

of individuals (p. 367). Yet the Islamic message was being lost in transmission to at-risk youth due to deficiencies in delivery, from both parents and Islamic institutions. Parental moral guidance was absent due a lack of parenting skills, lack of interaction outside the home, and delegation of moral education to mosques and madrasahs, which for their part were also detached from the youth's local realities (2007).

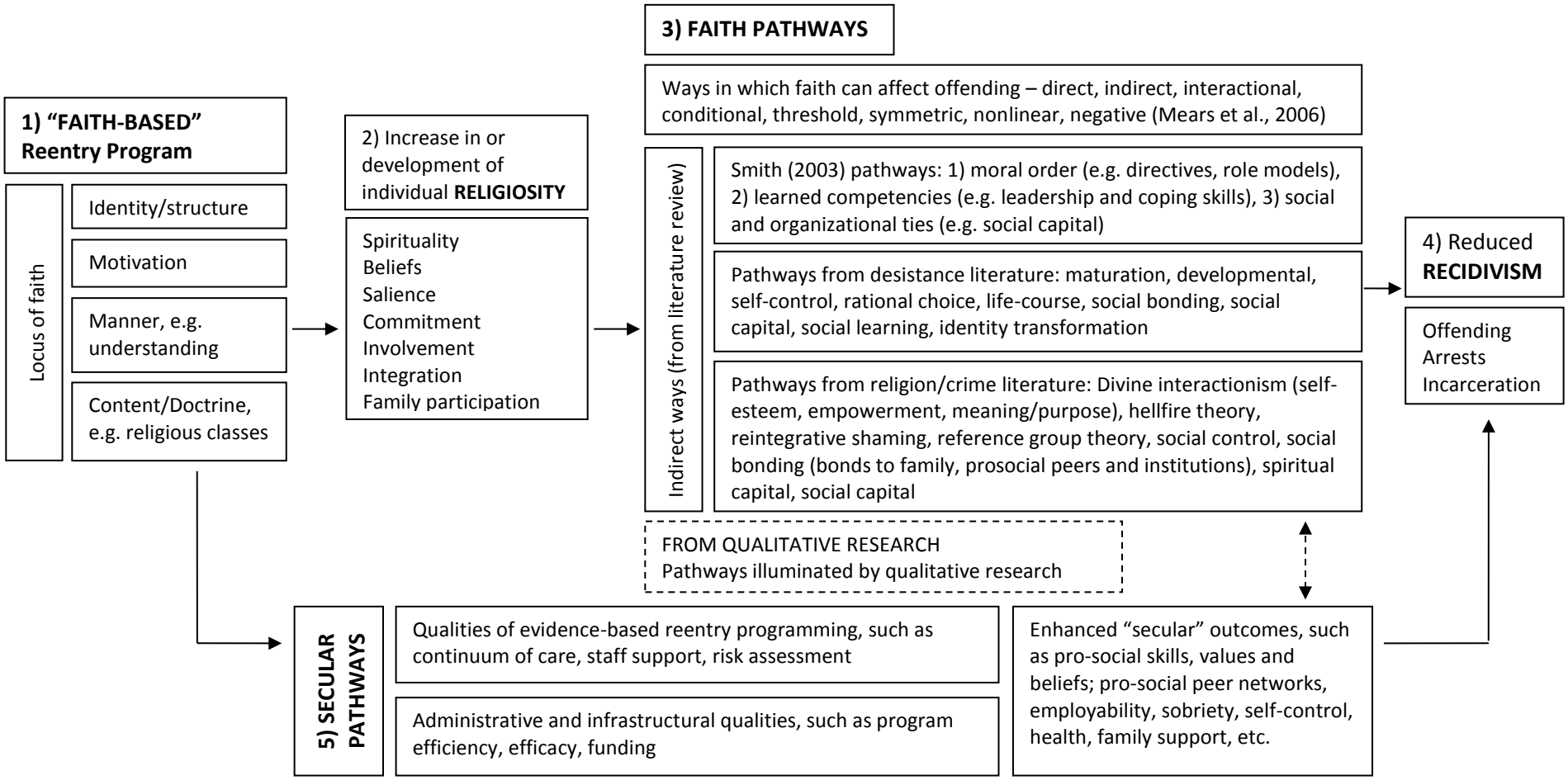
D. Creating a Theoretical Framework

The literature on faith-based reentry programming does not reveal many details about whether such programs are effective, or the process by which any reductions in recidivism might take place. While research does show a negative relationship between various measures of religiosity and crime, and between involvement in a faith-based reentry program and recidivism, research about program effectiveness is hampered by methodological limitations, particularly selection biases. At the same time, research that is more methodologically sound is limited by some more "natural" quantitative restrictions, including the inability to fully identify the ways in faith operates in an FBO, the multiple dimensions of religiosity itself, and, of course, whether and how faith actually reduces reoffending in the context of the program's operation.

Nevertheless, the literature reviews do offer some guidance as to how, theoretically, faith-based reentry programming may operate to reduce recidivism. Figure 4 below distills and captures this guidance in a basic theoretical framework that will be further developed in the following chapters. As the diagram shows, a faith-based reentry program's effect may originate from its secular aspects, or from its "faith-based" aspects (Area 1). In terms of the former, the program may reduce

recidivism by operating through "secular" pathways (Area 5), e.g. by directly improving cognitive and behavioral qualities of the individual, such as self-control or pro-social values (see Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006); by working through evidence-based, administrative, or infrastructural channels; or by working through pathways identical to the "faith pathways" in Area 3 (hence the dashed arrow between the "secular" box and the "faith pathways" area). In terms of the latter, the program's faith-based qualities may impact a participant's own religiosity through a variety of dimensions (Area 2). The increase or development of the individual's religiosity then may reduce his offending through a variety of pathways (Area 3), as described by various scholars. Mears, Roman, Wolff, and Buck (2006) and Smith (2003) offer some specific guidance about the pathways in which faith might affect criminal behaviors, while literature on desistance and the relationship between religion and crime offer additional ideas. The endpoint of these pathways, of course, is reduced recidivism, which most relevantly refers to reduced re-offending. Areas 1, 2, and 3 in the diagram – i.e. 1) the manifestation of faith in an FBO, 2) the dimensions of religiosity, 3) and the pathways by which faith affects offending – are the key areas in which existing literature has not provided much clarity or detail, and many questions remain. Qualitative research, as discussed in the following section, can help illuminate some of these gray areas. Following a robust discussion of the qualitative research, Figure 4 will be revisited and supplemented accordingly (see Chapter 5).

Figure 4: Theoretical Framework for Process by which FBOs Reduce Recidivism



Chapter 3: Original Qualitative Research: Methods and Background

The literature reviews thus far have helped develop part of a theoretical framework that describes how religiosity and faith-based programs may promote desistance. But because of the gaps in research pertaining to *how* faith-based programs actually operate, their role in fostering desistance, the way in which faith is present in these programs, and the applicability of this research to minority faith groups, qualitative research is increasingly important. As Frazier (2011) discusses, literature on faith-based reentry features very little on the actual experiences of prisoners during reentry and the process of reentry. Shover (2004) writes, "at a time when increasing numbers of investigators know offenders only as coded categories in electronic datasets, the value of first-hand knowledge of them and their lives is considerable" (p. x). These criticisms of existing, quantitative research imply a need for qualitative data that delves into the experiences of those reentering society through a faith-based program. Specifically, the original qualitative research undertaken here examines experiences of formerly incarcerated Muslims to help address the research gaps previously identified. In subsequent chapters, the qualitative research findings will be analyzed alongside the findings from the literature reviews, will complement the literature reviews in developing a theoretical framework for understanding the operation of faith-based reentry programs, will help create problem and program theories to showcase the development and implementation challenges of such programming, and will guide policy-related recommendations.

3.1 Methodology

This section discusses the methodology for the qualitative research component of this dissertation, which plays a critical part in the development of theory that informs intervention design. As Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, & Day (2009) note, "[q]ualitative studies of intervention processes (e.g., extensive interviews . . . of program participants . . .) may be useful in sequencing intervention activities or reconfiguring intervention content" (p. 28). A key element of this qualitative research is interviews with "experts" on the intervention in question – including formerly incarcerated individuals, former or current intervention participants, intervention administrators, researchers, or other practitioners (Craig et al., 2008; Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, & Day, 2009).

The original qualitative research for this dissertation was conducted with American Muslims. Focusing on a minority population, it was decided, would assist the development of a broadly informed theory, one that extended beyond the Christian and Judeo-Christian-focus of existing literature. Participants fell into three groups, which differed by the type of research participant and geographic location. Each of the cities in which participants were recruited were major U.S. cities, among the top 25 for overall populations according to the 2011 U.S. Census and, according to interviews conducting for this dissertation, have significant numbers of incarcerated Muslims. In two of these cities, Muslim participants of two faith-based programs, which have exclusive or significant Muslim involvement, were interviewed. These programs are described in further detail below. The names of these programs are omitted in order to keep the opinions of the interviewees completely anonymous. Because there are so few faith-based

programs that target or cater to Muslims in the United Staets, the cities where these programs are located are also not mentioned. These cities are referred to as City A, City B, and City C. The programs are described in as much detail as possible below, and are referred to as Program A (or, the "Muslim transitional home" or "Muslim reentry program") and Program B (or, the "spiritual, multi-faith program" or "spiritually-based drug treatment program"), to correspond with their cities of location. The interviewed groups are described in Table 8 below:

Table 10: Research Group Breakdown

	Geographic Location	**Participants**	**Overt faith-based characteristic(s) of program, if applicable**
Group 1	City A	8 formerly incarcerated Muslims who are or were participants in a Muslim reentry program, including a Muslim transitional home, and 3 administrators of the program	Muslim participants only; some Islamic spiritual classes; larger organization has Islamic identity
Group 2	City B	5 formerly incarcerated Muslims who are participants in a multi-faith, spiritually-based drug treatment program, and 4 administrators of the program	Interfaith; participants required to have ties to a faith tradition and to attend weekly faith event such as a prayer service
Group 3	City C	8 formerly incarcerated Muslims who are not part of a faith-based reentry program	Not applicable
Group 4	Nationwide	4 "practitioner" experts: individuals who have been leaders of faith-based programs for Muslims or have worked with Muslims in the reentry process 4 "researcher" experts: individuals who have conducted and/or published studies about faith-based reentry programs	Not applicable

3.2 Research Questions

Three primary research questions informed the execution of this qualitative research. These research questions were formulated to complement the literature reviews—that is, fill in existing gaps—in order to construct a theoretical framework to better understand how faith-based programs work, how they might be effective, and how they might operate for minority faith communities, specifically Muslims. The first research question was:

1) *What challenges do formerly incarcerated Muslims face as they reenter into society?*

These challenges may be "general" challenges that impact individuals despite their faith, as well as the challenges that impact these individuals *because* of their faith. Questions pertaining to this issue were asked to all research groups (1-4). The second research question was:

2) *Do reentering Muslims feel a need for a reentry program that has a faith component, in what ways, and why?*

For example, some Muslims may feel that a reentry program that has an Islamic vision or offers Islamic classes is necessary to strengthen their moral resolve to stop re-offending. Like Question 1, this question was designed to help develop problem theory by trying to understand the process by which reentering Muslims might proceed to desist, or to reoffend. Questions related to this area were asked to reentering Muslims regardless of whether they were participants in a faith-based program at the time, as well as to experts (i.e. Groups 1-4).

The third research question, related to the second, was:

3) *What elements of two existing faith-based reentry programs assist the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated Muslims?*

Questions related to this area were thus asked only to those interviewees who were currently participants or administrators of the two faith-based programs that were examined for this research (i.e. Groups 1 and 2). As discussed earlier, "successful reentry" refers to the reduction in measures of recidivism, such as reoffending. These three research questions aim to deepen the understanding of the process through which both secular and religious aspects of a faith-based reentry program may reduce recidivism.

A fourth research question was asked to certain individuals who were administrators of the case-study programs as well as experts with practical or research experience in this field (Groups 1, 2, and 4): *what challenges face faith-based reentry programs for Muslims?* Though not a primary research question, this question was designed to help elucidate some of the program-level and implementation-related challenges facing these programs to help develop a theoretical framework for a prospective intervention (i.e. program theory).

3.3 Justification for Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methods were selected as most appropriate to address the research questions outlined above, for several reasons. First, a primary purpose of this dissertation is to understand how individuals experience reentry in particular contexts, noting, for example, differences in the experiences of non-Christians, particularly Muslims. Qualitative research specializes in "intimately connecting context with explanation" (Mason, 2002). It acknowledges that human behavior is influenced by its context, defined by place, norms, values, and other variables, and so it must be studied within this context. This dissertation's research depends critically on bringing contextual variables to light, analyzing experiences of

individuals in different cities, different programs (or lack thereof), and different professional capacities (or lack thereof). Questions related to "how" and "why" in the context of reentry and during involvement in a faith-based program are especially suited for qualitative methods (Greenhalgh & Taylor, 1997).

Second, the topics addressed in this research (e.g. the effectiveness of faith-based reentry programming, the Muslim experience in such programming, etc.) have been studied very little (Read & Dohadwala, 2003; Newman, Moseley, Tierney, & Ellis, 2005; Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006). Most existing research has focused on assessing program effectiveness quantitatively, even though little can be ascertained from the studies about the *process* involved in such programs—i.e. *how* the program might reduce reoffending, and what aspects of faith might be involved in this process (as explained in detail above). In such little understood areas, qualitative research helps prevent the researcher from imposing his own values, speculations, and belief frameworks onto research participants. Since the topic of faith-based reentry programming *for Muslims* is severely understudied, creating structured, quantitative research instruments would prematurely force the researcher's subjective frameworks onto participants, thereby masking critical data that would otherwise emerge from an open-ended, qualitative discussion (see Marshall & Rossman, 2006). As the objective of this research is to explore more deeply an esoteric issue, in order to better understand it, qualitative methods should be used (Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, & Day, 2009; Newman, Moseley, Tierney, & Ellis, 2005; Greenhalgh, 2006).

Third, qualitative research is "especially useful for exploring sensitive or complex issues" (Newman, Moseley, Tierney, & Ellis, 2005, p. 72). This research embodies a number of such issues, including religion and spirituality, minority

religious experiences, religious conversion, criminal behavior, family dynamics, and struggles during reentry. Quantitative analysis would be ill-suited to explore the nuances – many of which are yet unknown – that are involved in the operation of faith-based reentry programs. Indeed, at the heart of this research are inherently multidimensional concepts, including religion, desistance, and the presence and role of faith in a faith-based organization, all of which were discussed previously in some detail.

Fourth, qualitative research recognizes that research participants may sometimes be insufficiently aware of their thoughts and feelings to respond to a questionnaire (Mason, 2002). Since this dissertation deals with identifying "processes" and with an under-educated population that may not be able to articulate their beliefs and actions, open-ended questions that allow interviewees to talk through their beliefs, sentiments, behavior, and values are appropriate.

3.4 Description of Qualitative Methods Used

A number of qualitative methods were utilized in this study in order to address the research questions described above. The table below describes and justifies the data sources and methods used to address each question, using a framework developed by Mason (2002).

Table 11: Description of Sources and Methods (adapted from Mason, 2002)

Research questions	**Data sources and methods**	**Justification**
1) What challenges do formerly incarcerated Muslims face as they reenter into society?	Formerly incarcerated Muslims in Muslim reentry program (Program A): interviews Formerly incarcerated Muslims in multifaith, spiritually based program (Program B): interviews Administrators from both programs: interviews Experts who have done research on reentry: interviews Experts who have run reentry programs for Muslims/worked with Muslims during reentry: interviews *Supplemental sources:* Documents from programs: documentary analysis	Provide insights on challenges they have faced or seen others face, based on their own experiences Provide insights on challenges they have faced or seen others face, based on their own experiences Provide accounts of challenges they have seen Muslim clients face in their experiences Provide insights regarding challenges Muslims face, based on their research Provide insights about challenges they have seen Muslims face, based on their experiences May document some of the challenges faced by clients of programs
2) Do reentering Muslims feel a need for a reentry program that has a faith component, in what ways, and why?	Formerly incarcerated Muslims in Muslim reentry program (Program A): interviews Formerly incarcerated Muslims in multifaith, spiritually based program (Program B): interviews Administrators from both programs: interviews Experts who have done research on reentry: interviews Experts who have run reentry programs for Muslims/worked with Muslims during reentry: interviews	Provide insights on the needs they and others have had, based on their own experiences Provide insights on the needs they and others have had, based on their own experiences Provide accounts of needs felt by Muslims, based on their experiences Provide insights regarding the needs felt by Muslims, based on their research Provide insights about the needs felt by Muslims, based on their experiences

	Supplemental sources: Documents from programs: documentary analysis	May document some of the needs felt by clients of programs
3) What elements of two existing faith-based reentry programs assist the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated Muslims?	Formerly incarcerated Muslims in Muslim reentry program (Program A): interviews Formerly incarcerated Muslims in multifaith, spiritually based program (Program B): interviews Administrators from both programs: interviews *Supplemental sources:* Documents from programs: documentary analysis Observation of programs: observational analysis	Provide insights on how their program has assisted their reentry, based on their experiences Provide insights on how their program has assisted their reentry, based on their experiences Provide insights on how their program has assisted clients' reentry, based on their experiences May document some of the ways in which the programs assist reentry for their clients May show some of the ways these programs assist reentry for their clients and/or corroborate administrator/client views
4) What challenges face faith-based reentry programs for Muslims?	Administrators from both reentry programs: interviews Experts who have done research on reentry: interviews Experts who have run reentry programs for Muslims/worked with Muslims during reentry: interviews *Supplemental sources:* Documents from programs: documentary analysis Observation of programs: observational analysis	Provide insights on what challenges their program has faced, based on their experiences Provide insights on what challenges such programs have faced, based on their research Provide insights on what challenges such programs have faced, based on their experiences May document some of the challenges facing the programs May show some of the challenges facing the programs and/or corroborate administrator/client views

Semi-structured interviews were the primary method used to gather data for this research for several reasons. Primarily, these interviews allowed individuals to talk through their experiences, honing in and drawing out details, and focusing on relevant areas as needed. As discussed above, this dissertation recognizes that

context is significant in understanding individual experiences. Semi-structured interviews allowed experiences to be discussed in their proper context and were flexible enough to allow the direction and depth of questioning to be adjusted during the interview itself (Mason, 2002). In addition, the flexibility of the interviews created a respectful, open atmosphere and tone that was critical in drawing candid responses about sensitive subjects such as criminal behavior and religion from Muslim men who varied in their religiosity, age, offense history, educational level and literacy, and other variables. Finally, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for some consistency in the questions asked to different groups of people – including formerly incarcerated individuals, program clients, program administrators, research experts, and practitioner experts – permitting comparisons and contrasts to be made. At the same time, questions could vary as needed based on the unique characteristics and perspectives of the perspectives.

Some documentary and observational analysis was also conducted to supplement and corroborate the interview data. Documents including grants, descriptions, advertisements, and intake and evaluation forms were examined to see how these addressed the various research questions. In addition, the two reentry programs that served as case studies for this research were observed to identify and corroborate client and administrator accounts of how they operate and the challenges they face, and to assist in analyzing if and how these programs assist reentry.

In addition to the qualitative data, some quantitative data was obtained from research participants, including demographic information (race/ethnicity, age, gender), length of time since last incarceration, faith-based program involvement

(length and/or degree of involvement) and religious background (where and when they converted to Islam, if applicable).

3.5 Sampling

To help develop the theoretical framework for faith-based reentry programming, as described in previous sections, best practice has dictated that primary research ought to consult various types of "experts" as necessary, namely those who have experienced an intervention ("clients"), those who administer an intervention ("administrators" and/or "practitioners"), and those who research and/or develop such interventions ("research experts" and "practitioner experts") (Craig et al., 2008). As such, all of these individuals were interviewed as part of this research. For clarity sake, they are described in four groups, as described above, and each group embodied a distinct sampling strategy, the details of which follow. Details of the sampling strategy are described further below.

3.5.1 Groups for Analysis

Each of the four groups analyzed in this dissertation is described, by city and program (if applicable), in this sub-section, along with justifications for their selection.

Most of those interviewed were individuals who have been formerly incarcerated themselves, whether or not they were clients of a faith-based program (Groups 1-3). All of these participants shared the following characteristics:

- Proclaimed Muslim faith during reentry from prison or jail
- Above age 18
- Have been incarcerated at least once either in jail or prison in the last ten years

Some of these individuals were clients of actual faith-based programs, namely Groups 1 and 2. These two programs were selected as case studies for this research particularly to address the third research question (i.e. what elements of the programs assist the successful reentry of clients). Between them, they represent two different types of faith-based reentry programming. While the City A program involves some Islamic classes as well as "secular" reentry services and is run by a Muslim organization, the City B program has a general faith/God-consciousness component and accommodates all faiths. Both were chosen in part because they are among the few reentry programs that actively accommodate or seek out Muslims and that have a sizeable number of Muslim participants. Further description of the sites follows.

Group 1: Program A – City A

As mentioned earlier, very few Muslim-led or Muslim-focused reentry programs exist in the United States. One of these few is Program A, a part of a larger Muslim-led social justice organization. The organization is one of the premier Muslim-led service and advocacy non-profit organizations in the country. The organization is "faith-based" for the purposes of this dissertation because its mission statement rests on Islamic principles, it is staffed almost entirely by Muslims, and select programs (including Program A) incorporate some Islamic spiritual elements. Founded in 2006, Program A has a number of features. At the time of this writing, Program A operated a transitional home for recently released Muslims, skills training, education and job-placement assistance, and instructional Islamic classes. The program's transitional home accommodated eight men, who could directly parole into the home. Each week, residents participate in the following primary activities:

- Islamic education: provides classes on traditional Islam
- Empowerment education: provides lessons on social skills, life choices, and goal-setting
- Arabic language education: provides courses on reading, writing, listening, and speaking Arabic
- Personal and community safety: provides courses on the ensuring personal and community safety
- Job readiness training: provides both technical and non-technical skills training, including construction certification training, as well as soft skills including problem-solving, communication, interpersonal/teamwork, and work ethics training

Program A also operates another reentry initiative, in which recently released Muslims assist in the environmentally-friendly "green" renovation of abandoned or foreclosed homes that were purchased by the organization. The individuals involved in this initiative obtain training and certification in this type of construction and renovation through a partnership with the city. The staff of the initiative consists of Muslims from the larger organization, and participants are free to engage in the spiritual and skills-development classes offered in the transitional home and in the larger organization. These homes, once renovated, may become transitional homes operated by Program A, in the model described above. Notably, both initiatives (the transitional home as well as the construction initiative) are open to formerly incarcerated individuals of all faiths, but thus far only all participants are Muslim. Interviewees from Program A come from both the home and the construction initiatives. Thus, using the categorization of faith-based organizations that has been used previously in this dissertation, Program A (both initiatives) would be considered "faith-based" due to its identity/structure, motivation of staff, and manner of service delivery. The home is also faith-based in terms of the content/doctrine of certain services (e.g. spiritual classes)

Group 2: Program B – City B

A second case study program is Program B, a residential drug rehabilitation program in City B. Program B's participants come from court referrals, other referrals, and voluntarily off the street, and a large number of participants have been formerly incarcerated. Program B operates between 10 and 20 group rehabilitation houses in a given year and has a minimum residential requirement of nine months. Between five and twelve individuals reside in each house. The program is open to individuals of all faiths, but is considered "faith-based" for the purposes of this research because it requires that all participants align with a faith tradition and seek appropriate spiritual services (for example, Friday prayers for Muslims or Sunday services for Christians). Additionally, treatment and group meetings reflect faith in God (for example, by using the "serenity prayer" often recited in Narcotics Anonymous, NA, meetings). Program B was founded by a Muslim and has had substantial Muslim involvement since its inception. Many Program B participants and counselors (who are often former participants) are Muslim, and Program B has operated a "Muslim men's house" when demand has been sufficient.

The length of the Program B program, at minimum, is nine months. The daily schedule of Program B clients generally begins with a morning group prayer and reflection session, followed by appointments, which vary by individual. While some individuals go to work, others see counselors or mental health experts. Group NA-style meetings are held three times a day and those who are able must attend. Each participants must also attend weekly religious services, whether Christian, Muslim, or other religious denomination.

Group 3: City C -- Interviewees who are not participants in a faith-based reentry program

A third group of interviewees in City C were not current participants in a faith-based reentry program for Muslims. City C was chosen as a study site because it is a major U.S. city with a sizeable Muslim prison/jail population – over 90% of some City C detention facilities according to an interview with a correctional officer – but lacks a faith-based reentry program with significant Muslim leadership or involvement that is at the level of formality as the City A and City B programs. As a result, it was thought that interviewees from City C would represent various perspectives about challenges facing reentering Muslim and the need for a faith-based reentry program, based on their experiences outside a faith-based reentry program and not based on what they have seen in or heard about from such programs. Thus, interviewees from City C primarily addressed the first two research questions (about challenges during reentry and the need for faith-based programming).

Group 4: Experts

A fourth group of individuals were interviewed for their expertise, both practical and research-based, on reentry and faith-based reentry programming. Practitioner experts were individuals who had been leaders of faith-based programs for Muslims (e.g., founders and directors of such programs) as well as those who had worked with Muslims during reentry (e.g. chaplains, reentry counselors, mentors, and directors of informal mosque reentry efforts). Research experts were individuals who had conducted and published studies about faith-based reentry programs, as well as those who engaged with the issue from more of a policy or lawmaking stance. No geographic specification limited the location of the experts.

3.5.2 Sampling Strategy

A different sampling strategy was utilized for each of the four groups highlighted in the previous sub-section. The strategies are described below by location. A total of 37 individuals were interviewed, broken down as follows:

1) Group 1 (City A): 8 program clients, 3 program administrators
2) Group 2 (City B): 5 program clients, 5 program administrators
3) Group 3 (City C): 8 individuals
4) Group 4 (experts): 4 practitioner experts, 4 research experts

Further details of how sampling worked in each group follow.

Group 1: Program A – City A

All current clients from Program A were interviewed. These eight individuals represented the residents from the transitional home as well as the construction training initiative. In addition, two directors of the program were interviewed, as well as the organization's director.

Group 2: Program B – City B

Five Muslim clients – three current and two former – were interviewed from Program B. At the time of the interviews, there were only three self-identifying Muslim participants who had come home from prison or jail as Muslims (though many more who attended the Muslim services and converted in the program), according to the program director. Both current and former clients were recruited via a snowball approach, by asking for the recommendations of program director and other staff, the clients, and individuals at the mosque that Muslim clients attend for services. Recognizing a potential "gatekeeper" effect of relying on the recommendations of individuals affiliated with the program, clients and those at the mosque were asked to particularly refer any individuals who may

have less favorable views of the program or who were not particularly successful in it.

Additionally, the director of the program, two counselors, and two high-level administrators who worked or currently work with Muslim participants were interviewed.

Group 3: City C

In City C, eight formerly incarcerated Muslims were interviewed. The interviewees were recruited primarily through a snowballing approach that sought participants from four key sources, which were selected based on preliminary fieldwork and pilot research: 1) in-person recruitment at three major mosques and Islamic centers in City C; 2) references from the imams and leaders of these centers; 3) references from volunteer or reentry coordinators and chaplains from area prisons and jails; and 4) "word of mouth" and references from other formerly incarcerated Muslims and community leaders who work with this group.

The mosques and Islamic centers were chosen as recruitment sites because initial fieldwork found that many former Muslims attend these sites for worship or other reasons or have contacted the sites' leaders for spiritual advice or guidance, services, or other purposes. Recruiting from mosques may invite the criticism that the individuals who attend mosques are not representative of the larger population who identify the religion. Specifically, critics may say that formerly incarcerated Muslims who attend a mosque are more "religious" and perhaps less likely to re-offend as a result than those who do not attend religious services. There are a few reasons to believe this is not the case in the present situation. First, the centers offer prayer services as only one service among many, and serve also as community centers for Muslims in areas of high crime and poverty, where other

Muslim service institutions are lacking. For example, the three City C centers offer, among other services, a food pantry and food distribution, prison "da'wah" programs that correspond with prisoners and distribute literature (see Read & Dohadwala, 2003), and "new shahadah" classes to educate recent converts to Islam.

Second, pilot research indicated that most Muslims reentering from prison seek these community centers for support upon reentry, especially given that many attendees are converts and these centers are the predominant places of gathering and learning about the new faith for this minority community. Individuals who have converted outside of prison have often done so within these sites. The same argument extends to the references from prison/jail chaplains, who are often the individuals who administer the official "conversion" and the only personal source for learning about Islam while detained. Since effort was made to explicitly seek out some interviewees who were less "practicing" and may have a more difficult time feeling integrated into the community, and more systematic sampling methods were also used, there is little reason to think that using mosques and religious leaders to help recruit introduced substantial systematic bias into the perspectives gathered for this study. It should also be mentioned that, to some degree, recruiting from personal references is necessary in order to find individuals who are both Muslim and formerly incarcerated, as both of these qualities are often not readily apparent to non-acquaintances.

Thus, from all three cities, 21 formerly incarcerated Muslims (13 of whom were a part of the two faith-based programs profiled) were interviewed as a part of this research.

Group 4: Experts

Finally, eight experts were interviewed, four of whom were considered experts based on their research, publications, and/or policymaking experiences, and four of whom were experts based their practical experiences. The former group included one judge, a joint professor and researcher from a major think-tank, a university professor, and an upper-level administrative official who designs policy related to community supervision. The latter group included one reentry counselor in the correctional system, one former reentry program director, one imam, and one government reentry liaison.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Oxford's Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC). Both CUREC guidelines and professional guidelines (i.e. Government Social Research Unit) were followed. In particular, the purpose of the dissertation and its uses were explained in detail to interviewees. Verbal and written consent was obtained. Interviewees were assured of anonymity and confidentiality and notes and data were kept accordingly. Nearly all of the interviews were audio recorded for accuracy, upon participant consent.

3.7 Questions and instruments

Questions for the interviews were developed by consulting existing research and studies referenced in the literature review (e.g., Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006), subject matter experts from government, the correctional system, and think-tanks, and pilot research with formerly incarcerated individuals. While research and expert opinion provided useful guidance about what questions to include, pilot research with formerly incarcerated individuals in City C added supplemental and follow-up questions and helped order and phrase the questions in

the most appropriate and clear way. This pilot research is described below. Importantly, as mentioned above, interview instruments were only semi-structured, to allow for flexibility based on individual circumstances and comfort levels. Questions were purposefully left quite open-ended to allow for fuller discussion. Examples of questions included:

- When you were coming home from prison, what challenges did you face?
- What kind of programs or services could have helped you as a Muslim when you came home from prison?
- If you could create a program for Muslims coming home from prison, what would it look like?

While research methods focused predominantly on qualitative data, limited quantitative data was also collected from interviewees, including:

- Age
- Race/ethnicity
- City of residence/reentry
- Length of incarceration
- Date of most recent release from prison/jail
- Whether the participant committed any violent offenses
- Whether the interviewee converted to Islam
- Whether the interviewee converted to Islam while in prison
- Participation in any required post-release programming
- Participation in any faith-based programming during reentry

The answers to these questions were obtained verbally from participants, who were free to choose not to answer any question as well. The interview instruments can be found in Appendix A.

3.8 Pilot research

Pilot research was conducted during the formulation of questions for the interviewee instrument to help phrase and order the questions in the most appropriate fashion, with a particular concern for enhancing the comfort of interviewees as they discuss sensitive topics such as criminal history and religion.

A focus group of eight formerly incarcerated Muslim men in City C was convened, in which participants were asked about the challenges they faced during reentry and the need for a faith-based reentry programming. This discussion generated ideas for questions for interviews. Participants of the focus group also conveyed insights about how to best phrase the questions to optimize clarity. Subsequently, two interviews with formerly incarcerated Muslims were conducted in which these questions were asked. The wording of the questions was then adjusted and the questions were ordered in a manner to help enhance interviewee comfort. For example, questions about religious conversion and criminal history were not asked up front, but were instead asked towards the end of the interview or when brought up organically in the conversation.

Individuals involved in pilot research also offered insights about challenges in recruiting, and how and where to best recruit participants for the research in City C. Recruiting for the focus group itself, which used a snowballing approach beginning with a Muslim correctional officer and a Muslim religious leader, demonstrated the challenges of finding formerly incarcerated Muslims to interview. It was readily apparent, and confirmed in interviews, that incarcerated Muslims face significant stigma in the Muslim community, which encourages them to keep their criminal history hidden and makes it difficult to find individuals with this background. Since many formerly incarcerated Muslims are converts, whose official names are not Muslim, it is even more difficult to find these individuals outside a Muslim setting (i.e. not in a mosque or through a Muslim connection) as their Muslim identities may not be apparent.

Individuals involved in the pilot research recommended four sources by which to recruit formerly incarcerated Muslims in City C.: 1) three major mosques

and Islamic centers in City C, by advertising to their congregations; 2) the imams and leaders of these centers; 3) volunteer or reentry coordinators and chaplains from area prisons and jails; and 4) formerly incarcerated Muslims and community leaders who work with this group.

3.9 Reflexivity considerations

It is important for the integrity of the qualitative research process to reflect on the role of the researcher herself (see Mason, 2002). As I embarked on recruiting participants and interviewing them, two of my own characteristics became salient: 1) my being Muslim, and 2) my being a woman. My Muslim faith was an asset in the research. I immediately felt that I was granted initial access to interviewees, particularly those holding religious positions (e.g. imams, chaplains, etc.) by virtue of being Muslim myself. My religion imparted a powerful credibility, compounded by the sense of community in Islam – the concept of "ummah" – that links Muslims to one another regardless of race, ethnicity, and geography. I saw also that it helped create trust with interviewees, who believed that I was genuinely interested in understanding their experiences and in developing evidence-based programming, that I had none of the typical biases against Muslims (i.e. stereotypes of Muslims as violent or extremist), that I respected them as co-religionists, that I had no ulterior motive for seeking to talk to them (in particular, that I was not a government spy), and that I was not simply using them to further my research agenda. Indeed, one individual whom I interviewed early in the study commented on the skepticism that many prospective interviewees would feel to simply be "research subjects" whose insights would be "limited to the publication of a research paper."

Being Muslim also equipped me with some essential knowledge of the religious "language" spoken by my interviewees. As some have written (see, e.g., Skotinicki, 2002), prisoners of a particular faith speak a particular language, and in order to understand their perspectives, statements, and actions fully, a researcher must at least consider "the possibility that the language of faith is a precondition for understanding the experience of faith. It is a precondition for determining the meaning of its rituals, its behavioral expectations, and what possibilities and sanctions emerge with the failure to live according to those expectations." (p. 205). While I lacked the experiences of personally being incarcerated, being African-American, and converting to Islam, the knowledge and understanding that accompany being a Muslim American proved to be beneficial. Several individuals felt free to use Arabic religious terms as they spoke (for example, "masjid" for mosque, "salat" for prayer, and "hijab" for women's head covering). Numerous interviewees also discussed very frankly issues related to internal discord within Muslim communities and mosques, which they may have felt uncomfortable or embarrassed discussing with non-Muslims.

It is conceivable, however, that being interviewed by a member of the same faith group may distort participant's responses rather than enhance their truthfulness. Specifically, if a Muslim participant is being interviewed by a Muslim interviewer, the participant may perhaps feel inclined or pressured towards presenting himself as more religious or knowledgeable than he really is, perhaps to impress the interviewer. I do not think this concern was substantial here, though, because participants were expressly told that their honesty about the challenges they have faced would assist in developing more effective programming and in addressing their needs, and participants were asked explicitly about the

representativeness of their own experiences (thereby encouraging them to openly discuss more suppressed elements from their own lives in the third person).

Another type of credibility was provided by personally knowing many of the referees and leaders of the sites through whom participants were recruited (for example, chaplains, counselors, or imams). If these individuals recommended other interviewees personally, they often vouched for the legitimacy and earnestness of my work. Otherwise, I was able to reference them as recommenders. In both scenarios, having these recommendations made it easier to reach participants in the first place, and establish trust necessary for detailed, honest interviews.

Finally, being a female researcher brought a unique dynamic to the interviews, in two main ways. First, there was a possibility in each interview that the interviewee, a Muslim male, would feel uncomfortable being interviewed by a female interviewer. Thus, each interviewee was given the option to hold the interview in the presence of a male whom they did not know and who was not affiliated with the research in any way. The locations of interviews were also chosen such that they were both "public" and "private" – in the sense that they could be accessed by others through open doors, but were large enough so that the interviews could not be easily overheard – for example, conference rooms. Such locations were consistent with Islamic guidelines on gender relations. Individuals were given the option for more secluded locations, such as private offices, but all but one preferred the more open option. Second, being a Muslim woman in particular seemed to afford a level of respect of its own, as interviewees were obliging, many addressing me as "sister." The effect of this dynamic is unknown. To the extent true, it could have encouraged interviewees to act more religious than

they were, or it could have enhanced interviewees comfort level and honesty. As explained above, the latter effect was likely more dominant.

3.10 Data description

A total of 37 interviews were collected in this research. Table 12 outlines the general breakdown of the interviews.

Table 12: General Breakdown of Interviews

		Number
Geographic location		
	City A	11
	City B	10
	City C	8
	National	8
Type		
	Formerly incarcerated Muslim	21
	Program participant	13
	Program administrator	8
	Research expert	4
	Practitioner expert	4

3.11 Analytic Approach

The primary goal of this dissertation is to construct a theoretical foundation for a particular type of intervention via an examination of existing theories of religion, crime, and desistance, as well as original qualitative research. Given the obviously central role of theory to achieve this purpose, as well as general justifications for the involvement of theory in qualitative research (Mason, 2002, pp. 179-180), it should come as no surprise that the analytic approach adopted here centered around the interplay between theory and data.

After the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, the data was analyzed in three phases using the software program, Nvivo. In the first phase, an

inductive approach was used, in which theoretical explanations were formed from the emerging data analysis, similar to Glaser and Strauss's (1967) "grounded theorizing" approach (Mason, 2002, p. 180). The data were analyzed using an "open coding" method that explored the data intensively and minutely (Berg, 2007, pp. 317-318), beginning with the broad research questions originally posited and working towards narrower conclusions. As Berg (2007) states, "this effort ensures extensive theoretical coverage that will be thoroughly grounded" (p. 318). In the course of the analysis, initially tentative categories were refined and cemented, as transcripts were revisited multiple times.

In the second phase of the analysis, the data was reanalyzed using the coding scheme that emerged from the first phase, in a systematic and deductive way. Using a comparative, dialectical, joint coding method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), the coding scheme from the first phase was refined according to the new analysis.

The third analytic phase mirrored the second, except that the coding scheme against which the data was analyzed did not emerge from the data itself, but rather from the desistance and religion-crime theories that were discussed in the literature reviews conducted above. Again, the data was systematically analyzed against this framework. In phases two and three, particular attention was paid to highlight "negative cases" (Berg, 2007, p. 323) that did not fit the theoretical frameworks.

This three-phase approach, embodying the advantages of joint coding (see Berg, 2007, pp. 322-323), was adopted in order to be more true to the data, and to avoid the pitfalls of fitting the data to pre-existing theories based on literature that has questionable applicability to the population interviewed, as well as the

deception of ex post hypothesizing (i.e. developing hypotheses that accord with observations, see Berg, 2007). What follows are the conclusions from this analysis, drawn from this multi-phase approach to reflect an honest and critical assessment of the data. When discussing themes and patterns drawn, the proportion of interviewees that stated the same position will be highlighted, not as a finding in itself, but as an indication of the strength of the pattern in question (Berg, 2007, p. 327). Any absence of pattern and negative examples will also be discussed. Explanations for patterns will be discussed in light of the literature reviews previously conducted.

3.12 Quantitative Data

A limited amount of quantitative data was collected primarily to better understand the diversity of experiences that were represented in the interviews. A deliberate and concerted effort was made during the recruitment of formerly incarcerated participants to elicit a range of ages, criminal histories, and experiences with reentry programs. Table 13 describes the characteristics of the formerly incarcerated participants, divided into cities of residence to help facilitate comparison. Note that the statistics in this table refer only to formerly incarcerated participants, thus excluding those interviewed as program administrators, staff members, and experts.

Table 13: Descriptive characteristics of formerly incarcerated participants

Age, in years		
	All cities (average, median)	(43, 45)
	City C (average, median)	(37, 33)
	City A (average, median)	(44, 45)
	City B (average, median)	(45, 38)
Ethnicity	All cities (percentage African-American)	100%

Length of incarceration, in years		
	All cities (average, median)	(15, 17)
	City C (average, median)	(13, 17)
	City A (average, median)	(16, 15)
	City B (average, median)	(15, 15)
Years since most recent release		
	All cities (average, median)	(7, 6)
	City C (average, median)	(5, 6)
	City A (average, median)	(11, 9)
	City B (average, median)	(8, 8)
Percentage who have committed a violent offense		
	All cities	(57)
	City C	(50)
	City A	(75)
	City B	(50)
Percentage who have converted to Islam		
	All cities (generally, in prison)	(100, 76)
	City C (generally, in prison)	(100, 50)
	City A (generally, in prison)	(100, 100)
	City B (generally, in prison)	(100, 50)
Percentage who have participated in post-release programming		
	All cities (generally, faith-based)	(75, 33)
	City C (generally, faith-based)	(83, 33)
	City A (generally, faith-based)	(50, 33)
	City B (generally, faith-based)	(50, 50)

As Table 13 shows, the formerly incarcerated interviewees were on average middle-aged, and all were African-American, regardless of location. The average age of participants was 43 and the median age was 45. The interviewees from City C were younger than the average participant generally. On average, participants were incarcerated for about 15 years of their lives. Though the City C participants were slightly younger than others, their average length of incarceration was nearly equal to their non-City C counterparts, reflecting the fact that the City C interviewees were on average younger at the start of their sentences. While half of City C and City B interviewees had committed violent crimes, three-fourths of City A participants had. In fact, all but two of the latter were incarcerated for murder.

On average, participants had been out of prison/jail for about seven years. City A participants had been out for 11 years on average, reflecting the presence of

several who had been released for over a decade (including three for fifteen years each). Most participants (75%) had participated in reentry programming following their release from prison, but only a third had participated in *faith-based* reentry programming.

In addition to formerly incarcerated individuals, fifteen individuals were interviewed in their roles as administrators of faith-based reentry programs with Muslim clients, "research experts," and "practitioner experts." While all the formerly incarcerated participants were male, two administrators and one research expert who were interviewed were female. All formerly incarcerated Muslims interviewed had converted to Islam, and all but four did so while in prison. Three-fourths of formerly incarcerated interviewees attended post-release programming, divided equally between halfway houses and drug treatment programs. The remainder did not participate in any formal reentry programming, prior to their current program, if applicable.

3.13 Ethnographic Observations and Interviewee Profiles

To paint a visual picture for the reader before delving into the qualitative data, I provide ethnographic descriptions of the cities and programs at the heart of the field work, along with profiles of several of the interviewees in Table 14.

City A

City A, the largest of the three cities by far, is home to many neighborhoods that are socioeconomically and ethnically diverse. City A's Muslim transitional home is situated in a lower-class neighborhood that is almost half African-American and half Hispanic. Its immediately adjacent neighborhoods are some of the poorest and highest crime areas in the country. I visited the

transitional home to interview the formerly incarcerated Muslims living and working therein. The house was in much better shape, though no bigger, than the other single-family homes on the block, some of which were foreclosed and boarded up. Each house had its own metal fence and front porch, from which neighbors would often sit and observe. The interior of the transitional home had been recently renovated by its tenants. The paint was still fresh on some walls. The bathroom was brand new and tastefully decorated with a matching shower curtain, soap dish, and coordinating towels. I was greeted by the program's director, a charismatic, well-built African-American man in his sixties. He gave me a tour of the home, parts of which were still under construction. I observed the bedrooms with two sets of bunk beds each, the musical instruments, and the exercise room in the basement. I then settled in the dining room of the home, where I conducted the interviews.

City B

City B is a similarly large, bustling city. Its inter-faith recovery program is located in a lower-class, almost exclusively African-American neighborhood. The program occupies a good part of a block that features other small stores, including an electronics shop, a t-shirt store, laundromat, and fast food eatery. Community residents frequent the stores and loiter outside the front of the program. But the building itself is not particularly busy. The façade of the building is austere. There are no windows and the entrance is not immediately apparent. For each of my visits to the program, I entered through the rear entrance. During one of my visits, I arrived at a cookout for program participants and community residents, located in the parking lot behind the building. About forty people were present. It was immediately apparent that several of the individuals were suffering from substance

abuse issues. I recruited and interviewed some program participants during the cookout. During my second visit, I attended a group meeting in the large common room of the building. The room featured a stage and podium. About thirty chairs were arranged facing the stage, akin to a lecture hall. The walls were simple and undecorated for the most part and the only source of natural light was the back door. The group meeting was led by the director of the program, a tall African-American man in his seventies. His talk adopted the framework and language of a 12-step program, but used faith concepts common to Christians and Muslims without citing specific religious texts. He spoke emphatically and with a deep, personal understanding of everyday challenges "on the streets." Participants in attendance, half of whom were African-American and half of whom were white, actively engaged in the discussion, sharing their struggles and empathizing with each other. I interviewed several program participants and administrators afterwards.

City C

City C is about as large as City B and though ethnically and socioeconomically diverse, the city is somewhat segregated. About half of the city (geographically) is poorer, almost entirely African-American, and affected by high crime rates. My interviewees came from this area of the city, where single-family homes and garden apartments are the norm. I interviewed them in various areas, including classrooms within a nearby mosque or community center and common/conference rooms at workplaces and apartment buildings.

The following table contains profiles of six interviewees, two from each city. To preserve anonymity, all participants were not profiled and some details are left vague.

Table 14: Sample Profiles of Interviewees

Participant	Profile
Roshon	Roshon is a resident of City A and a leader in the transitional home. He was incarcerated for over a decade for a violent offense. He converted in prison after studying Islam "rationally" and engaging in intellectual debates with Muslim prisoners. Roshon's service in the military has led him to adopt a no non-sense attitude that commands the respect of his co-residents. Despite his friendly disposition, his responses are critical, candid, and explicit.
Saleem	Saleem is a resident of City A who has become a leader in the transitional home. While serving thirteen years in prison, Saleem converted to Islam through the mentorship of a fellow prisoner. Saleem still feels the excitement of adopting a new Islamic identity. He wishes to engage positively in the community as a way to make amends for his past criminal behavior.
Sadiq	Sadiq is a City B resident who has been out of prison for ten years. He has been in Program B before, struggling with substance abuse issues and relapsing several times. He has appreciated the program's welcoming nature and its emphasis on making God central to one's life. After interacting for years with and being inspired by the program's director, Sadiq converted to Islam.
Bilal	Bilal is a leader of the City B program. After numerous periods of incarceration and thirty years of living as a drug addict, Bilal changed his lifestyle and sought to help others do the same. He had been a part of the Nation of Islam growing up, and later adopted orthodox Islam. His belief in a spiritual approach to recovery and changing one's life course comes in part from having been in a spiritual, non-denominational recovery program many years ago.
Binyamin	A resident of City C, Binyamin is in his mid-twenties and was released from prison five years ago. Although he became Muslim prior to being arrested, after being introduced to Islam by a friend, Binyamin gives off the impression of being a new convert, eager to meet new Muslims and share his views on his challenges as a new Muslim, particularly with his non-Muslim family.
Lateef	A resident of City C, Lateef is in his mid-thirties. He has been out from prison for nine years. He converted to Islam while in prison, after observing the prayer and actions of Muslim prisoners and reading about Islam. Lateef has a long beard and routinely wears a *thoub* (a long dress for men) and a *kufi* (a skull cap). He is eager to share his experiences as a formerly incarcerated Muslim and readily offers critiques of and suggestions for the Muslim community. He works with young Muslims reentering from incarceration and is well-connected with those working in the reentry arena in City C.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis of Qualitative Research

4.1 Data Analysis

This section reports the findings from the qualitative analysis of the data. Recall that the four research questions guiding the qualitative research were:

1) *What challenges do formerly incarcerated Muslims face as they reenter into society?*
2) *Do reentering Muslims feel a need for a reentry program that has a faith component, in what ways, and why?*
3) *What elements of two existing faith-based reentry programs assist the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated Muslims?*
4) *What challenges face faith-based reentry programs for Muslims?*

Based on these questions, the analysis below is grouped into three categories: 1) challenges facing formerly incarcerated Muslims during reentry, 2) the need formerly incarcerated Muslims feel for a faith-based program, and 3) their programmatic needs and challenges. In the next chapter, the findings from this section are used to construct a theoretical framework for faith-based reentry programs as evidence-based interventions. In the discussion that follows, direct quotations are provided as often as possible without being redundant, in order to use the actual voices of the participants to illustrate findings. The names of formerly incarcerated participants have been changed. If the individual is being quoted as an administrator or expert, their role is described and no name is given. The location of a participant is not mentioned except if relevant to the point being discussed (for example, if participants from a particular location offered distinct or different opinions than others). Thus, if the participant's location is not mentioned, it can be assumed that the perspective was shared by participants across the various cities. The occasional exclusion of both names and location helps preserve the anonymity of the participants.

To assist the reader, a glossary of Islamic terms used in the quotations and analysis below can be found in Table 15.

Table 15: Glossary of Islamic Terms Used by Interviewees

Arabic term	**English translation**
Adab	Manner of conduct
Allah	God
Assalaamu alaikum	"Peace be with you," a Muslim greeting
Awliya	Supporters/protectors
Bait ul maal	Treasury
Deen	Religion ("deening" is a colloquial term that refers to following the religion of Islam)
Dunya	Literally, "world," referring to secular influences
Hadith	A saying of the Prophet Muhammad
Halal	Literally, "permitted"
Halaqah	Religious "circles"/discussions
Haram	Literally, "prohibited"
Jahiliyyah	Pre-Islamic era
Jumuah	Friday congregational prayer that is mandatory for Muslim men
Kufi	Skull cap for men
Maghrib	Evening prayer
Masjid (pl. masajid)	Mosque
Salat/Salah	General term for ritual prayer
Shahadah	Convert to Islam
Shaytaan	Devil
Siraat	Path (of righteousness)
Sunni Islam	Orthodox Islam
Ta'leem	Religious study/class
Tabligh	Spreading the message, similar to proselytizing
Thoub	Long dress for men
Wa alaikum assalaam	"And peace to you," response to Muslim greeting
Wudu	Ritual pre-prayer ablution

4.1.1 Challenges facing formerly incarcerated Muslims during reentry

When asked about the challenges they faced during reentry, previously incarcerated Muslims highlighted many of the typical struggles that former prisoners encounter, including finding housing, employment, clothing, and food.

A. Basic needs

The most frequently mentioned challenge in terms of basic needs was the need for housing. All but one participant emphasized that finding housing after being released from prison was a challenge. Omar asserted that "the first thing is you need somewhere to live that is a stable environment." David expressed a similar opinion, emphasizing the need for securing housing to help avoid one's previous lifestyle. He said, "One of the biggest worries of someone coming out is having that security of having that place to live. And this is one reason that a brother can fall victim to the *dunya* [i.e. criminal or sinful influences], to secure housing."

Yahya highlighted that part of the challenge of securing housing was the practical restrictions governing where parolees may go. Public housing authorities have discretion about who may reside in their facilities and many have restrictions on offender occupants (Reentry Mythbusters, n.d., p. 2). He related,

> [A] lot of times when guys come home, due to government funding, like my mom is living in Section 8, low income, you can't parole there. You can only parole when your folks have their own home. So then you'd have to finish the rest of your time. So that's why it's so important to have . . . somewhere for people to go.

Half of the participants highlighted the challenge of finding a reliable and steady source of income. Several of them mentioned that part of the challenge was ensuring that they did not go back to their former criminal lifestyles to obtain money. One related, "A brother be getting back on the streets selling drugs, because you don't have no money when you come out, especially if you have someone to feed other than yourself. So it's really hard." Similarly, Sadiq described the challenge thus: "So you're hanging out with your old buddies, and

you don't have money . . . it won't be long before you decide that 'hey, I didn't do all this time in prison to come out and not have my needs met.'"

Others echoed the sentiment that finding a job was additionally difficult when one was seeking to provide for a family. One imam who formerly directed a mosque-run transitional home stated, "It's a challenge finding gainful employment. Guys want to get married but don't have a job. These are major challenges. If they had a substance abuse problem—or there only way of making money was a criminal path—then making eight dollars an hour is hard to do."

In terms of both housing and employment, participants discussed that the challenge in securing either one was enhanced because they were Muslim. Put another way, even when participants discussed "secular" (i.e. not explicitly religious or spiritual) reentry needs, they emphasized that these challenges had an additional religious significance and difficulty.

B. Housing challenges – transitional and drug treatment homes

Regarding housing, over half of the participants talked about being uncomfortable, excluded, chastised, or stigmatized at secular or church-administered transitional homes and residential drug treatment programs. Participants remarked that they felt uncomfortable praying, or found it difficult to find a place to pray.

One participant described his experience at a halfway house ten years ago thus:

> The halfway house environment . . . you are in a room with other people. I shared a room with three others. There were bunk beds in there. There was no private space, so to speak, where you could pray. You would have to create that. You could go to the common area if everyone was asleep, you could go pray in the morning. But because most of the time people were

> awake, the common area, if they are in there playing cards, it's very hard to pray.

Mustafa, who spent time in a transitional home, added that "Being allowed to go to *jumuah* [Friday prayer] was a challenge. You'd have to sign out to go to religious services." Frank, who was released six years ago, shared that halfway houses "have problems with brothers saying the prayers, making their *wudu* [mandatory pre-prayer ablution]."

Not only did participants express that they were stifled in their performance of their own religious duties, but they also felt mandated to take part in Christian activities in faith-based programs. One participant remarked that he was required to attend church services in his faith-based drug treatment program, which used Christian prayers and services in treatment. Another, Rodney, commented that when he chose not to participant in religious activities in his treatment program, which also involved Christian prayers and concepts, he was treated in an inferior manner. Rodney related: "Places I've been to, you have to sit in a circle, hold hands and pray. And if you opt out, then you get those looks like 'what's wrong with you?' Like you wrong for opting out."

In general, participants used the terms "insensitive," "proselytizing," "unfriendly," "nonchalant," "not accommodating," "not comfortable," "not conducive," "don't understand," and "disrespectful" to describe the way they were treated in their transitional homes and residential treatment programs. All participants stressed these negative attributes of their reentry programs, even if they mentioned some of the helpful services they may have obtained from these sources, such as job skills. Two participants who discussed these challenges of practicing Islam in reentry programs mentioned that it could potentially have a positive effect on reentering Muslims in that the adversity could strengthen one's

faith and resolve. One stated, "Adversity is what makes you develop. People have to learn that it's always difficult before ease, and you can't just give up, you can't just leave. And it's in the difficulty that you learn things." However, this perspective was not shared by the remaining participants, who felt that the inability to or discomfort in practicing Islam in the residence could lead to their reoffending. Idrees, who spent nearly two decades in prison, was released ten years ago, and now works with formerly incarcerated people, described the process as follows:

> [O]nce you are detached and the further estranged you become from practicing principles that you had been practicing for 5, 6 years – depends on the length of your incarceration – so if you're in an environment where you can only practice 50-60% of what you were doing for the last ten years, it does affect your attitude towards it. You become lackadaisical. Because you think you can't do it, you stop doing it. If you weren't able to pray *maghrib* [prayer] for 6 months after you came out, it will be very hard to start up again. . . . So the time that you are not praying, that you're not in an Islamic environment, practicing, you're going to be in another environment that is reinforcing other things. . . . Now the Muslim, you're out, you can't practice your tenets, you don't have money, and can't take care of your basic needs. So it is *very* easy to reoffend.

C. Housing challenges – family dynamics

Housing was also described to be a challenge outside of required programming, even when the individual actually had a roof over his head. Three-fourths of participants highlighted the dynamics *within* the home – specifically, with non-Muslim family members – to be quite difficult to navigate and a cause of re-offending. Binyamin, a participant in his mid-20s who was released five years ago, described the challenge as follows: "I live in a house, I'm with my grandmother, who is a firm Christian. So when I make *salat* [prayer], she has the TV loud and dinner might have pork in it. So the family doesn't have respect."

Several other participants echoed the insensitivity or lack of respect from non-Muslim family members with whom they reside. Participants recognized a level of discomfort, at the least, that they felt, as well as a kind of pressure to be

involved in sinful or illegal behavior. As Ragib, who was released eight years ago and chose to not live with family, conveyed:

> [F]or the reverts [Muslims who have converted] . . . in some cases the family there does stuff that Muslims aren't supposed to do. Like I go to my family's house and they have a big pork chop dinner, or they drinking and smoking and playing cards, so either you compromise your religious principles or else you feel real uncomfortable."

Another participant gave an even starker example:

> I got a brother I know, beautiful Muslim brother – he's been incarcerated 13 times. But in the house he comes back to, it's not Islamic. His brother isn't Muslim. He does drugs, his wife does drugs, his father drinks. I bought him a coat, another brother bought him some clothes when he came out. Next day we came, it's all gone. His brother stole them. So these are the real stresses we go through.

As in the context of residential reentry programs, participants agreed that a home environment in which Islam was difficult to practice could lead one to reoffend. One participant shared the following anecdote:

> [A brother I know] is a first generation Muslim. His grandmother eating pork, has it embedded in her mind the negative media image of Muslims. She is always negative about Islam. She cooks pork and locks the fridge so he can't have food. He wasn't able to keep his Islam, and fell victim to the *dunya* [sinful influences]. He ended up recidivating.

D. Food

As the preceding quotations show, obtaining food that was *halal* (permissible according to Islamic law) was often identified as challenging. Over half of those who discussed challenges regarding housing also mentioned food-related difficulties. In residential reentry programs, participants described "Muslims looking through the boxes at the ingredients" and that "there was no sensitivity no a non-pork diet." One participant described, "If there was pork on there, you'd eat the other stuff that wasn't pork." Others described the challenges during the Islamic month of daily fasting, Ramadan, in which Muslims can only eat and drink before dawn and after sunset. As Abdullah, who was released from

prison fifteen years ago described, "During Ramadan, if you didn't eat [during scheduled meals], you didn't eat. We couldn't afford our meals at the time. We were very dependent on others giving us food during Ramadan." Ali, who was released ten months ago, described not eating at all when the food contained pork or was "prayed over in the name of Jesus." He also stated that food was only freely available according to the Christian holiday schedule, and not during Ramadan.

Food-related challenges were also described in the context of family dynamics. As described above, many participants found living with non-Muslim family members to be difficult, and illustrated this difficulty by relating how their family members would eat or serve pork and alcohol around them. Some described going hungry while others emphasized feeling uncomfortable or pressured in this situation.

E. Lack of support from family

Two-thirds of the participants explained that dealing with their families created challenges for them as they reentered society. Some participants articulated that the difficulty in dealing with one's family stemmed from the predominantly non-Muslim family's lack of understanding of the individual's new identity as a Muslim. All but two of the participants who discussed family dynamics described families who were insensitive, unsupportive, or hostile to the new Muslim during his reentry. Lateef, who has been out for nine years, explained the lack of support:

> Some people didn't respect [that I converted]. Lot of my family cut me off, they don't say it's 'cause of my Islam, but deep down you know it's because of your Islam. For example, if I'm going through some difficulty,

> I need someone to talk to, rest my mind. Before Islam the support is there, but after Islam the support is not there.

Others described the lack of support as a lack of respect for Muslim beliefs and practices. Binyamin, who lives with his Christian grandmother, described not being able to pray in peace, being served pork for dinner, and "parents trying to feed you" when it's Ramadan. Six others described the same atmosphere in their own homes. The lack of respect sometimes took a more hostile tone. One participant said "I personally don't associate with my family too much. Some family members reject Muslims so much they don't want to give a chance to Islam." Another stated, "Your family can discourage you and push you back to your old ways. . . . They don't understand Islam, and see only the negative side of Islam." Yet another described a family member actively preventing the newly released Muslim from eating or praying.

One participant highlighted another possible explanation for the lack of family support and respect: that family members may also think that the individual is not serious about his new identity – that being a Muslim is just a temporary phenomenon. He explained,

> One of the challenges I was most worried about was the cliché of the black man coming home Muslim. They say the black man go to prison, comes home Muslim. I was so passionate about Islam, I didn't want my faith disrespected like that. . . . My family thought Islam was a phase. Now they see I'm serious about this.

Some participants also explained how their families' insensitive actions may cause them to reoffend. Salam, who has no Muslim family members, explained that

> when you come home, your family and friends try to treat you like you never been gone. If you play into that, you will immediately fall into things that's now forbidden to us. So you have to be very careful. . . If you have friends and family not sensitive to Islam, it is easy to go the other way.

Dawud, also estranged from his family, made clear that the lack of family support can cause reoffending if the individual does not receive support from another source. Saleem, who described family members who were drug addicts, described the presence of criminal influences within the home as a "pull" that can overpower the new Muslim's best intentions to "stay away" from prison. Others described their interactions with family in terms of a "slippery slope" in which family members "trying to get you to have beer, give you a joint, try to get you to go to the club," which can result in re-offending.

Only two participants described families that were supportive of their being Muslim, or of their positive transformation as a result of their new religion. Jibreel, who described his family as his "supporting cast" during his 17-year incarceration for murder, said that his family "respected the Islamic *adab* [manner of conduct]. They respected that I came from the days of *jahilliyyah* [pre-Islamic days] to now. They liked the behavior they saw." He argued that in the African-American community, "when a mother sees her son, when they've seen the trauma we have, when they see what we've been through – gang banging, killing – and when they see that that becomes foreign to you, they don't care what you profess. It's about your behavior." Similarly, Abdullah, whose family initially thought Islam was "a phase," said that his family grew to have respect for Islam. "My family loves my transformation," he said. "They want to learn more about Islam." Of course, the opinion that one's non-Muslim family approved or respected his conversion to Islam because of its positive impact on behavior was not shared by any of the other participants, as described above. The overwhelming theme with regards to family dynamics was that reentering Muslims felt a lack of support from their non-Muslim family members. Many interviewees felt that the lack of family

support could cause them to reoffend by pulling them back towards antisocial behavior, whether directly ("[family members] give you a joint") or indirectly ("family can discourage you and push you back to your old ways."). In fact, this lack of family support was the second most-mentioned challenge among the participants. Noticeably, none of the program administrators or experts interviewed who were *not* formerly incarcerated Muslims themselves mentioned this challenge.

F. Lack of comfort at the masjid (mosque)

One in three participants described a lack of comfort in the mosque ("masjid" in Arabic) as they reentered their communities. Although mosques "tend to be the first stop for people coming out," according to an imam who works with formerly incarcerated Muslims, participants reported feeling uncomfortable in the mosque setting because they did not feel they could relate to other Muslims there and felt they were being judged for being an ex-offender.

Sadiq, who was released with prison ten years ago, recalled: "You go to the masjid [mosque], you are around a bunch of people – you don't know them, and they don't know you. A lot of times Muslims are not very warm in the masjid. And sometimes they view you with suspicion – like this person has to prove himself." Four other interviewees described the same sense of feeling "judged" by other masjid attendees. One formerly incarcerated individual explained that "you get judged at the masjid," not just by attendees but also by the leadership. He particularly described feeling hesitant to talk to the imam for fear of being judged. He elaborated, "if you tell the imam [something], how do you know he won't tell his wife and she won't tell the sisters? And that could destroy families." One

program administrator described the origin of the "judging" in mosques to be the "high premium based in the Islamic principle of faith *and practice*," which in turn "feeds the denial of social problems like incarceration and drug addiction." The expectation that Muslims ought to actually practice moral conduct and not simply profess faith means that when someone with a criminal history enters a mosque, they may be "reacted to with such judgment that it doesn't lend well to recovery [and rehabilitation of the individual]."

The discomfort that participants described feeling at the mosque was explained by four other participants as a "lack of understanding." Husain, who was incarcerated for over 18 years, elaborated, "It was very difficult to fit in the mosque. I was going from masjid to masjid. It was hard to find Muslims who understood what I was going through, who you could relate to." One imam described that "a problem with masjids in general" is that they are not "relatable" and "are not connecting with people." The feeling of not fitting in at the mosque may create "isolation" and a general lack of "engagement with the community," explained the director of a Muslim reentry program. This can in turn lead to reoffending. As one participant explained:

> There are some people who don't feel comfortable in the masjid so instead of going to another masjid they just don't go at all. . . [Some brothers] come through the masjid just every Friday, then they solely start to dwindle off, and then you find yourself asking where they at, and you hear 'oh such and such got locked up.' And you see that happen because either 1) they don't feel comfortable in the masjid and they shun themselves, or 2) they don't get the support they needin' from the masjid to really want to embrace it.

G. Difficulties in finding Muslim brotherhood

The most-cited challenge among interviewees, including formerly incarcerated participants as well as administrators and experts, was finding a

Muslim brotherhood following one's release from prison. About 80% of formerly incarcerated interviewees explained that they had difficulty finding Muslim brothers and brotherhood as they reentered their communities. As a former director of a Muslim transitional home explained, "What many guys report is a disappointment of not finding that brotherhood that they had in prison." Another program director echoed, "So the bonds of brotherhood in prisons are intense. So many guys coming out are looking for that structure, and they don't find that." In fact, when formerly incarcerated participants described their desire to find Muslim brothers post-release, the word "surround" came up more often than any other word except "Muslim" and "brother." Ilyas, who was incarcerated for 27 years, said, "My biggest need was being surrounded by other Muslims." Abdul-Shakur, incarcerated for 22 years, said, "I wanted to surround myself with them. I felt this was who I am, this is what I want to be. I wanted to be around brothers." Another participant explained that his desire to be around Muslims motivated him to be involved in the Muslim transitional home in which he resided. He explained, "By me being a new *shahadah* [convert to Islam], even after three years, I was eager to learn, so excited to just be about the Muslims."

Participants mentioned various reasons for wanting to be around Muslims. All but two mentioned the level of shared understanding, comfort, and support they felt in Muslim company, as well as the desire to have positive peer influences. Two participants mentioned that they wanted to be in Muslim company because they wanted to learn more about Islam. One participant explained that the only need he had coming home was to "just be[] surrounded by Muslims. Because I had been gone for a while. I wanted somewhere I would be comfortable at and not be distracted by the *dunya*." Lester, who was incarcerated for eight years for a

drug-related offense and struggled with addiction during the reentry process, explained that Muslims "understand where I've been and where I'm going." The support felt among Muslim "brothers" was, moreover, both moral as well as tangible. Three participants described receiving toiletries, clothing, and food from fellow Muslims within and outside of prison.

Participants who had been incarcerated and released multiple times particularly emphasized the need to have Muslim peers in order to prevent reoffending. Kabeer, incarcerated for 19 years, said "The key [to desistance] is the support people feel from brothers." Jibreel, who was incarcerated three separate times, recognized that being around Muslims helped him stay away from negative behaviors that could lead him to commit crimes. He said,

> I would love to be around Muslims, but when I wasn't around them, then I would sometimes smoke or drink. When I was with them, then I wouldn't feel the urge. I liked to be out and being active with Muslims, other than that I am in a house alone, where I'm tempted to call females.

Lateef, who was incarcerated twice, said, "I associated with Muslims, but the first time, I didn't intertwine with them as much as the second time. I wasn't surrounding myself with them. The second time, I surrounded myself with them." He explained that being "surrounded" by Muslims helped him stay away from criminal activity. Saleem, who was incarcerated for 13 years, specifically sought Muslims after being warned that non-Muslim peers might lead him back to immoral and criminal behavior. He shared the following anecdote, which he had recalled multiple times during his reentry into the community:

> Before I came home [another Muslim prisoner] told me he was worried about me because I didn't know Muslims in [City A]. He told me to "seek out Muslims, get with the Muslims and stay with the Muslims. Don't go back to the *dunya*. Don't let the guys from the *dunya* pull you back. You found something good, something that will change your life, don't go back."

Another participant summarized that Muslim company created "positive energy" in that "a good Muslim is going to prevent you from making mistakes."

Despite the agreed-upon importance of securing (or "creating," in the words of one participant) Muslim brotherhood, the task was deemed a challenge by nearly all who broached the subject. Only three formerly incarcerated interviewees mentioned that it was not difficult to find Muslim brothers upon reentry. The remainder found it challenging for primarily two reasons: 1) the immediacy of the challenge of securing basic needs such as income, housing, and food; and 2) "worldly distractions" that lure the individual into his past sinful and/or criminal lifestyle.

In the first category, formerly incarcerated Muslim participants mentioned facing an immediate need to secure income in order to obtain housing, food, and other necessities. Faced with this difficulty, which is enhanced by legal restrictions, family dynamics, and new religious requirements, as described above, participants commented that Muslims often feel as if they must return to "seeking fast money," in the words of one participant, to make ends meet and provide for one's family. Ilyas, who was released at age twenty from prison five years ago, described "getting back on the streets selling drugs, because you don't have no money when you come out." Sadiq, who was released at age 47, described: "For twelve years, I didn't have to pay rent, buy food, do laundry. I didn't have to buy glasses. Out here, you pay for it. The instant you get out, the basic needs are thrust back on you." Meeting these basic needs is usually the most pressing, everyday concern facing those reentering – indeed, a matter of survival for many – and may trump the desire to seek and remain in Muslim company.

In the second category, formerly incarcerated Muslim participants felt that they were prevented from finding or retaining Muslim peers by the temptations and distractions of a sinful and/or criminal lifestyle. All but one of the participants who fell into this category used the word "dunya" to describe this temptation. In Arabic, the word "dunya" means "world." In Islam, the term is often juxtaposed against the hereafter, and devout Muslims seek to prioritize the latter over the former by leading a moral lifestyle. In American Muslim parlance, it has come to represent the activities and actions in modern society that are sinful under Islam – for example, drinking, premarital sex, doing drugs, etc. Participants explained that the *dunya* could "pull you back" from being around Muslims. One participant said, "I have seen brothers who are learned, and they just get out, and they get distracted. They just go back to what they did." Another explained that the pull of the *dunya* is much greater than that of the Muslims. He said, "There is no sterile environment." To explain, he provided the following example:

> I want to work out in the gym, and there may be a lady walking around in spandex. And she asks you, hey do you know how to use this equipment? And you show her, and she's thankful, etc. So she invites me to a cookout with her family. They're drinking, and you're in the environment. Here's the Muslim being slowly courted by the world. You start to look around and start to appreciate all those things you previously rejected. Because the Muslims are not engaging you at the level that non-Muslims are. . . . So if you're weak in your faith, the world is engaging you, you start appreciating those things that will lead you back down the path of destruction.

He explained that because Muslims do not provide "an array of offerings" particularly with regards to "halal" (permissible) entertainment, the attractiveness of the *dunya* is enhanced. Furthermore, for new Muslims, it is even easier to revert to one's previous lifestyle, because as one participant put it, "after you have been a certain way for 22 or 23 years, for so long, it's way more easy to fall back on what you know, than to follow something you are new at." Avoiding the *dunya* by

seeking Muslim brotherhood is what motivated three-fourths of the formerly incarcerated interviewees to enroll in Islam-based programs or be active in a mosque or other Islamic organization. "I wanted somewhere I would be comfortable at and not be distracted by the *dunya*," said one interviewee. Another remarked that his neighborhood mosque became "a second home" because he wanted to be "where it is positive" rather than "being outside [in my neighborhood] where it's negative." Yet another sought out an Islamic mentorship program after noticing that when he was not around Muslims he would "smoke or drink" and be "tempted to call females."

H. Challenges of navigating a new world

Several individuals mentioned that they had difficulty reentering simply because of the challenge of navigating a new world that they had been away from for so long and ill-equipped to reenter. In the words of an imam who oversaw a Muslim transitional home and counsels many reentering Muslims, "Most of these guys face a tremendous paradigm shift. If you've been away for more than a few months, then you don't know life out here."

Five participants articulated that the world they were reentering was "fast-paced" and "new" and they felt challenged to determine what activities were in their best interests instead of "rushing in." One participant, who was incarcerated for 22 years, said

> My main challenge was calming down. Everything was new when I came home. *Everything* was new. The newness made me anxious to do something but not having resources or background to do what I wanted to do. I was jumping into things to try to find where I could fit in.

Another interviewee agreed, explaining that he sought his Muslim-based program because "[i]t gave me a chance to sit back and observe instead of rush in head on and 'catch up' on what I had lost. It gave me a chance to reflect and take my time

in reintegrating." The Muslim-based reentry program was identified by half of its residents as helpful in simply providing a positive environment in which reentering Muslims could have their basic, immediate needs met while steadily and deliberately reintegrating into society. Another participant described the challenge he felt navigating the economics of his new world after spending twenty years in prison. "People have to learn that things have changed, and money is very important to you," he explained. "Like when I came out, I went to buy a water hose for a project. The water hose was $30! I didn't have that money. So we have to learn about saving money, [developing] economic skills."

Again, as in the case of other challenges described above, the participants' responses indicated that typical reentry challenges (i.e. those that affect ex-prisoners generally, regardless of faith) take on an additional dimension, and sometimes an added level of difficulty, for the new Muslim coming home from prison. In addition to facing a "new world," the reentering Muslim must also navigate his own relatively new religious, spiritual, and overall identity; the new Muslim community, and its structure, attitude, and operation; as well as new family and peer dynamics. Many of these challenges were described above and are further elaborated below. It is sufficient to note here that two-thirds of formerly incarcerated participants described the challenges of dealing with old influences and a new world as a new Muslim. As one participant, who was incarcerated for twelve years and is the only Muslim in his family, described, "your family and friends try to treat you like you never been gone. . . . So that now that I've been *deening* [i.e. been a Muslim] all these years, now that lifestyle is foreign to me." Navigating a changed society, a new identity and religious community that has little to offer returning Muslims, and old peer and family influences can result in a

profound “disconnect” in which returning Muslims do not have “anywhere that can genuinely address their needs” and thus “come home even more scattered and disconnected,” in the words of the director of Program A.

4.1.2 Need for faith-based reentry program

Participants described a range of challenges that formerly incarcerated Muslims face as they reenter society, including securing housing, food, and employment; dealing with new family dynamics and pressures; locating a Muslim brotherhood, while often feeling uncomfortable at the mosque; and navigating a new, fast-paced society. A significant point described above is that while many of these challenges also affect non-Muslim ex-prisoners, they take on a distinct nature and added level of difficulty when the Muslim is concerned, because of the often new (or relatively new) religious identity with which the person is coming home, the dynamics of the Muslim religious community and its institutions, and the inter-faith dynamics between the reentering Muslim and his non-Muslim family, peers, and former lifestyle.

How these challenges can be dealt with is addressed in this section, which discusses the participants’ views about the need for a faith-based reentry program for Muslims. Every participant reported the need for such a program for Muslims, though there was some difference of opinion about whether it should be Muslim-specific and what the program should look like. This point is elaborated further in the following section. This section discusses the participants’ opinions on what a faith-based program would provide a Muslim and how it would assist his successful reentry into society. The findings are grouped under three categories based on the type of benefit the participant envisions receiving from a faith-based

program: individual-centered, peer-related, or program-level. Individual-centered benefits include beliefs, knowledge, understanding, skills, and characteristics that one seeks to develop from the program. Peer-related benefits result from interactions between and relationships among the participants in the program. Finally, program-level benefits are derived from the structure or environment of the program itself and characteristics of the staff.

A. Individual-centered Benefits

On an individual level, interviewees generally felt that a faith-based program was needed in order to help formerly incarcerated Muslims learn more about God, spirituality, and/or Islam; to improve their mental health, self-control, and outlook on life; to help them establish order and discipline in their lives; and to help them develop employable and leadership skills.

Increasing Knowledge about God, Spirituality, and/or Islam

Every formerly incarcerated interviewee described a need for faith-based programs in order to learn more about spirituality and religion. All but two specifically expressed the need to learn more about Islam particularly.

Several individuals felt that Islamic education was needed in order to improve the conduct of the individual. Saleem, who was incarcerated for twenty years and now heads a mosque-run prisoner assistance program, explained, "You will be better educated Muslim which will make you a better person. When your spirit is right, it will dictate to your mind what is right." Several participants explicitly drew out the connection between faith and deterrence, emphasizing that a belief in God's punishment would deter criminal behavior. When asked to

explain his desire for a program that incorporated Islamic learning and practice, Saleem said, "it [would] curb[] offending tremendously, because you know that if you break a law or commit an act that will displease Allah [God], it will hurt you in the long run, both this life or the next life." Another participant advocated for Islamic classes from which "[t]hey would obtain the knowledge in Islam [and] a Muslim's character, believing in Allah [God], knowing that if you commit a crime you would be punished."

Essentially, participants felt that a program with Islamic instruction of some sort would strengthen their Islamic faith, which would in turn help them desist from criminal behavior for fear of supernatural punishment. In the words of Roshon, who had never been part of a faith-based program, Islamic classes "would build a brother's *deen* [faith] up." As a Muslim learns more about Islam, "the more you have to give up. . . . the more you feel obligated to take negative stuff off the to-do list." Salih, who also was never in a faith-based program, identified the need for Islamic instruction in a reentry program because it would teach participants about God and accountability. He then said, "I'm not tempted to do crime now, because I don't want to be held accountable, I don't want the punishment. I don't want to be asked on the Day of Judgment about doing the bad crimes, I don't want Allah [God] to ask me why I did that when I knew they were forbidden." Ali, who was a resident of the Muslim transitional home, spoke from his own experience, explaining that as a result of his program's theology classes, "the more I learned about the religion, the more I feared going back to the streets, because I didn't want the punishment of going back."

Three individuals explained the accountability aspect of Islamic beliefs by explicitly drawing a comparison to Christianity, which they felt did not serve to

hold individuals accountable for their actions and thereby deter criminal behavior. One formerly incarcerated participant explained, "I was born into Christianity. There was no emphasis on the omniscience of God. That he can see and hear, and accountability is real. No emphasis on that. If you say to someone that you've already paid for your sins, that doesn't do that." A program administrator echoed this sentiment, saying that "We tend to have an observant expectation of people who practice Islam, whereas Christianity's concept of 'born in sin' assumes a contradiction of belief and practice." This "observant expectation" may help deter criminal behavior (though it also feeds the denial of certain social problems, as explained elsewhere). Another program director explained that the lack of accountability in Christianity is not something inherent in the faith, but rather is a contextual interpretation for the population in question. He explained:

> I think Islam provides a context that Christianity once did in more traditional societies. But here, in the African American communities, Christianity no longer provides that the sense of accountability to a higher power. For many of these guys, what holds me back is not some fear of man-made restrictions. They've shown they can survive that. But rather what restrains me now is longing for divine pleasure and fear of consequences of incurring the displeasure of God. That does become a very real source of passion and engagement, because I think the Christian tradition may not be as operational, at least in this population.

In terms of what specific educational elements they desired in a program, participants had varied thoughts. Several emphasized a need for simply learning the fundamentals about faith and Islam. Two interviewees, both of whom were participants in the multi-faith, spiritual drug treatment program, advocated general spiritually-based teaching (e.g. classes and lectures) that increased knowledge of God and one's relationship with God, but that was not particular to Islam. One participant, who did time for a drug-related offense, felt that a program's mandatory "exposure" to faith-based teaching was "most critical" in order to help

participants "learn something" about God and one's relationship with God – for example, that God exists, that he "cares about me," and that he is "more powerful than any drug." Another participant felt that a spiritually-based program was essential in order for someone to "recover what you were when you were born" – i.e. "the person that God created" in a state in which one did not offend or abuse drugs.

Those who expressed a need for Islamic instruction did not offer many specifics regarding the content of that instruction, but expressed a need for theology classes that dealt with basic Islamic beliefs and practices as well as particular instructions on issues that participants were dealing with. One participant expressed, "[The] main thing is to teach Muslim brothers, even if they already know, about the fundamentals – remind them Allah [God] is your provider, if something goes wrong, it's from Allah [God]. Most brothers think it's about them." Another felt a need for "*Salat* [prayer] classes, 'cause a lot of brothers don't know how to pray" as well. Three participants felt a need for learning more about the Prophet Muhammad and his character and memorizing more of the Qur'an. Two participants also described a need to learn more about "soft skills" including Islamic manners and inter-gender relations.

In addition, two program administrators and one formerly incarcerated participant expressed a need for theological instruction that was "corrective" because they felt that those reentering from prison as Muslims had "twisted" Islamic beliefs based on "what they learn[ed] in jail," which may not be accurate. Four other formerly incarcerated participants expressed that they did not know "Sunni Islam" (i.e. orthodox Islam) well, or at all, when they reentered from prison since they had ascribed to other "derivative" forms of Islam such as the Nation of

Islam or the Moorish Science Temple of America. Two of these individuals described a need to learn more about Sunni Islam upon reentry and felt that an Islam-based reentry program could help them achieve that goal.

Improving One's Mental Health, Self-esteem, Self-control, and Outlook on Life

Two-thirds of interviewees felt that a faith-based program was needed in order to improve the mental health, self-control, and outlook on life for reentering Muslims.

While half of the administrators and experts discussed the importance of having mental health counseling of some sort, only two formerly incarcerated individuals broached the topic. One imam, who oversaw a Muslim transitional home, explained, "Many brothers also need clinical help [during reentry]. They may have scarred by the prison experience or have psychological issues from before." Another expert, who leads a Muslim-focused reentry initiative, said that "intense counseling" during reentry to help the Muslim ex-prisoner adjust to his new world. A program director who implemented mental health services in his transitional home felt that "a full evaluation, looking at some of the deep issues they are dealing with" including "depression, suicidal thoughts" was necessary. None of these interviewees expressed that this need was particular to Muslims, or that counseling should be spiritually-based. Rather, they expressed the need for a faith-based reentry program that incorporated counseling to deal with mental health needs. In contrast, two formerly incarcerated interviewees mentioned the need for reentering Muslims to be able to "talk about what's on their mind" either through "*halaqas*" (religious discussions) or a spiritually "sensitive" approach.

One in four individuals felt that a faith-based program would help them develop self-control. Three participants, who strongly felt a need for a spiritual program that was not Islam-specific, felt that teaching about faith would give someone the self-control to avoid committing crimes. One participant, who was incarcerated for drug-related crimes, expressed that learning about "a higher power" and a "power greater than drugs" would allow someone to "get away from" drugs and crime. Another participant, who served eight years for a drug offense, felt a faith-based program "helps you to bring out the structure in yourself" so that you ask, before each action, "what would God do?" An administrator from the multi-faith program, which serves many individuals incarcerated for drug-related offenses and who are addicted to drugs, felt that "addiction itself is a consequence of a sickness in the will. Faith is an expression of the will. If you really want to serve the will, you should be sensitive to the freedom of expression of the will – you should accommodate a diversity of faith expressions." An imam, who oversaw a transitional home for Muslims, also discussed the self-control that faith provides, but in Islamic terms specifically. When describing his current work counseling formerly incarcerated Muslims, the imam noted the role of Islamic teachings in promoting desistance. He said, "I tell the brothers something in Ramadan: you come from a culture that paints blacks as they can't control themselves, but you just finished Ramadan. You abstained from something that is permissible and essential. So if you can leave all that, you can work off that which is *haram* [forbidden]."

One in four interviewees also articulated that faith-based programming would improve an individual's outlook on life. Three individuals discussed specifically that such programming would instill "meaning and purpose" into one's

life. An administrator of the multi-faith drug treatment program stated that "getting in touch with a source of meaning and power that is stronger than . . . the destructive element in one's life" was "critical" to help stop reoffending. Moreover, the only way to do so was through attaining faith. He explained that the "first point" in the desistance process "is to know unequivocally that you are not it, that there is something bigger than you, something that responsible for everything, and you derive meaning and purpose from that source. That source becomes more powerful than the attraction of popular culture, the feeling of abusing self and society."

Additionally, participants emphasized that faith and belief in God gave them peace of mind when dealing with everyday stresses. They specifically explained that the belief in God assured them that "everything is going to be okay" because "God is in control." One formerly incarcerated participant, who has never been in a faith-based program, explained, "Even though I have a record . . . I know Allah [God] is my provider. The majority of people don't think like that. People become lost . . . right when they come out." He recalled that when he was working at a grocery store for $8 an hour and "losing his self-esteem" he "just ha[d] faith in God" and was then able to secure another, higher paying job. He felt strongly that other Muslims should learn to "just have faith" and that "Allah [God] is your provider" instead of resorting to criminal activity. Another participant, who was involved in the drug-treatment program, expressed that establishing a "spiritual connection with God" was necessary "to get you through the journey [of rehabilitation and recovery, you cannot do it alone." These participants seemed to be put at ease by the knowledge that God was "in control" of their lives and "provided" for them. One said, "When I learned . . . that God is the best way . . . I

could back up a little bit. . . . I learned I could have help, I didn't have to have so much control over things. Let go and let God take control, one day at a time." A program director echoed this sentiment, emphasizing that faith can teach an individual patience through life's stresses. He said, "People have to learn that it's always difficult before ease, and you can't just give up, you can't just leave." Similarly, an imam who counsels reentering Muslims also explained that a program featuring Islamic teaching can "chang[e] [one's] life" by "offering [one] hope in the here and now and in the hereafter. You can be an upstanding person – you can be upstanding and be successful here and now. And in addition you can be successful in the hereafter." Together, these sentiments show that some participants felt strongly that faith-based teaching in a program would assist an individual's desistance from crime by improving their outlook on life and ability to cope with difficulty and stress.

Establishing Order and Discipline in One's Life

Half of the interviewees described needing order and discipline post-release, and stated that an Islam-based program would help provide this. Those who advocated a generally spiritual, multi-faith program did not express this opinion. One program administrator summed up her advocacy for a faith-based program for Muslims by saying "A big problem with anyone trying to reenter is getting order. Islam provides us with order naturally. A big part of [our] program is having a very structured day. Just five prayers alone provides an element of structure." Several formerly incarcerated individuals who have never been part of a Muslim reentry program echoed this sentiment. One, who now works with incarcerated Muslims and has been out of prison for eight years, was asked to

explain how a Muslim program would help prevent re-offending. He explained, in part, that "In some cases, since we offer *salat* [daily ritual prayer], five times a day, it's difficult to fall into other things because their life revolves around *salat*. So how can I go on a date when I'm worried about making my *salat*, or how can I go to the club?"

Other formerly incarcerated participants also emphasized the need for an Islam-based program to enforce the performance of the *salat*, or ritualized prayer, specifically. One, who directs a reentry program, explained the reason for this emphasis:

> I always ask a brother when I see them doing some sin, I ask them, 'Did you stop making your *salat*.' And they all say yes. . . . So when you're in an environment, when everybody together [i.e. in a Muslim transitional home], there's no way you cannot [pray], because brothers gonna come knock on your door, just like in the joint they gonna knock on your cell, and you can't get away from it. So when you have that environment, then we can lean on each other.

Four other participants explained that an Islam-based program with an emphasis on prayer would instill "structure" and help prevent participants from becoming "lackadaisical" and "lazy." A current director of an Islamic transitional home advised, "Islam, particularly when practiced with others, by its very nature, provides a very regulated practice, structure, and rituals, that can help provide semblance of order at a time when they need it the most. So there is something to be said about the particular prayer schedule, etc. I find these guys [i.e. the residents in the home] heavily relying on that to cope." Thus, a substantial number of participants felt that a faith-based program – particularly one that incorporates Islamic prayer – is needed to instill discipline in the individual, which in turn helps them avoid sinful and/or criminal behavior.

Developing Employable and Leadership Skills

Finally, in terms of individual benefits, one in four participants articulated that while they wanted a spiritually based program, they also sought some secular benefits in the form of skill development. Participants who expressed this opinion all felt a need for an Islam-specific program for Muslims only. These individuals felt that such a program could help them develop employable and leadership skills, and having the program be Islam-based would provide additional support and ease. Participants emphasized "workforce development" which would "help Muslims back into the workforce," "the opportunity to develop skills," "the opportunity to be creative," and receiving "hands on training." One participant, who was incarcerated for 22 years and participated in several reentry programs, also described the "self-worth" that one gains from developing such skills. He explained that skill development "change[s] the outlook of a man's perspective. I've been a criminal before. I know what the criminal world is like. When you give a man the opportunity to do something, to build his self worth, to provide for himself, you give him so much."

Two participants detailed explicitly why a faith-based, Islam-specific program was needed to provide skill development. One described that such a program would show the new Muslim convert support from his religious community. He explained that after he was released from prison,

> I did want support [from the Muslim community with getting a job]. I had to go to Goodwill to get a suit. I would have helped to have Muslim brothers provide suits. Had I been exposed to that from Islamic perspective, I would have felt that I have my religion's support. And in turn that helps the community, when I'm employed, because I can help other people, and fulfill my *zakat* [mandatory almsgiving] obligation.

The other participant explained that skill development and training as a part of a Muslim reentry program would facilitate participants' learning because "you're

dealing with 'likes.' Everyone has the basic foundation – this gives you common ground for building upon. You have the base of Islam. Your platform is so solid. Everything else is built on that."

Two participants also emphasized developing "soft skills" and "people skills" in addition to building job-readiness. One participant defined "soft skills" to include "Islamic manner" and inter-gender etiquette, which would assist in navigating the Muslim community. Another defined "people skills" in the context of becoming job-ready. To him, "people skills" were essential to "get[ting] back into society" by both assisting with securing employment and making one feel confident in interacting with the outside world in general.

A quarter of participants also advocated developing leadership and community development skills from a faith-based reentry program. These skills can enhance your "self worth" and "reenergize you," in the words of one formerly incarcerated individual. A current director of a Muslim reentry initiative felt strongly that developing leadership skills can encourage both "independence" and "positive involvement in the community," which will sustain successful reintegration. One administrator from the Muslim transitional home described the importance of "really developing leaders" to help make them a force for positive change and "stability" in the community they live in, to help them transition "from being a mentor in the home to being a homeowner in the [surrounding] blocks." He also explained that the "spiritual support" of the program can help "shift [the participants'] identity from being a formerly incarcerated person to being leaders in the community" because the program specifically "cultivate[s] a spirituality that nurtures their identity, that's not about retreating into exclusivity, one that encourages them to think about their relationships with the larger community."

While these participants described skill development needs that were secular in themselves, they situated their comments in a context that advocated for Islam-based reentry programming. Some directly explained the reasons why they felt such a program could better provide job-readiness and leadership training, whether in terms of added support, ease of learning, or a particular type of spiritual cultivation.

Interviewees explained a range of individual-focused benefits that they felt they could obtain from a faith-based program, including learning more about God, spirituality, and/or Islam; improving their mental health, self-control, and outlook on life; helping them establish order and discipline in their lives; and assisting their development of employable and leadership skills. The following sections describe other types of benefits that participants felt would derive from a faith-based reentry program.

B. Peer-related Benefits

All but two interviewees expressed some kind of peer-related benefit that they felt a faith-based program would provide. The benefits described generally fell into two broad categories: those related to "Muslim brotherhood" and those related to mentoring.

Muslim Brotherhood

Over three-fourths of interviewees described a benefit they wished to obtain from the "Muslim brotherhood" in a faith-based program, including every resident from the Muslim transitional home (Program A) and every formerly incarcerated interviewee from City C (those who were not currently in a faith-based program). These interviewees described four particular benefits that they

sought from a Muslim brotherhood: family-like support and encouragement, a "check" on behavior, education about Islam, and a mutual understanding that only a fellow Muslim ex-prisoner would be able to give.

Family-like support

Half of those who described Muslim-brotherhood related benefits discussed specifically that they wished to receive "support" from Muslim brothers in their program and that these brothers were like their "family." Lateef, who was incarcerated for 19 years and counsels many reentering Muslims, described that the "key" to a faith-based program is "just overall community." In describing this "community," he continued:

> And in Islam that's really important, that feeling of family. The brothers are a family in Islam. And a lot of reverts come from dysfunctional families, so the Islamic family fills a major void for them. I know in my life it does. Also when it came to those rainy days where you needed someone to talk to, instead of someone asking 'brother, do you need something,' they gave you something, and it was right on time.

He further emphasized the importance of reentry programs for Muslims that are staffed by Muslims and include Muslim co-participants. Such programs are critical to successful reentry because

> It's like the support of my family. I view my Islam as my family. These are individuals who really love me for the sake of Allah [God]. I know they support me when I'm down, because I see the support when I'm up, so I know I can come to these people when I'm in need. I can count on their support. It can replace or add on to the family dynamics you already have – like your extended family. This is especially [true] for the reverts [i.e. those who convert to Islam], because in some cases the family there does stuff that Muslims aren't supposed to do.

Lateef, who himself does not associate with his non-Muslim family due to their behavior (such as "smoking" and "drinking"), emphasized that the brotherhood of the peers in a Muslim reentry program can create a prosocial family that many of the newly converted Muslims do not otherwise have. The sentiment that Muslim

brotherhood in a program can be a "family" of sorts was echoed by other participants as well. Qadeer, a resident of the Muslim transitional home, described two other residents in the home by saying, "They are family. We are just like family, even more than my actual family." He also described that the "brothers" of the program "feel an obligation" to each other to prevent each other from "falling." Ilyas, who is half as old as Lateef and has been out of prison half as long as well, shared this same opinion. He remarked, "a good Muslim is going to prevent you from making mistakes. I know I would do that for a brother." When describing why he felt that "a program would help a lot," Ilyas also mentioned that the strong bonds of brotherhood that exist in jail may "slip" during reentry because "you come alone." He felt that "[t]he greatest thing you can do is to be around other brothers, so you won't want to do other stuff you're used to." He described the brotherhood as creating "positive energy."

Four participants, across all cities, emphasized a high-level of support that they felt the Muslim brotherhood in a program would give them. They used the following words and phrases to describe this support: "brotherly love," "help[ing] each other," "camaraderie," "lean[ing] on each other," "fellowship," "feel[ing] loved," and "consistent support." They also mentioned that those who are "successful" in desisting from crime are those who receive such support.

Checks on Behavior

Three-fourths of those who described "Muslim brotherhood" related benefits discussed the reminders – or a "check" – that Muslims would provide each other to behave morally and in a law-abiding fashion. Some participants described this "check" as an explicit, verbal reminder. Lateef, a formerly incarcerated

Muslim from City C, discussed the general reminders he received from Muslims. He explained:

> If I didn't have the *masjid* [mosque], if I didn't have the brothers or even the community, I would have reverted to my previous behaviors. There were sisters selling books in the *masjid*, and I remember going to them and asking to buy a book for a female friend, and the sister saying, "brother, you need to get married." That was a reminder that in Islam you can't have no girlfriends. If I went home then to my family and friends, they would have supported me in having a girlfriend as opposed to me having a wife.

He described the "constant reminder" that Muslims in the community generally could provide a reentering Muslim to act in a law-abiding manner and in accordance with Islam, as long as the reentering Muslim was sufficiently engaged. He said,

> From personal experiences, I've seen, the people who were consistent in engaging with faith, classes, *jumuah* [Friday prayer], inviting brothers over, they tend to not fall in trouble, get locked up, fall into great sins. It's a constant reminder. You see those people who have come out and you don't see them in their old spots and you see them hanging out with the Muslims more, and those brothers who are calling other brothers to hang out with them, they tend to do better.

Thus, Lateef felt that the Muslim peers as well as fellow mosque attendees could provide positive "checks" on behavior. When discussing a hypothetical Muslim transitional home, Lateef felt that the same "check" would be even more prevalent. There, he felt that "all the reminders and warnings" would "pull[] back" a fellow Muslim. Another Muslim from City C who had never participated in a Muslim program, stressed the need for a Muslim transitional home in particular, explaining the benefits of being "in congregation" by saying "if one loses focus the other could help. It's hard to be a Muslim by yourself."

The presence of Muslims alone has a positive effect, some said. One participant, who was incarcerated for twenty years but never participated in a Muslim reentry initiative, said, "People are watching, people see you. You will

constantly be on guard about what you do, more polished about your activity. In your non-Muslim environment, they don't know how a Muslim is supposed to act, so you lose some of the polish." Another City C resident explained that just "be[ing] around" other Muslims prevents one from "making mistakes" and from "want[ing] to do other stuff you're used to," but emphasized that the Muslims must be "good" – that is, they must actually practice the faith.

All but one of the residents of the Muslim transitional home felt that the Muslim brotherhood in a faith-based program would provide a "check" on one's behavior. As one resident put it, "When we are with Muslims, we check our brothers if we see them falling into a *haraam* state [i.e. committing criminal behaviors]." One resident emphasized the latent, even unexpressed, negative feedback that one might receive as a "check." He said, "Say if I were to start smoking, it would have been frowned upon. That keeps you in check." Another agreed, explaining that the mere environment created when one is with fellow Muslims reminds one to act morally and pro-socially. In his words: "It's hard to relapse when you're surrounded by all positive things. You will make better decisions." The environment created by the Muslim brotherhood can essentially envelop those within it, despite their own levels of faith, exerting a pro-social influence. One resident described that the Muslims within the transitional home would remind each other to pray on time by knocking on each other's doors "and you can't get away from it." The same environment exerted reminders for other types of behaviors as well, including "dress[]," "smoking," "drinking," "club[bing]," and substance abuse – as well as, by extrapolation, even more extreme anti-social and criminal behaviors (i.e. violence).

Peer Education about Islam and Spirituality

Of those who discussed brotherhood-related benefits, three-fourths mentioned that such a brotherhood would be able to increase their knowledge about Islam. One formerly incarcerated Muslim described "peer support" as a "teacher." Another noted that "If the brotherhood is solid, and the Muslim is spending time with the brotherhood, and while he is doing that, and spending time in the *masjid*, he is learning more." This opinion was shared across cities, where a majority of formerly incarcerated individuals interviewed from each city discussed peer education.

Half of those involved in the Muslim reentry program (City A) discussed peer education, particularly discussing how it played a positive role in their own program. Qadeer, who was a leader in the construction initiative of the program but did not reside in the home, said that having Muslims around him in the program "helps a great deal, even more than the work itself" because "There is someone there. If you see someone drifting, he knows how to pull you back." When describing how peers "pull back" each other, he said "[A fellow Muslim will] say, let me give him knowledge." Another Muslim in Program A's construction initiative discussed how his fellow program participants would "teach each other" about Islam, saying "Everyday one brother brought something, something new that they read from the Qur'an." One interviewee from City C, who had never participated in any Muslim programming, also mentioned the advantage of being with other Muslims in a hypothetical house setting. When describing his ideal program, he advocated having a Muslim-only transitional home in part because, "If I have a question I could ask my fellow Muslim."

Several individuals, across cities, mentioned that education among peers

was critical to preventing reoffending. One called it a "safety net [that] prevents you from reoffending." Three in particular discussed that education is a constant phenomenon among peers in general, and that one's company can either influence one positively or negatively. Thus, being around Muslims helped reentering Muslims – in particular, those new to the faith – stay away from influences that may encourage them to reoffend. Omar, from City C, who was incarcerated for twenty years, described this phenomenon as follows:

> We want to keep [the reentering Muslim] in an Islamic mentality as close as we can. The environment itself is a breeding ground for good. Bad company is like a furnace, if it don't burn you, the smoke will get you. The people that you associate yourself with, either they will influence you or vice versa. Since they enjoy a superior position – you're just starting out, and they've been at it for five, six years, then they will probably be influencing you.

Omar further clarified that the "environment" he wished to create among Muslims would be one in which "criminal thinking is not going to be reborn."

Ben, from City A, shared a very similar sentiment, advocating Muslim company because "It's easier for someone to pull you down than it is for you to pull the crowd up. It's easier for you to be pulled back into something you are familiar with than for you to pull them into something that is new." One City A participant felt that "[i]f you hanging with a non-Muslim, someone is *tablighing* someone" – where "tabligh" is the Arabic word for "spreading the message," somewhat akin to proselytizing. He stressed that the informal education about one's faith and moral actions is a critical advantage of Muslim company and keeps the reentering Muslim away from actions forbidden by both Islam and the law. Similarly, when discussing how formerly incarcerated Muslims can best desist from crime, one City B resident stressed the need for the "new Muslim" to be "surrounded by other Muslims" in order to "learn more."

Individuals from each city shared strikingly similar opinions with regards to peer education, as with other aspects of brotherhood. Half of the participants in the multifaith Program B were, however, distinct in that they recognized that positive peer education could also happen in other spiritually-based settings that were not particular to Islam, including "group meetings," "Church," "Bible-study," and being around "people in the program" who were not necessarily Muslims. Overall, however, many participants felt that faith-based peer education from like-faith colleagues would assist in their desistance from crime.

Mutual Understanding

Finally, three-fourths of those who discussed "brotherhood"-related benefits described a distinct and unique "understanding" that they felt from their Muslim peers. This sentiment was shared across cities, though it was mentioned by City B participants as not exclusive to Muslims, as discussed below.

The kind of "understanding" that interviewees described was both an understanding of Islam as well as an understanding of the challenges facing a formerly incarcerated Muslim – particularly the influences that could lead one to criminal behavior. As discussed previously, one of the difficulties that participants felt during reentry was "find[ing] Muslims who understood what I was going through, who you could relate to." Participants described that having peers in a program who were also formerly incarcerated Muslims would address this need, because these peers would understand the influences and stresses that are weighing on reentering Muslims. As one interviewee put it:

> This is a serious high crime area that we are in, so we have a very good idea to deal with the issues that may come up. The experience that you get from being what they are – I've been there where you at, I know what you need, I don't need you to tell me what you need.

Two experts and three program administrators, all from distinct cities, agreed that peers who have "been there" have an "edge" in relating to their co-participants because these peers have experienced the same challenges. Because of this "edge," these individuals "can speak with more authority," in the words of an imam and former transitional home administrator. A formerly incarcerated participant elaborated on this point: "We can be honest with each other. [W]e can't be fake with each other. I know who you are. You can't be fake with me because I've been there, so don't even try." He further described the advantage of having peers with a common background by adding that "we know what it looks like when brothers fall off." That is, having formerly lived a common lifestyle, where "damn near all of us almost been shot, [we] have been on the killing floor, we have taken lives," the formerly incarcerated Muslim peer knows what behaviors may be warning signs of a return to criminal behavior.

The idea that Muslim peers provide a unique understanding because they have "been there" resonated among half of the interviewees who discussed peer understanding. One resident of the multifaith program said that being around other formerly incarcerated Muslims was "very important" because they are "on the same page. They understand where I've been and where I'm going." The idea that participants could "be honest with each other" and therefore provide better support was also echoed by other interviewees. A director of the Muslim reentry program argued that because of their common experiences, Muslim participants in the program feel that they can share their concerns openly. Describing the discussions within the program, he said:

> [T]hese guys are coming from backgrounds where before, [they] would deal with being wronged in a physical or violent way. Now, there's an opportunity to sit with the other guys, talk it out, pray together, to talk about that struggle. This gives you an outlet to try and talk about these

> stresses. So whether it's violence, or economic pressures about selling marijuana on the side, whatever it may be. Just being able to talk about this without judgment, with some spiritual advice.

The understanding described by participants also included an understanding of Islam. Qadeer, who has been out for twelve years, said that having Muslim peers can help stop someone from re-offending because "You have someone who understands that way of life [i.e. Islam]." Saleem, a resident of the Muslim transitional home, described the "stress" of not "lov[ing]" his non-Muslim peers at a previous job, who thought he was "the bad guy" because he had been incarcerated. He then said, of currently being in a Muslim-only program, "Here, we all speak the same language. We can touch on any topic, it's not foreign to any of us." In the words of another resident of the home, "everyone can relate to each other."

Mentoring

All but three of those who discussed benefits related to brotherhood in general described distinct benefits to a faith-based program providing mentors, and over three-fourths of these individuals brought up the importance of mentoring without being questioned about it.

Four individuals described the benefits of mentoring in terms of having role models who provide success stories and examples of successful reentry, even with little direct guidance. As one program director put it, "brothers who have 'been there done that'" are "really critical" because "They provide an example of how to stay away from prison. They show how to successfully engage society and emerge as leaders." One formerly incarcerated participant, who now works on reentry issues professionally, but who never had a mentor himself, said, "You need to

come in contact with people who are living this life successfully – who have jobs, have families. They need to see there are Muslim men that are doing well, practicing their religion. You need that reinforcement, hope that it can be done." Matin, incarcerated for drug-related offenses and assault and a former resident of the multifaith program, said spiritual mentors generally (not just Muslims) could show someone "the example of what worshipping did." In describing his fellow program participants, he said, "The program showed a better way – you saw people who submitted, how it helped them get better."

Other interviewees argued that having a mentor was beneficial because the mentor, as someone who had "been there," had an unparalleled understanding of the challenges the mentee faced and his situation, and therefore could offer positive guidance. "Everybody needs a companion to share things with, to guide them," said a 50-year old formerly incarcerated Muslim who himself was a mentor. He continued, "Myself I've been incarcerated, the Imam [at my mosque] been incarcerated. . . . we have an idea of being converted to Islamic mentality in an Islamic environment." Because of this background, he stated that he had a strong grasp of the challenges facing reentering Muslim and how to address them. "I've been there where you at, I know what you need," he stated. As described in the previous sub-section, several participants articulated the special understanding and authority that comes from having "been there" as a formerly incarcerated Muslim. A professor and social worker described the ability to give "wise counsel" during the "stresses" of reentry during which a reentering individual must make many decisions that were formerly made for him. The "critical help" that a mentor could provide, in the words of a program director, also extends to offering advice, information, and spiritual guidance, as well as providing "a point of

accountability" (in the words of an expert) and social control. A 26-year old participant stated that "No matter how old you are you could always use a mentor. If you were incarcerated a lot, then a mentor could help you. Take you out of negative situations. Especially if it's a brother [i.e. a Muslim]." A 27-year old participant emphasized that "You obtain knowledge from the mentor, and people would know the punishment behind committing crimes." Across cities, ages, and roles, interviewees described mentoring as "critical," "very important," "crucial," and "the most successful support system" in providing support, understanding, and a "pull" away from offending.

C. Program-level Benefits

Nearly every participant described program-level benefits that they felt would result from a faith-based program. These benefits, described below, are labeled "program-level" because they result from the structure of the program itself, the environment created by the program, and characteristics of the program staff.

Characteristics of Program Staff

Three-fourths of participants talked about the characteristics possessed by the staff of a faith-based program and why these characteristics were beneficial to reentering Muslims. Most often mentioned was the understanding that staff members had. When interviewees from each city were asked to describe the need they felt for a faith-based reentry program, participants emphasized that the "faith-based" nature was critical because staff members would understand a Muslim's need to pray, fast, and engage in other behavior. Importantly, two participants from the multifaith program (Program B) agreed on the need for sensitivity and

understanding from staff, but did not require the staff to be Muslim. The remaining interviewees deemed it critical for the staff to be Muslim to truly be able to understand and accommodate Muslim needs. Indeed, many of these individuals had earlier expressed challenges with being in non-Muslim, faith-based reentry programs (such as church-based reentry programs), as described above. For example, Lateef, who commented on the "proselytizing" nature of Christian reentry programs and feeling "excluded" during Christian prayers at these programs, said:

> I think [the program] needs to be Muslim because if it's time for *salah* [daily ritual prayer], they understand it's important to pray. If it were someone else, they wouldn't understand that. Like if it's Ramadan, if I'm sitting there in a discussion, someone might have a big old meal and invite me to eat. Little things like that play a big part. To the point where I'm dealing with someone and they're smoking and drinking, that could lead me to fall off track [i.e. reoffend].

Others echoed this sentiment. Sadiq, who also struggled with praying at a secular halfway house, advocated that a reentry program "should be Muslim" because it "will understand the life I'm trying to live." Such a program "would know I'm not going to schedule a class at 1pm on Fridays. During Ramadan I would adjust the program to be sensitive to the thirty days." Three others agreed that a Muslim-run program would be "more sensitive to a Muslim's needs" than a non-Muslim program. One resident of the Muslim transitional home specifically professed great appreciation to his program for scheduling, accommodating, and even arranging for the fulfillment of religious practice. He said, "When we are working on the home, and whenever it was time for *jumuah* [mandatory Friday prayer], they said, 'okay it's time.' How many places would do that? And sometimes they brought the *jumuah* to us."

The understanding that would come from a Muslim program, according to participants, is not just limited to understanding rituals, but also includes the understanding among the staff members about the challenges facing reentering Muslims and about Islam. As Qadeer explained, the program's "professionals . . . understand you from a life perspective as well as the Islamic perspective [which] helps." Another participant said that a Muslim-run program would have "an understanding of responding to the individual challenges the person is facing. In most reentry programs there's a broad sweep of the brush." The understanding of the challenges facing reentering Muslims also includes "know[ing] what it looks like when brothers fall off" and begin to reoffend. Participants also emphasized Islamic understanding, saying that staff at a Muslim faith-based program would "speak the same language" and would "understand[] that way of life." In fact, participants from City A and City C particularly, felt that *only* Muslim staff would be able to truly understand their needs and connect deeply enough to help guide that individual towards permanent moral and law-abiding behavior. One City C resident, who has been out of prison for ten years and at his current job for over five years, felt that a non-Muslim could not connect at a profound enough level with a Muslim so as to help keep him "on the straight and narrow." He elaborated:

> [The staff member] would have to understand what this person's goal is [i.e.] this person's goal is to try to achieve paradise, not amass a lot of wealth . . . There are no long term courtships in Islam. A non-Muslim wouldn't necessarily say that you need to get married to keep yourself in check. There is an aspect of that that a Muslim could explain – yes, you need to get married but you need to be able to provide. It's all in the delivery – how would a Muslim present it versus a non-Muslim.

Ali, from City A, who has been out of prison for twelve years, explained that having Muslim staff administer a reentry program was essential also because the participant would also have a high level of understanding of the staff member (not

just vice versa). He explained, "When you're dealing with Muslims – you pretty much understand their basic core principles. With other people, you're not necessarily sure of their foundation, their goals, and directions. So you have to be careful." When asked if having a Muslim administer a program was necessary for successful reentry, an imam who formerly ran a transitional home stated:

> Definitely. Having a Muslim help them is critical because they want their lives to be centered around Islam. When they come out, Islam is their whole life. They don't want to work for non-Muslims. A Muslim could help them get over that. The brothers want to live around the Qur'an and *Sunnah* [prophetic example], and a Muslim would be able to understand that.

The imam's comment underscores a high level of religious adherence and aspiration for Muslims exiting prison, as well as a new identity, which feeds their need to be surrounded by other Muslims (discussed above) and their feeling that only a Muslim trying to help them would truly be able to understand their new identity fully.

Some participants framed the unique bond between Muslims – which they felt was essential in a staff-client relationship – in terms of respect and trust. One participant, who was incarcerated for 18 years and now works professionally on reentry issues at a government level, said,

> A Muslim automatically gives you their ear, regardless of class. *Assalaamu alaikum – wa alaikum assalaam* [the Muslim greeting, "peace be upon you"]. You have a built-in connectivity. A non Muslim would not get this. Even in a non Muslim setting, a Muslim would have more respect. Because they believe that Muslims have a higher standard of morality and faith. . . . When we walk[] around, people put out their cigarettes. "How are you doing brother." Automatically, you have respect. The person coming out of prison senses that.

Another individual, a 26-year old, said, "I would just trust the people teaching more when they are Muslim." Others described feeling more "at home" if Muslims ran the program. One resident of the Muslim transitional house, who also

described some non-Muslim halfway houses as "unfriendly" to Muslim residents, said "if the guy running [the program] is Muslim, it's based around Islam, there are situations you can go [seek help]. [Our program director] always opened the door, always invited us in. Financially, [or] if we needed something, he always invited us." He described an open relationship with the program staff in which he felt comfortable expressing his needs and challenges. Statements from a director from the Muslim program also emphasized the level of comfort that Muslim residents had, describing that these individuals – for the first time – had a space where they could "talk it out, pray together, to talk about that struggle." During sessions with a religious instructor, the director reported hearing the individuals discuss the stresses that weighed on them. He said,

> Brothers have told me that just being able to talk about those issues has helped them stay away from situations that can lead them to offending. . . . issues about interpersonal conflict, with families, people in the block – conflict and tension that could easily escalate and cause a person to take action that could be very damaging.

The comfort of being among Muslim staff who "understood you" was a prevalent notion. One individual, who was not in any reentry program, said that a Muslim-staffed program would have an advantage over any other because of its Muslim staff, because "when it comes time to eat or pray, your family understands you, and they don't question you." For newly converted Muslims, this "family"-like, supportive and understanding atmosphere helps ease the stresses of reentry and provides support for a new, law-abiding lifestyle.

The sense of comfort that returning individuals felt with Muslim staff was the result of not only the staff's understanding, but also the staff's motivation for helping others. Six interviewees discussed this motivation, elaborating on the sincerity of Muslim staff and the reasons behind their help. Salih, from City C,

described hypothetical Muslim staff members as "family" who "really love me." He elaborated on the success of a Muslim program, versus a non-Muslim program, by saying:

> It's the mutual bond that's there, the love that's there, it's the whole dynamic. Someone relates to you on a spiritual level, with an understanding that they're reward for helping you is from Allah. They are helping you on a higher level, they're not looking to get anything from you. . . . I can count on their support.

Others also mentioned that Muslim staff-members help fellow Muslims because they feel required by God to do so, and to do so out of their love for God. Qadeer, a resident of the Muslim halfway home, said, "The difference is that you have Muslims around you – there's an obligation among Muslims. Any other guy might not feel an obligation to you. 'I'm not obligated to you, we aren't brothers to that degree. I saw you falling, it ain't my business.'" Jibreel, a formerly incarcerated Muslim now running his own Muslim reentry service, discussed the "moral obligation" that Muslims feel to be "*awliyaa*"' – supporters and protectors – of each other. Wallace, another resident of the Muslim transitional home, said,

> I think more *masjids* and Muslim organizations should get involved with programs like this. This is one of the best ways to prove that you want for brother what you want for yourself. Our main goal is to get to *jannah* [paradise]. This is more beneficial to you than the person you are helping.

A participant in the multifaith program (Program B) also discussed the importance of staff who "care about another person" which he described as a spiritual concept" and "what God wants us to do for another." While no interviewee from the multifaith program expressed that the spiritually-based reentry program for which they advocated required an exclusively Muslim staff, all but one expressed that any staff should be "sensitive" and "understanding" of Muslim needs. The one individual who did not express this belief, and who had endured difficulties in praying and eating in accordance with Islamic law, did not

explicitly require understanding among the staff and expressed that difficulties from a lack of understanding may make the individual enduring them stronger in his faith. Again, however, the clear majority of interviewees described a desire for having Muslim-only staff because such staff would help them adhere to their new prosocial lifestyle.

Protective Program Environment

Three-fourths of interviewees discussed the benefits of the environment that a faith-based program would create, describing in particular that it was a "protective" environment akin in several respects to the "protective" environment that they had experienced in prison. A quarter of these interviewees described the lack of distractions and temptations in the hypothetical program environment. Three other characteristics were also mentioned – that the environment was structured, characterized by the Muslim brotherhood, and incorporated substantial time to think and study – each by half of the interviewees in this category. Almost always, the characteristics were discussed after an interviewee described a unique aspect of the Muslim experience in prison and linked this to a particular need they had during reentry.

Abdullah, who spent twenty years in prison, where he converted to Islam, described the "protective" prison environment thus:

> We are in a protective environment in [prison] – no fornication, no alcohol, no drugs, no night clubbing, going to bed at 9 or 10 – [a] protective environment. And if you are Muslim and part of the community . . . you will be in a community environment. You will have class three times a week, sit together, work out together. When you come out, you lose that protection you have, unless you establish yourself with a community out here that will accept and embrace you and has a sense of your needs. It exists but it's rare.

He described the need for a program that creates "insulation" and "keep[s] you in a Muslim environment." Others echoed the sentiment that the prison environment did not have "distractions" and made it easier to be Muslim. One said, "Well, it is definitely easier to practice in prison than out here, because [there are] not a lot of distractions in there. There is no *shaytaan* [devil] to take you off the *siraat* [straight path]. Definitely challenging in that respect." Another said, "The brotherhood in prison – is much easier. You don't have the distraction." As a result, several interviewees described wanting a program that would also take them away from distractions. As one resident of the Muslim transitional home described, "I wanted somewhere I would be comfortable at and not be distracted by the *dunya* [world]."

The prison environment also featured structure that assisted formerly incarcerated Muslims in practicing Islam. As a primary matter, the environment in prison handled one's basic needs, and allowed prisoners time to focus on reflection, religious study, and practicing Islam. The most often mentioned basic need was employment. A former director of a Muslim transitional home described, "What many guys report is a disappointment of not finding that brotherhood that they had in prison. What I point out is that they didn't have a job in prison, and so you would go to *jumuah* [prayer] every Friday, go to *ta'leem* [religious study] . . . you didn't need to work." The prison environment was also more accommodating of some religious requirements. Rasheed, who was incarcerated for thirteen years and converted in prison, said

> To dedicate time to *salat* [prayer], to read and get understanding [was easier in prison]. There, they would let you go off the job site and pray. Out here they don't allow that. To devote time to Islam is harder here. Because you have family, economic responsibilities out here. So it shortens the hours of the day where you can sit down and study Islam.

One interviewee also mentioned that in prison their basic needs of food, clothing, and toiletries were covered, but by their fellow Muslims, not the prison itself. Sadiq, who was incarcerated for eighteen years while Muslim, said,

> If I went to prison today, the moment they learned that a new Muslim was here, off the bus, the brothers would engage me immediately. I came out of the holding cell, came across the compound. If someone said there is a Muslim in the house, they would try to find out what his name is. "There's a Muslim in the cell house" – the brothers would try to find out who this is. The brothers would try to get this guy. The brothers would have toiletries for him, confections, clothes, etc. until he is stable. If he didn't have resources, the brothers would support him. We'd have a '*bait ul maal*' [treasury] in there where brothers would donate stuff like soap, and literary items.

Thus, because prisoners did not need to take care of many financial and family responsibilities and had many basic needs fulfilled while in prison, they had "time to think" and to study their faith. Eight formerly incarcerated interviewees, of all ages and from all cities, mentioned having this time to reflect and to study. One said, "I think a lot of people accept Islam in prison because they have a moment of reflection, time to think about themselves. There are listening opportunities. You listen to the Muslims, and guys come out saying 'what the Muslims have to say makes the most sense.'" Another explained, "When you're in jail, you have your privacy, you can have privacy to get close to Allah [God]." Yet another participant described converting to Islam after hearing a Muslim prisoner and Christian prisoner "debat[e] about Islam" and listening to the Muslim prisoner "[make] a lot of very valid points."

Likewise, the interviewees' conversion stories featured many anecdotes about intense studying and reflection. One former prisoner described being mentored by a Muslim. "We would sit together and he would study with me every day. He would teach me about Islam," he said. Another describing being illiterate, "[teaching] myself how to read and write," and "developing a deeper

understanding of life, period." He explained that he "learned more" about Islam, studied the Qur'an, and became Muslim as a result. The longer the sentence, the more time the individual has to think, according to one program director.

Additionally, the prison environment reinforced a prisoner's new Islamic identity through structured Islamic practices, including the five daily prayers, religious classes, and Friday prayer, most of which were executed as part of the Muslim "brotherhood" that was discussed by three-fourths of all interviewees. Several interviewees discussed prison brotherhood specifically, and used words like "unbelievable," "strong[]," "intense," and "tremendous" to describe this brotherhood. One interviewee, a City C resident incarcerated for five years, said "I saw how close the brothers were in prison and that made me want to convert." The prison brotherhood helped reinforce Islamic practices, as prisoners would often pray together. Omar, who was incarcerated for twenty years, recalled having class, praying, and exercising with other Muslims. Roshon, incarcerated for twelve years, discussed that "In the institution, it ain't no option about missing *salat* [daily prayer]. If you ain't there [praying in congregation], brothers gonna make you get up and do that *salat*."

After being in this protective prison environment, formerly incarcerated Muslims experience difficulty in finding a brotherhood, developing structure in their lives, and continuing to practice their religion. These challenges have already been described in detail above, and are summarized in the following statements from a formerly incarcerated interviewee, a program administrator, and an expert, respectively:

- "And trying to identify Islam, and the brotherhood in the institution and what we had out here, it was completely different. What we had in prison was much stronger. We had to *make* a brotherhood out here."

- "So the bonds of brotherhood in prisons are intense. So many guys coming out are looking for that structure, and they don't find that. For those who are successfully integrating the practices of Islam in their lives – many of them are coming from highly regulated atmospheres, especially those who have been incarcerated a long time. Much of their daily life and mental stability is contingent on that schedule."

- "It is unreasonable to expect a formerly incarcerated individual to go from a structured environment where they have such support to a whole new world alone with no plan, no support, and no guidance."

The takeaway point is that a faith-based program may help recreate a "protective" environment that is similar to the environment that a Muslim experiences in prison and that allows him to address the challenges of adjusting to a new world during reentry and developing a prosocial lifestyle. Interviewees discussed various characteristics of a program that can help develop that protective environment, including structure, enforcement and accommodation of religious practice, addressing basic needs, allowing time for study and reflection, and supportive brotherhood, as discussed previously. The following four statements (from a program administrator and three formerly incarcerated individuals) provide a summary of such opinions:

- "A big problem with anyone trying to reenter is getting order. Islam provides us with order naturally. A big part of the program is having a very structured day. Just five prayers alone provides an element of structure."

- "[O]nce you are detached and the further estranged you become from practicing principles that you had been practicing for five, six years – depends on the length of your incarceration – [e.g.] if you're in an environment where you can only practice 50-60% of what you were doing for the last ten years – [you will more likely reoffend]."

- "[My Islamic faith-based program, i.e. Program A] gave me a chance to sit back and observe instead of rush in head on and "catch up" on what I had lost. It gave me a chance to reflect and take my time in reintegrating."

- "In jail, brothers have a strong bond, and when they come out, their bond isn't strong, because you can't come together – you come alone. So their bond might slip. So a program would help a lot. The greatest thing you can do is to be around other brothers, so you won't want to do other stuff you're used to."

Participants indicated that a program's ability to "protect" and develop Muslim brotherhood was essential during the transitional period from prison to the community, where the "paradigm shift" is so "stark" because the returning individual must take responsibility for employment, housing, and family, while facing more limited family, peer, community, and faith-based supports.

4.1.3 Programmatic needs and challenges

A. The Ideal Program

Interviewees also discussed the programming features of the ideal reentry program. Those formerly incarcerated individuals who were involved in a program at the time (i.e. Program A and Program B) as well as program administrators discussed the shortcomings of their programs and how to improve them. The latter also discussed their programs' implementation challenges.

When discussing their ideas for ideal programs, participants across cities shared several similarities. All but one of the interviewees advocated that the program provide housing, all but two desired having Islamic or spiritual classes, and all but four wanted some kind of job skills training and placement. As with other topics, City A and City C residents shared very similar opinions, while City B participants differed on some points. The primary difference related to the spiritual nature of the program. All non-expert interviewees argued in favor of faith-based programs, but those interviewees who were in or who staffed the interfaith program (City B) felt that the need was for a spiritual, multi-faith program, while City A and City C participants felt strongly that the program should be Muslim-specific and Islam-based (most often described in terms of

classes and staff). Participants who were in Program A and Program B felt that their own programs, respectively, were ideal in large part. These differences are discussed in Section 4.1.5(A), below.

The most-often mentioned characteristic of an ideal program was that it offered housing. Interviewees explained that housing was needed because it took care of one of the most immediate and critical "basic needs" and it allowed Muslims to live together, thereby incorporating benefits of having Muslim peers, as described above. Two City C residents in their mid-twenties said, "[The ideal program] would have housing, where [individuals] could stay for a couple months until they could get back on their feet" and "I would provide them with shelter. First I would make a house where they could live with other Muslims, where they'd be in congregation because if one loses focus the other could help." Two other City C residents, both 33 years old, said, "A house could really help for . . . brothers to have that peace and calm" and "A place to stay would help, but knowing myself and this area but I would have to lay down rules." Residents of the Muslim transitional home (City A) also felt that housing was a critical component of their ideal faith-based reentry program. For example, one resident explained, "If I were to design it, I would definitely eliminate the basic needs immediately. . . . Eliminating the things that would cause them to not be secure. Providing security for them as well as keeping them on the *deen* [i.e. a good Muslim]." Thus, the housing that participants described was not merely a structure; it provided both physical shelter as well as a sense of spiritual support and security.

Formerly incarcerated interviewees from all cities agreed that any ideal reentry program should involve classes about spirituality and/or religion as well as

job skills training. Shamar, from City A, described his desire for "[c]lasses about respecting [Islam]." Salih, from City C, discussed implementing "*Salat* [prayer] classes" and "*halaqas* [religious discussions], to help people talk about what's on their mind." Two City B participants emphasized that any reentry program should involve "lectures" based on religious texts and "group discussions." Those who described the need for job skills training discussed the development of soft skills, vocational training, first-hand experience, and actual employment. One former director of a Muslim transitional home advocated implementing "[p]rograms for job readiness, helping develop their skills so they can find a job." Qadeer, a participant in the construction training initiative in Program A, deemed the effectiveness of his program to be due in large part to its skills training portion. He said,

> Anyone, Muslim or not, can see that this is a successful process in work: you have people coming out, you are rehabilitating them, educating them, and giving them skills. . . . It's not making you rely on anything, but it's teaching you a skill. It's not just allowing you to be here, but also allowing you to develop. It's giving you a direction from an Islamic perspective to do what you need to do. This program hits on every cylinder.

Other participants discussed employment-related services by emphasizing access to jobs rather than skills training. For example, Salih expressed a need for classes about "how to get jobs, how to dress at an interview, [and] at the job." Ilyas, from City C, said, "I would let them know where they could find a job fair. I joined a network with a Muslim brother who told me about a job fair, I signed up with myself and a bio and I could find out about other Muslim networks." A City A resident advocated that the program itself provide job opportunities to its participants.

The requirement of "discipline" was mentioned by ten individuals from all cities, who also mentioned wanting housing in a program. These individuals felt

that strict discipline was needed in any reentry program to ensure that the residents are "serious" and to make sure that they are exposed to spiritual teaching. A Program A participant described the necessity of "laying down the rules" for the reentering population. Individuals from City C described wanting classes to be "mandatory," a rule that "[if] you miss three or more days you get kicked out," requiring attendance for each daily prayer, and creating "chores." The purpose of these rules would be to determine "if they are ready to be serious about the *deen* [i.e. Islam]" and whether they are committed to making a pro-social change in their lives. Participants reflected on their own needs and tendencies and reflected on the characteristics of their social environments as they spoke of these requirements.

Individuals from City B also discussed the need for discipline. Administrators discussed being a "tough love" program and mentioned that "not being tough enough on [clients] is not helpful." One mentioned that "without discipline, you become a victim of [criminal] behavior." Another described "struggle" as essential to the learning process. Clients of the multifaith program described the "discipline" that comes from the faith teachings, such as awareness of God and implementation of prayer, as well as the program's requirement to "go and listen to faith-based teachings." These elements of discipline were absolutely essential and core to the program's success, they felt.

All but two of the participants and administrators from the Muslim reentry program (Program A) extolled their program's requirement of discipline and "seriousness." Attendance at various classes was mandatory, along with restrictions on conduct and travel and implementation of chores. One of the participants described needing strict discipline because "we are trying to develop real leaders . . . We didn't want to turn into a flop house." A director of the

program described the "military" nature of the program: "we are gonna clean up, cook, [have] quiet time. . . . We also gonna do a lock down for 45 days in the beginning to make sure they don't engage with anyone else." In fact, Program A incorporated an interview process expressly to find individuals who are "serious," "dedicated," and "committed" as Muslims and to becoming leaders of the community.

Overall, striking similarities existed across interviewees of different roles and from various cities, who felt the ideal reentry program should offer housing, spiritually-based classes, and employment-related support. Discipline should also be a key element of any program. While interviewees from City A and City C agreed that the ideal program should offer Islamic classes and be run by Muslims, those from City B advocated a more spiritual, multifaith approach. As one administrator from Program B said:

> The administration should be sensitive to Muslim attitudes, but we should get these people back to their humanity, not split hairs about religious preference. We should be thinking about benefitting all people who are in trouble. To make this specific to a religious identity would depart from Islamic principles. I think that Muslim programs should be open to clients of all faiths. I could imagine density of need that would make that possible or necessary to focus on a sub-population, like Muslim-only, but that is not right now.

B. Partnerships

A quarter of interviewees mentioned that the ideal reentry program, in order to be effective, should partner with other entities, specifically the government. Interviewees – including every expert – felt that partnering with government would primarily help make the transition out of prison smoother and provide financial support with housing and other basic needs. One imam discussed the need for Muslim representatives, perhaps from a reentry program, to regularly volunteer within the prison to provide reentry support for Muslim prisoners. He

described his own mosque's volunteers as being "well known in the Department of Corrections" and that his mosque is therefore "the first stop for people coming out." A program director also described the need to connect with the correctional system to help tailor the program's services to each individual's needs. She advocated "connect[ing] the program to a chaplain, someone in the prison, because it is essential that their current behavior is incorporated into the program." Another program director echoed the need to partner with the government, and specifically with the corrections system, in order to raise the profile of the reentry program and allow individuals to come to the program directly, and smoothly, from prison or jail. From the government's perspective, two experts – a judge and policy-maker – discussed in detail the need for the government to liaise with community organizations in order to connect reentering individuals with mentors and to provide community-based social support (and "social control") that probation officers could not provide.

In terms of financial support, several interviewees mentioned that the government help could address basic needs, including housing, food, and healthcare. One formerly incarcerated participant said,

> I would build a house and seeks the government's help also, for assistance as far as maybe funding or housing. To get transportation and employment, as much as we can . . . . The government should stop paying the rent, [so participants] should be able to obtain a job after five years after us helping you out. This should be money just to get you started, then you should get a job and get off the streets.

Those who discussed government financial support felt strongly that participants in a reentry program were critical recipients of such support. As one program administrator emphasized, "You need to plug these people into their entitlements in their society – i.e. public services. The program should interface with government freely."

A few individuals also mentioned partnering with other entities outside government, including other Muslim organizations and faith-based groups. One formerly incarcerated individual advocated informing those reentering of job fairs and employment opportunities through Muslim individuals, groups, and informal networks. He said, "I would let [formerly incarcerated Muslims] know where they could find a job fair. I joined a network with a Muslim brother who told me about a job fair. I signed up with myself and a bio and I could find out about other Muslim networks." Others advocated partnerships that went beyond the Muslim community. An imam described the need to partner with non-Muslim groups in his local area to provide reentry services for Muslims that were beyond the capacity of the mosque. A director from the Muslim reentry program (Program A) as well as the multifaith program (Program B) discussed partnering with other service organizations to provide mental health screenings, employment-related services, and other services that the program itself could not provide in-house.

C. Location of ideal program

Some interviewees also described the location of an ideal reentry program. Most of these individuals (80%) advocated that the program operate independently. In particular, they highlighted that the program should *not* be affiliated or located within a mosque (masjid). Several reasons were given to justify this decision. First, mosques were seen as legally or practically restricted from partnering with the government. A program administrator from the multifaith program, when advocating that a reentry program "should not be run by a masjid" but may still be "Islam based" and should still be a "501(c)(3) [non-profit organization]," said that "The program should interface with government freely. You might unnecessarily

hold yourself up if you're tied to a masjid." The administrator described her own program as "affiliated with an official masjid and official church but not run by it." Another expert said that "Muslim organizations are likely to receive real scrutiny" in the post-September 11th political atmosphere because of the "appearance of proselytizing" and the misguided view that the Muslim organization may be "recruiting for a training camp" if they include religious content in the program. He advocated incorporating "ethics classes" rather than openly religious classes to address these concerns.

Second, mosques were seen as "too busy" or lacking capacity to properly run a reentry program. An imam whose mosque formerly ran a transitional home for Muslims reentering the community discussed how his mosque "decided that we couldn't manage it," in part because the home needed "a full-time person to run it." As a program director explained, "the typical *masjid* doesn't have the focus, the resources, the wherewithal to do this [i.e. administer the home] well," and "wouldn't be able to have the kind of professional oversight that is needed."

Third, the environment of mosques was described as "alienating," "judgmental," and too "rigid." These characteristics were discussed in detail earlier among the challenges individuals faced during reentry. The following two quotes, from a formerly incarcerated interviewee and a mosque imam, respectively, offer a summary of these challenges:

- "I wouldn't base [the reentry program] in a *masjid* personally, because of the dynamics of the *masjid*. I think it would turn some people off because of their understanding of Islam and community. I don't prefer a *masjid*, because of the risk of alienation. If it were *masajid* [mosques] it would have to be a collaboration. And even if it were a collaboration, you'd run the risk of alienating the smaller *masajid*."

- "[Mosques in America] have a high possibility of losing [former prisoners] just like we are losing youth and young professionals. The masjids in America – the way we function is a turn off for young people in general. . .

> . We have to be relatable to what is the real world – this is a problem with masjids in general. We are not connecting with people. For some of the guys that come out they think it's what they had in prison."

Thus, in addition to being practically restricted from government partnerships, misunderstood, and lacking capacity and time, mosques were seen as places with insufficient understanding and acceptance of the experiences, beliefs, and challenges facing those coming home from prison. It may be useful to note that the mosques that these interviewees referenced were generally local (i.e. within the interviewee's neighborhood) and predominantly African-American. Interviewees did not mention racial tensions at the mosque (likely because the mosque attendees were generally of the same race) as a source of alienation or difficulty.

A minority of interviewees recognized potential benefits of having a reentry program that did operate out of a mosque. First, the mosque provided a positive environment, even if its reentry programming was entirely secular. One formerly incarcerated participant said, in reference to reentering Muslims, "Just by being in the *masjid*, they'd be more serious," out of respect for the mosque. Another agreed, and added that being in the mosque can yield unexpected and positive inspiration. "You're in a place of God," he said. "You're going to have some type of inspiring moment. You could be inspired by a number of things – see someone *deening* [i.e. practicing Islam] or a sister wrapped up." Second, the mosque could provide key resources for reentering Muslims. Several individuals mentioned that mosques are the "first stop" for reentering Muslims and the place where they meet many of their most basic needs. One formerly incarcerated interviewee described, "*[M]asajid* [mosques] have the knowledge, the connections, and they are the first place brothers come. They sleep in the *masjid* coming out." He advocated that "more *masjids* and Muslim organizations should get involved"

in building reentry programs. Others agreed that the mosque provides "resources" for reentering Muslims. One explanation for this ability may be that mosques receive more financial and in-kind support from the Muslim community generally, which reentry programs – few in number anyway – struggle to secure (as described further below). A program administrator described that her program "has never had enough support from the general Muslim community, which would be an advantage of basing the program in a *masjid*. There are never enough Muslims to teach the people. Never community interest to reach out and become a part of the work."

D. Implementation Challenges

A third of interviewees also discussed challenges that faith-based reentry programs face in terms of implementation, particularly if they cater to Muslims. All administrators and experts were asked this question, and several formerly incarcerated interviewees also delved into the matter on their own. In general, four implementation-related challenges were identified: 1) community denial of problems related to offending (and related stigma), 2) lack of community interest in and financial support for reentry programming, 3) lack of infrastructure, and 4) absence of partnerships.

First, interviewees felt that reentry programs dealing with Muslims faced significant challenges due to the Muslim community's general denial of problems related to offending. This challenge was described in part above. Lateef, who was formerly incarcerated in City C, reflected that "With [offending], you see that people are in denial, and the issue is taboo. Some Islamic centers think we shouldn't be dealing with [it]." Several individuals, as discussed above, mentioned the "judgment" and "denial of social problems" they felt among Muslims or in the

mosque. As one program administrator stated, the fact that the "Muslim community tends to not confront this challenge [and] tends to deny the problem" makes it "more challenging" to create and implement a reentry program.

Second, all but one of those who discussed implementation challenges brought up the fact that the Muslim community lacks interest in reentry and offers little financial support for related programming. Lateef, who was formerly incarcerated and now voluntarily assists Muslims who are reentering, said, "Muslim organizations [dealing with reentry] lack the support of the community, in terms of financial or in terms of getting more people into the program." He also discussed the fact that those who volunteer on reentry issues in the Muslim community struggle to do so because they receive no compensation for the many hours of work they do. He explained the lack of reentry programming for Muslims in terms of a lack of community support. In his words:

> And in that light [reentry programs are] very few. All of these individuals [i.e. potential program staff] are stretched so thin they can't give the support that's needed. . . . And even if you [had staff], because of the financial situation we are in, we are hard pressed to support initiatives like this because it takes away from . . . even making ends meet. So this is why the mentors and different groups like this . . . are so few. And it's sad because you want to do it but then you think, if I dedicate my time to this and I don't get no money then that takes away from my livelihood . . . .

Several others explicitly mentioned that the Muslim community did not seem interested in reentry issues. A program administrator discussed "never" having "enough support from the general Muslim community." An imam whose mosque previously oversaw a transitional house for Muslims, which later closed in part due to financial issues, said, "Money would go a long way. The Muslim community should think about [supporting reentry initiatives]. . . . [W]e as a community aren't ready for . . . people coming out of jail." Another expert, who operates a Muslim reentry initiative, said that Muslims "have few if any links" to

Muslim-run "advocacy and services." A formerly incarcerated resident of Program A echoed the idea that "American Muslims should be more concerned about Muslims who are incarcerated. They are coming home." Only one program director or expert mentioned seeing interest and financial support from the Muslim community, but this was a minority perspective.

A third implementation challenge facing faith-based reentry programs for Muslims, according to interviewees, was the lack of organizational infrastructure. One program administrator discussed the lack of paperwork that existed six years after her program was founded; even "a written explanation of the program" did not exist. She also described the struggle of progressing from being a grassroots initiative operating "by the bootstraps" to an organization conducting its operations "by the book." As an example, she highlighted the challenge to "get organized in a way to satisfy the insurance companies" once the organization began to "interface with the government and insurance companies." A former director of a Muslim reentry program described the challenge in properly evaluating the program and satisfying funders' evaluation requirements, particularly because the program did not have the resources and infrastructure to do so. He said,

> We were getting some government funding. It became more challenging when government began to become more output focused rather than focusing on the process. It was hard to get money because you can't show the direct output. . . . There is now more competition [for government funding], less money, and it is hard to show effectiveness. People that are competing for the money are savvy and in it for the money.

A current program director also described infrastructural needs, echoing evaluation concerns due to a small sample size of participants and financial concerns related to hiring enough staff for proper oversight:

> We have a tremendous [need] to deepen and further institutionalize the implementation of our curriculum. We have experimented with different forms. We have not really had much opportunity to test it. So scale – not a

> big enough sample size [are problems]. And having all the resources to support the structure and positions to provide full time professional oversight. For example, [we need] a full time counselor who can be paid to provide evaluation and follow-up.

Fourth, several individuals discussed a lack of partnerships that prevent programs that cater to Muslims from succeeding. As one expert noted, Muslim organizations have "few links [with] other faith-based movements" pertaining to reentry. One formerly incarcerated individual who works informally to assist reentering Muslims, said that Muslim reentry efforts "could be partnering with nonprofits or government to get referrals, but I don't think they are, because the program[s] would be more packed." He attributed part of this lack of partnering to the "inclusivity" of some Muslim communities, who may wish to restrict a certain program to those of a particular sub-group. He said,

> A lot of times in the Muslim community you see the community become inclusive, like this program is for this community or ethnic group. And it's rare that programs are not scrutinized when they open up for everyone. . . . And I've seen this for years, and it prevents us from doing good work.

When asked what he would do to combat this tendency, he recommended:

> Partnering with government, nonprofits, doing your best to stay neutral and doing best to defend yourself when it comes to Muslims trying to shoot down your cause. Picking and choosing your battles, what's a good partnership and what's not. And understanding your community. Now the [City C] community is not just African American, but also [other ethnicities]. You don't [want] people to come in and say that this program does not look like my community.

4.1.4 Placing Findings in Context

This section further analyzes the qualitative findings by reconciling and situating them within the broader literature and background reviewed in earlier chapters. First, Table 16 summarizes the main findings of the qualitative analysis.

Table 16: Summary of Findings from Qualitative Analysis

Challenges facing formerly incarcerated Muslims during reentry

Basic needs – challenges enhanced when Muslim

- Finding housing
  - Uncomfortable, excluded, chastised, stigmatized at secular or church-administered transitional homes and residential drug treatment programs.
  - Family dynamics, especially with non-Muslims, cause difficulty in practicing faith and staying away from risky behavior/influences
- Securing employment
  - Employers not providing or understanding religious accommodation
- Food
  - Difficulty in eating *Halal* food and fasting during Ramadan

Lack of family support

- Family critical of or hostile towards Muslim faith

Lack of comfort at mosque

- Feelings of being misunderstood and judged

Difficulty finding Muslim brotherhood

- Immediacy of the challenge of securing basic needs such as income, housing, and food
- "Worldly distractions" that lure the individual into his past sinful and/or criminal lifestyle and away from Muslim peers

Challenges of navigating new world

- Added level of difficulty for Muslim because of new religious, spiritual, and overall identity; the new Muslim community, its structure, attitude, and operation; and new family and peer dynamics

Need for faith-based reentry program/benefits sought from faith-based program

Individual-centered benefits

- Increasing knowledge about God, Spirituality, and/or Islam
  - Those in multifaith program advocated spiritual, non-denominational learning; remainder advocated Islam-only teaching
- Improving mental health, self-esteem, self-control, and outlook on life
- Establishing order and discipline in life
- Developing employable and leadership skills

Peer-related benefits

- Muslim brotherhood
  - Family-like support – particularly for new Muslims for whom biological family may be unsupportive
  - Checks on behavior – "constant reminder" and positive influence
  - Peer education about Islam and spirituality
  - Mutual understanding – from shared experiences and shared faith
- Mentoring
  - Provides role models, success stories, guidance, and understanding of challenges

Program-level benefits

- Characteristics of program staff
  - Staff understanding of Muslim needs and practices

▪ Program B participants did not require Muslim staff; remainder did o Client understanding of staff motivation o Client comfort with and trust of Muslim staff • Protective program environment – akin to prison environment for Muslims o Lack of temptation and distractions o Structured environment o Muslim brotherhood o Time to think and study
Programmatic needs and challenges
<u>The ideal program – programming features</u> • Housing • Islamic/spiritual classes o Program B participants advocated spiritual, multifaith approach and staff; remainder wanted Islam-specific programming and Muslim staff • Discipline • Job skills training/places <u>Partnerships with government and non-profits</u> • Makes transition out of prison smoother • Provides financial support with housing and other basic needs <u>Location of ideal program</u> • *Not* within or affiliated with mosque o Legally or practically restricted from government partnerships o Seen as too busy o Seen as alienating, judgmental, and rigid • Some beneficial elements of mosque include positive environment and key resources <u>Implementation challenges</u> • Community denial of problems related to offending • Lack of community interest and financial support for reentry programming • Lack of infrastructure, such as capacity for rigorous evaluation • Absence of partnerships with government and non-profits

These findings have implications not only for the development of theory (as discussed in the next chapter) but also with respect to various themes that arose from the literature review, specifically in the following areas.

A. Measurement of religiosity/faith

Chapter 2 discussed the various measures of "religiosity" that have been put forth by researchers and used in various studies. These measures include beliefs, commitment, and involvement. The findings from the qualitative research

indicate that, for those interviewed and likely for most reentering Muslims, faith or religiosity cannot simply be a matter of one's beliefs, but must include some element of practice. For example, the majority of participants discussed their feelings of discomfort and exclusion from secular and/or church-administered housing because they were unable to practice Islam (e.g. prayer, make *wudu*, fast, eat *halal* food, etc.). An even greater number of participants described the same challenges – along with the challenge of feeling pressured to be involved in sinful and/or illegal behavior – in their own homes and among their families. Others discussed the key notion of "accountability" in Islam and the "observant expectation" that Muslims practice their faith, the result of which is a sense of self-control that serves to deter people from crime. The inability to *practice* Islam – not necessarily any deficiency in Islamic beliefs – is what interviewees most often identified as leading to recidivism. To be sure, participants did discuss the sense of increased deterrence that derived from their belief in God, but this belief only translated into actual desistance through the individuals' actions (or lack thereof). Any measurement of religiosity for the reentering Muslim population must therefore address both beliefs and practices when seeking to measure the participant's adherence to his faith.

B. Family dynamics

The interviewees' descriptions of their interactions and relationships with family members stand as an outlier to the existing literature on the role of families in reentry. Research has established a link between successful drug treatment and positive family support (see Knight & Simpson, 1996; Sullivan, Mino, Nelson, & Pope, 2002), between programs that strengthen family involvement in monitoring

of delinquent youth and reduced delinquency and substance abuse (see Kumpfer, 1999), and between having strong family relationships in prison and improved adjustment to prison life (with lower rates of infraction) and reduced recidivism (Jiang & Winfree, 2006). For example, a recent study by the Vera Institute of Justice surveyed 290 incarcerated youth about their contact with family members by phone, letters, and visitation, and about their perceptions of family support (Agudelo, 2013). This data was matched with the facilities' administrative data regarding behavioral incidents and grade-point average (GPA). Youth who were never visited had statistically significant higher behavioral incident rates compared to youth who were visited infrequently or regularly. There were also statistically significant differences in GPA among youth who were never visited, visited infrequently, and frequently visited, although the analysis did not control for other relevant variables such as age and race. A more rigorous study conducted by the Minnesota Department of Corrections using Cox regressions found that, among the 16,420 offenders released from Minnesota prisons between 2003 and 2007, various measures of family visitation had a statistically significant association with reduced risk of reconviction and technical violation revocation (2011). In addition to this literature, life-course, social capital, and ecological theories (described above) describe various family-related mechanisms that foster desistance, such as the marriage "turning point" and the role of community "parenting." Perhaps in light of this theoretical and evidentiary support, reentry programs have sought to develop family relationships.

Against this backdrop showing the importance of family support during reentry in reducing recidivism, the qualitative research from this dissertation illustrates that for the majority of participants, biological families were not a social

support and were often a source of difficulty in the reentry process. Some of the family interactions described by participants were quite extreme, including disrupting prayer, not allowing the individual to eat religiously-permissible food, offering the individual alcohol or drugs, encouraging the individual to engage in sinful behavior, or cutting off relations entirely. Indeed, several participants commented that family-related challenges led them to reoffend. For the Muslim participants, the Muslim brotherhood they found in fellow Muslims, whether colleagues in their program or staff, seemed to create a new "family" that provided various types of social support and control that, in turn, prevented them from committing crime. According to participants, their Muslim brothers – their Muslim family – provided them with emotional support; a source of "constant" reminders and control that prevented them from committing crime; a source of knowledge, information, and networks; and a reference group (and role models) to whom they could compare their beliefs and actions. The participants' views of their Muslim brotherhood/family implicate several of existing sociological and criminological theories regarding desistance, including: social capital, social control, social learning, and reference group theory. These findings parallel some of those by Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011), who similarly found that some of the 23 Muslim prisoners they interviewed at a high security British prison felt that Islam provided a sense of "family" and/or "brotherhood," in which "[n]ew commitments," "kindness," and "trust" could replace "violent and abusive parents" as well as "hostilities from outside" (p. 65).

The present study thus demonstrates the importance of conceptualizing "family" broadly when discussing prisoner's lives and the reentry and desistance process. For many prisoners and former prisoners, "family" may be neither

biological nor traditional. In this study, brotherhood, in the form of fellow Muslims, replaced or supplemented existing family relations. Thus, the world of "family" blended with the world of "friends." One implication of this finding for further research is that studies should frame "family" broadly, asking participants who they consider as "family" and considering atypical conceptualizations of "family," particularly if the central inquiry of the study gauges social support. Another topic for future research is teasing out the relationship between the conception of "family," the role of "family" in reentry, and identity transformation, both theoretically and empirically. As described further below, religious conversion can be a source of identity transformation, as it was for the participants in this study. Many participants explicitly described the lack of support they felt from their family in terms of hostility or lack of understanding that their family felt towards the new Muslim and/or Islam. As the participant's identity transformed (from non-Muslim to Muslim, from anti-social to pro-social), not only did his conception and image of himself change, but his relationships with others and his notion of "family" were redefined as well. Some participants also commented that marriage was a natural, encouraged step for Muslims and a way in which a "life-course" change could be prosocial. Thus, while generally-accepted findings in the broader literature about the role of family (and marriage) in promoting desistance hold some truths for the Muslim minority population, the specifics of how family and marriage operate and how they should be defined are distinct, and should be context-specific.

C. Identity transformation

As described more fully elsewhere, some desistance literature (see Maruna, 2001; Maruna, 2004) focuses on the reentering individual's transformation in identity and self-image as the key to long-term cessation of criminal behavior. From their review of life-course narratives of offenders, Laub and Sampson (2001) noted, "It seems that men who desisted changed their identity as well" (p. 51). Part of this transformation may be the redefining of one's self-worth and role in the community, from one that is antisocial and destructive to one that is pro-social and constructive (Maruna, 2001; Lofland, 1969). Identity transformation theory and theories of religion and crime have not had significant overlap or meaningful interaction, despite the logical nexus between concepts such as "find[ing] God" (see Maruna, 2001, p. 8) and feeling like one is "not the same person as I was before" (see Johnson and Larson, 2003). In fact, there is a severe dearth of literature discussing the role of formal conversion to (or adoption of) a new religion in desistance, whether in terms of identity transformation or other theories. Further, as may be expected, no one has yet discussed the American Muslim prison convert's experience in terms of identity transformation theory.

Yet religious conversion aligns with several concepts in desistance literature that have been theorized and/or empirically shown to successfully stop criminal behavior. In terms of identity transformation, religious conversion can certainly create a new "identity" that can promote long-term desistance. The process may involve several pathways. For example, a new religious identity may serve to "knife off" a reentering individual from his surroundings and from criminal influences (see next chapter). It may also be a "turning point" in one's life course (Laub and Sampson, 2001) and might radically alter one's daily

activities. As Laub and Sampson (2001, p. 50) discuss, marriage and employment have similar effects, changing daily activities and decreasing unstructured socializing time with peers. As the authors write, "[i]nvolvement in these institutions—work and marriage—reorders short-term situational inducements to crime and, over time, redirects long-term commitments to conformity" (p.51). Being among a new set of peers and in new institutions, as a result of one's conversion, can immediately separate one from "situational inducements to crime," and through religious learning and peer presence help solidify one's commitment to law-abiding behavior.

Religious conversion may also develop a sense of agency, maturity, and responsibility, which Laub and Sampson (2001) also found to play a role in desistance in the life-course of former offenders, who then "forged new commitments, made a fresh start, and found new direction and meaning in life" (p. 50). Conversion itself may foster other life-course changes, such as marriage or employment, through peer-to-peer and spiritual teachings ("In Islam, you have wives, not girlfriends") and the development of leadership skills. The spiritual, God-awareness component of religion can direct the lives of converts by giving their actions and beliefs some meaning and consequence. The development of meaning and purpose can also help create agency, making the individual himself an agent of change for his own welfare (Maruna, 2001).

Among new converts to Islam, the "identity transformation" from religious conversion may be as prominent as any. As with the other consequences of religious conversion just discussed, conversion to Islam often creates an even more marked and significant departure from one's old lifestyle and a salient new identity. Several of the themes that emerged from the qualitative research promote

the conclusion that the Muslim conversion experience for reentering individuals is a unique and profound identity transformation, even compared to other phenomena of finding faith. One theme is Islam's "premium" placed on actually practicing the faith (an "observant expectation" as one interviewee said), which some contrasted with the Christian concept of "born in sin" and which one interviewee described as "you can't have it your way." A second theme is the significant sense of brotherhood among Muslim prisoners (see also Liebling, Arnold, & Straub, 2011). A third theme is the high levels of religious adherence among Muslim prisoners for whom "Islam is their whole life" because it is acknowledged as a "complete way of life" (see also Liebling, Arnold, & Straub, 2011). Finally, in terms of self-concept, the participants in this research remarked on their own new identity, describing a feeling of feeling "saved" by Islam and the desire to not "go back." As one City A participant summarized the change in him and his co-residents:

> We have a deep appreciation of what we have. We had to go through gunshots, murder, mayhem to get to Islam. . . . Islam is real for me. I have been blessed . . . . What could soften our hearts like Islam? We are talking about guys that stuffed people in trunks of cars and did some real vile things in their past. I look at it, and how our relationship with Islam is so different than others, because we can relate to Islam, and even to the pre-Islamic days, with the *jahiliyyah* [pre-Islamic] period, the tribal days. We can relate to the *hadith* [prophetic saying] about [repenting for] killing 99 people, and killing 100 people.

With such a stark contrast between self-images and actions before and after conversion, the adoption of a new faith (and the accompanying identity transformation) also seems to be a convenient way for reentering Muslims to come to terms with their past actions and reconcile them with their new identities – "making good," in the words of Maruna (2001). Likening their transformation to the difference between the Islamic and pre-Islamic (or *jahiliyyah*, literally "ignorance") periods, as two participants explicitly did, not only is a clear

indication of a comprehensive transformation but also indicates that the individual views his criminal history as a byproduct of a period of ignorance in his life that is now in the past. The final chapter in this dissertation further discusses the implications of faith-based identity transformation in desistance.

D. Protective prison-like environment

Three-fourths of participants in this study described the "protective environment" that they felt a faith-based program would create for them. The term "protective" refers to the environment's ability to protect individuals from committing anti-social conduct. The environment is: 1) free from distractions and worldly temptations, 2) involves structure and discipline, 3) allows time for thinking and studying, and 4) permits Muslim prisoners to spend time and forge bonds with each other. The first three of these factors are characteristic of the potential prison experience for any prisoner, or are at least not exclusive to Muslim prisoners. The final factor, pertaining to Muslim brotherhood, is an aspect of the prison experience that *is* particular to incarcerated Muslims. As mentioned, participants compared and contrasted their experiences as Muslims in prison with their experiences as Muslims reentering society, noting that the former was much easier due to the four factors described. Because the prison environment took care of basic needs, cut prisoners off from many worldly distractions and temptations, and as a result afforded them time, Muslim ex-prisoners remarked that they were able to reflect, study Islam, and meet and worship with other Muslims.

Due to this "community environment," Muslim prisoners felt they were a part of a strong brotherhood that affirmed their new prosocial identities. Some additionally noted that the in-prison Muslim "brotherhood" was a source of

physical and spiritual protection as well, as Muslim prisoners would look out for their co-adherents' basic needs and safety in prison and try to "check" the religious conformity of their actions. The notion of a protective Muslim brotherhood in prison was similarly found among Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011)'s British sample, although that sample expressed significant concerns with the disingenuous conversions to Islam – that is, conversions that occurred more for "fashion" and for the purpose of receiving the protection of influential, gang-like Muslim prisoners than for reasons pertaining to the faith – a concern that, while mentioned, was not prevalent here. In other words, in Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011, pp. 68-71), the term "protection" generally referred to Muslim prisoners' protection of each other from non-Muslims in the prison, even as the Muslims' own acts were violent or disruptive, while here, the term "protection" refers to the ability of the prison environment and brotherhood to protect Muslims from committing anti-social or immoral behavior.

Upon and during reentry, Muslims in this study felt their bonds of brotherhood weaken because they "came out alone" and not with their "community." A Muslim faith-based reentry program, therefore, would recreate the positive aspects of the prison environment and may help affirm new prosocial identities. The program's separation of the reentering Muslim from his antisocial peers and former lifestyle is akin to the concept of "knifing off" that has been discussed in literature on desistance, but not much in relation to religion and religious conversion. As Laub and Sampson (2001) write,

> It thus appears that successful cessation from crime occurs when the proximate causes of crime are affected. A central element in the desistance process is the "knifing off" of individual offenders from their immediate environment and offering them a new script for the future. Institutions like the military have this knifing-off potential, as does marriage, although the knifing-off effect of marriage may not be as dramatic.

The presence of practicing Muslim peers and staff may realize this "knifing off," especially if this presence is exclusive (i.e. the individual is completely separated from external delinquent influences).

However, the "protective" nature of the prison environment for Muslims is contingent on its "brotherhood" aspect. For non-Muslim prisoners, the prison environment may not be "protective" in the same way, unless it offered a similar type of brotherhood (perhaps faith-based). Thus, while some aspects of the "protective" prison-like environment of a faith-based program reflect aspects of prison that are secular and not particular to the Muslim prisoner's experience—such as structure, discipline, lack of distractions, and time to reflect—the basis for thinking of this environment as "protective" in the first place comes out of the *Muslim prison* experience, which is a unique experience. Conceptually, it would be difficult to deem prison as a source of protection if the prison was not the site of close-knit bonds that reaffirmed, and often created (through conversion), a new identity for the prisoner.

E. Shaming and community relations

As discussed elsewhere, "shame" can be a deterrent to future criminal behavior (see Braithwaite, 1989). While reintegrative shaming denounces the offense but accepts the offender, serving as a social control of sorts, disintegrative shaming stigmatizes and excludes the offender from the community. The comments of the participants in this study indicate that both types of shaming are involved in their lives. For those participants who were involved in faith-based program (i.e. those from City A and City B), their programs seemed to involve a "reintegrative shaming" approach, as fellow participants and staff members fully

acknowledged and denounced the wrongfulness of past criminal/sinful actions but embraced the individual who was ready to change. The presence of colleagues and staff who had "been there" or otherwise "understood the lifestyle" that participants wished to live also provided a social control—a "pull back" from further criminal activity. At the same time, the participants experienced "disintegrative shaming" at the hands of the broader Muslim and non-Muslim communities who, participants felt, stigmatized and alienated them. Participants discussed feeling excluded in the mosque environment, feeling "judged" and labeled by the broader community, and sensing a general lack of interest among community members in reentry-related issues and in the reentering individual. The implications of these competing notions of "community" are discussed in the final chapter of this dissertation.

F. Partnerships

Finally, a quarter of all participants discussed the necessity of faith-based reentry programs partnering with the government. Such partnerships were seen as necessary ways to ease the transition from prison, provide financial support, and address capacity issues. This finding aligns with the increasing popularity of government-FBO partnerships today, which are often executed by Offices of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (Department of Justice, 2013a). However, developing the parameters and details of government-FBO partnerships is a critical, but tricky, task. This issue is detailed more fully in the penultimate chapter of this dissertation.

4.1.5 Limitations and Questions of Generalizability

This section discusses limitations and issues of generalizability with regards to the qualitative research aspect of this dissertation. To be quite sure, as this research was certainly qualitative, it emphasized recruiting and understanding *broad* and *diverse* participant experiences and did not seek to randomly select "representative" participants (as would be critical in quantitative research). Indeed, the mere task of finding reentering Muslims, much less determining their characteristics and the representativeness of a sample, is difficult in itself. Yet the characteristics of the participants are critical in appropriately assessing the findings of this research. How similar are the Muslim participants to the re-entering Muslim population, or even to the reentering population? What can be said about the representativeness of the participants? These issues are explored here.

A. Differences Across Sites and Groups

As detailed in the previous sections, interviewees regardless of their ages, lengths of incarceration, backgrounds, roles, and cities of residence shared many similar views on the challenges facing reentering Muslims, the benefits of a faith-based reentry program, the features of an ideal reentry program, and the challenges facing such a program. Such similarity was unexpected. Administrators and experts generally echoed the sentiments shared by formerly incarcerated interviewees, except in two areas. First, administrators and experts did not identify family dynamics as a key challenge, which was significantly emphasized by formerly incarcerated interviewees. Second, while administrators and experts did touch on the need for "brotherhood" that Muslim ex-prisoners have, they did not

touch on a faith-based program's ability to recreate the "protective prison environment" to the extent that other participants did.

Perhaps the most significant disagreement drawn out in the analysis was between participants affiliated with City A and City C on the one hand, and City B participants on the other. On any relevant issue, those from City A and City C emphasized the benefits from and need for Muslim-run and Islam-based reentry programming, while those from City B simply advocated for spiritually-based, multifaith programming that was not exclusive to Muslims or rooted in Islam. This perspective was not unexpected. Indeed, at the start of this research, it was speculated that City A and City B participants may advocate for programs that mirror those in which they are involved—Islam-based or multifaith, respectively. These participants were intentionally recruited to provide differing perspectives that could shed light on the advantages and disadvantages of different faith-based approaches. City C participants were therefore also sampled to provide a sort of "neutral" sample of individuals who would be able to share perspectives that were not "biased" by a specific program in which they were involved. The striking similarity in the opinions between City A and City C participants, and the fact that not one of them agreed with City B participants on the Islam-specific nature of a program, indicates that the City B perspective is likely not shared by formerly incarcerated Muslims generally. Further research with broadly-recruited samples, however, would be needed to validate this claim.

B. The African-American Convert Experience

All of the participants in this study were African-American converts to Islam. Chapter 1 provided background on the demographic characteristics and

some of the historical experiences of this population, although little such research exists. African-Americans are a significant proportion of the overall Muslim American population (60% of native born American Muslims) and of the incarcerated Muslim population, though exact numbers on the *total* proportion of African American Muslims are not available (Johnson, 2011; Citizens Against Recidivism, 2010). Researchers have suggested that the majority of religious converts in prison turn to Islam and that a majority of male Muslims in prison are converts (Ammar, Weaver, & Saxon, 2004; Hamm, 2009; Citizens Against Recidivism, 2010). Again, exact figures on religious conversion in prison are not available—indeed, prisons do not collect information on inmates' religious affiliation as a matter of course, and studies like Ammar, Weaver, & Saxon (2004) and Citizens Against Recidivism (2010) only report figures from surveys administered to a few prisons in specific states. Any study commenting on the issue of religious conversion in prison—as well as research conducted in this dissertation—suggests that African American Muslim converts are quite prevalent in prisons.

Although the research on the history of Islam in prison is not particularly abundant, existing studies have shown that this history is significant (see Dix-Richardson & Close, 2002; Hamm, 2009). One study noted that it was "common" for African-American men to convert to Islam in prison (Dix-Richardson, 2002). Participants in the present study described the perceived "phase" and "stereotype" of African-American men "coming home Muslim." Thus, the experiences of African-American converted Muslim prisoners and ex-prisoners is not an uncommon set of experiences among African-Americans (incarcerated or generally) nor should they be thought of as the opinions of a minority among

incarcerated Muslims when in fact research suggests that many or most of the incarcerated Muslim population is African-American.

However, the experiences of this population (i.e. African-American converted Muslim prisoners) *are* distinct in ways that suggest that the findings of the present research[8] may not be generalizable to other populations. For example, participants in the present study as well as other researchers have referred to "jailhouse Islam" as a unique phenomenon, though it is not well-described (see HSPI, n.d.), To the extent that it involves unique theological emphases (and even sectarian mentalities, see HSPI, n.d.) and a distinctive sense of bonding and brotherhood, all of which was described by participants, the experiences of the African-American converted Muslim prisoner population are similarly unique. An analogous deduction can be made about the post-prison experience for this population. Again, participants described concerns about family acceptance, finding like-faith brotherhood, seeking support and understanding, and practicing their minority faith in their residence and workplace. These perspectives may be unique to reentering Muslims, whose family ties for example have strong cultural dimensions (refer to the myriad comments made by participants about their family members' immoral lifestyles or life choices). The present study's findings about the role of family dynamics and like-faith brotherhood during reentry may be particular to the reentering African-American Muslim experience. They may also, potentially, be able to apply to other populations, such as non-Muslim former prisoners who experience strong brotherhood in prison, have some kind of conversion or spiritual revival in prison, who belong to a minority faith (and therefore may experience similar family tensions). Indeed, some opinions –

[8] The terms "research" or "results" in this section refer to the findings from the qualitative research.

particularly those of Program B participants—were not specific to being Muslim and may be shared among those who "find faith" or reenter from prison with a strong spiritual identity. Further, the parallels of the present research with Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011) indicate that some themes—such as the "brotherhood" felt within prison among Muslim converts and the sense of "Muslims as family"—may be generalizable across some Western settings where Muslims are the minority, but more research with Muslims in various sociopolitical contexts is needed to make any concrete claims about the external validity of the findings.

C. Other Limitations

Other demographic characteristics of the participants in this research may limit the generalizability of the findings as well. For example, participants all returned to major metropolitan cities in the United States so it is questionable without broader sampling and further research whether their opinions can be generalized to those Muslims who return to smaller cities or rural areas, or to foreign cities. Additionally, the participants in this study were between the ages of 26 and 65 and generally had been incarcerated for lengthy sentences, ranging from five to thirty years. Thus, their opinions may not apply outside this age range, particularly to prisoners who are in their teens or early twenties, or to those who spent little time (i.e. under five years) in prison. Although it should be noted that participants shared many similar opinions and experiences across ages and geographic location, additional research with individuals from the non-sampled sub-groups could further address how generalizable present findings are.

In addition, it is conceivable that some of the results may be applicable to African-American converted Muslim women, but more research would be needed to discover more about their experiences and needs during reentry. It is also questionable whether the results would be generalizable to *shi'a* (a sect of Islam that is not *sunni*) Muslims, who have additional needs and face additional scrutiny and misunderstanding based on their minority beliefs, and to those Muslim offenders who committed crimes not represented in this sample (such as terrorism, immigration, or national security-related crimes). And again, "born" Muslims (non-converts) might not face some of the concerns about finding supportive and understanding networks and Muslim peers, which were dominant experiences for those interviewed and informed their needs. For example, incarcerated Muslims in the United Kingdom who are South Asian may likely not feel the challenge of having a family hostile to Islam or to practicing Islam, as many present interviewees did. In fact, Calverley (2012) found that for Indians and Bangladeshis in the United Kingdom, desistance operated as a collective, family-focused experience, while it was more of an individual experience for blacks in the country. Still, some incarcerated Muslims in British prisons may share sentiments regarding Muslim brotherhood, "Muslims as family," and "Islam as a complete way of life," as shown by Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2011). Finally, these findings likely have limited applicability to faith-averse or non-practicing Muslims for whom religious identification may be cultural, non-traditional, or otherwise limited in actual belief and practice.

To recap, then, the present findings may have only limited applicability to the following groups, though such claims cannot be made without further sampling these groups:

- Muslims who are not African-American
- Muslims who are not from major metropolitan cities
- Muslims who live outside of the United States
- Muslims who have committed terrorism, immigration, or national security-related offenses
- Non-Muslims within or outside of the U.S.
- Non-practicing, cultural, or faith-averse Muslims
- Some faith minorities

Finally, the "generalizability" question also extends to those findings that relate to the characteristics of the faith-based program itself. For example, it is likely that several challenges identified by administrators of the two programs sampled as well as experts apply to Muslim faith-based reentry programs generally since the individuals interviewed came from diverse backgrounds and professional experiences, and from various cities across the United States. These challenges include community denial, lack of community interest, and financial support, lack of capacity and infrastructure, and absence of partnerships. These implementation challenges may or may not apply to other faith-based programs that are rooted in non-Muslim faith traditions. Given the considerable variation among faith-based programs as a whole, broad statements about challenges they face are difficult to make, although research and policy literature indicates that capacity and funding-related issues are significant among FBOs of a variety of faiths (see Department of Justice, 2013a).

Further, while participants in this study shared that they felt that the faith-based programs they were involved in or envisioned were pro-social, not all FBOs provide their adherents with the same level of pro-social influences. For example, some FBOs are stronger than others in the extent to which they allow for networking or provide positive adult influences (Smith (2003)). Not all Muslim faith-based organizations may be able to provide the pro-social programming elements outlined in the findings above (including mentoring, religious instruction,

residential support, or job placement), or in the adequate amount. Some formerly incarcerated individuals may not be able to take advantage of these elements even if they are provided, perhaps inhibited by "disruptive events" and tragedies in their lives that cannot be overcome by religion (Smith, 2003). An example of such an event might be acute separation from one's family, perhaps as a result from religious conversion. Some Muslim organizations may even exert negative, antisocial influences on the lives of reentering Muslims, as discussed in Chapter 1.

D. Biases

The results of the qualitative research may also be limited by characteristics of the sample that are not related to demographics, though concerted efforts were made to address these biases and sample systematically as much as possible. One type of bias that may be present is the self-selection into the sampled programs (Program A and Program B) of individuals who are more likely to be religious, committed to their new pro-social identity, or willing and motivated to succeed (or other variables associated with the "protective factors" described previously). In other words, the participants in these programs, because of their being selected into Program A or voluntarily enrolling in Program B, might already be subject to fewer risk factors and more protective factors—even before the program begins. This concern is more applicable to Program A, which readily admits that it selects individuals who show commitment to their new faith, who have some sort of positive references, and who the program feels can become leaders in the program and in the community—a decision driven by the limited number of open beds they have available. Program B, in contrast, is a treatment-on-demand program which receives referrals from courts and prisons/jails, and also accepts walk-ins off the

street. There is no formal screening process to receive admission into the program and the program does not refuse admission to anyone who seeks its services. Selection bias into the program is therefore a concern for Program A. To help address this concern, interviewees for this dissertation were drawn not just from existing programs, but also from City C, where interviewees were not involved in faith-based programs and no program that is run by, caters to, or openly accommodates Muslims exists formally. City C interviewees served as a type of "control" in the research design. In addition, the interviews were analyzed keeping in mind the potential bias; thus, opinions across programs were constantly compared and salient similarities and differences were drawn out.

Another type of bias is the "gatekeeper effect" on sampling, which was discussed in the section on sampling strategy. This type of bias refers to the possibility that those who are referring interviewees may only refer those interviewees who have certain experiences or views—for example, the director of a case study program only referring those who have done well in his program. This type of bias may have been present in this study, since interviewees were found using a snowball sampling method that did utilize references, but was counteracted through a number of techniques. First, all current participants of Program A were interviewed, so there was no selection among this group. Second, City C interviewees were sampled to provide views that were outside of a program context. Third, numerous avenues were used to find interviewees in Program B and City C. Various individuals were asked for references—and these individuals varied on measures that may be associated with rates of recidivism, including religiosity, education level, employment, geographic location, length of time since release, etc. While some individuals were program administrators or religious

leaders, others worked in correctional facilities or government, and still others were simply recently released. Program B participants themselves were asked to refer other participants, as well as those who dropped out of the program. Individual referees were also asked to refer people who might have vastly different experiences than they, including those recently released. As a result, as the quantitative description of the interviewees showed, interviewees varied on key dimensions including types of offenses committed, length of incarceration, length of time since release, participation in faith-based and mandatory post-release programming, and age, though there was a somewhat disproportionate presence of older ex-prisoners, with violent criminal histories and correspondingly longer periods of incarceration. They did not differ at all in terms of ethnicity or conversion to Islam. To some extent, given the hard-to-reach nature of this population, some bias among the interviewees may be inevitable, because some use of referrals is necessary to reach participants. Future research may seek to sample this population more systematically, perhaps working directly with prisons and jails at the time of release.

A third type of bias is the bias of those participants involved in Program A and Program B to think that their program is ideal. Indeed, when asked to describe their ideal reentry program, participants who were involved in these programs often said that the program was their ideal. Again, City C residents served as a type of "control" to address this concern. Many of them described characteristics similar to Program A participants. All of the City C residents advocated Muslim-specific programming, unlike Program B participants, which indicates that the latter's opinions on the non-exclusive nature of their ideal program is probably not

representative of the typical formerly incarcerated Muslim, though more broad-based research would be needed to confirm this.

E. Generalizability and theory

To be clear, the limitations discussed above pertain to the qualitative research aspect of this dissertation, which is one (albeit significant) portion of a broader dissertation that aims to develop the theoretical foundation of faith-based reentry programming by marrying existing theory in sociological and criminological literature with original qualitative research. The generalizability concerns should not be construed as explicit limitations of the applicability of the problem and program theories and of the broader discussion on theory and intervention development, developed in Chapters 5 and 6. Indeed, research on the issue of generalizability in qualitative research describes the development of theory as the vehicle through which qualitative research becomes generalizable. Yin (2003b, p. 32) describes this process as "analytic generalization" (as opposed to the statistical generalization of quantitative research). Provided that qualitative research is rigorous in its methodology, data extraction, analysis, and development of theory, findings from the study of a particularized context or phenomenon can extend or inform the analysis of other contexts through the theoretical paradigm that is developed (see Yin, 2003a). Three ways in which qualitative studies can provide "validity checks" is through "(a) the use of multiple theoretical and conceptual lenses to examine the issue and parameters involve[d] *before* beginning the research; (b) the depth and extent of the sampling processes and feedback, member-checking and other data collection mechanisms; and (c) the multiple data analytic techniques used to align interpretations and test for consistency and

categories across the data sets" (Falk & Guenther, n.d., p. 6). Additionally, mixed-methods approaches that incorporate extensive literature reviews, reviews of evidence-based practices in the area, quantitative methods, and qualitative methods help develop theory, "practice principles," and policy insights that can help generalize the findings to broader policy contexts (Falk & Guenther, n.d., p. 6). The present research incorporates many of these qualities that help make the theoretical contributions of this study "generalizable," including extensive and cross-disciplinary literature reviews, reviews of evidence-based literature and evaluations, limited quantitative data collection, sampling that was intentional and systematic in many ways, analysis that was both inductive and deductive, and – most of all – rigorous development of theory that builds off of these multiple components.

Thus, despite some limitations, the findings from the qualitative research conducted for this dissertation are applicable to wider settings (e.g. beyond African-American Muslim converts exiting prison), in both practice and policy, particularly in the following two ways. First, a critical contribution of this study is that it illustrates the importance of conducting preliminary, theoretical research with the target population prior to developing or implementing an intervention. At the least, this study argues against a one-size-fits-all approach in reentry programming, even if the programming offered is "faith-based." The experiences of the reentering Muslims interviewed here have proven to be distinctive, indicating that this population (with its demographic characteristics described previously) is set apart from the typical, non-Muslim reentering population in several ways. The reentering Muslim typically has a strong conviction that practicing Islam promotes desistance, and he has a distinct identity, formed around

a pivotal life event: conversion to Islam. He often also has a unique experience as someone who was a Muslim in prison. While some of his challenges and needs upon reentry are the same as any other former prisoner, they often take on an added level of difficulty because of his Muslim faith (for example, finding housing that allows him to pray or that provides *halal* food). Overall, the reentering Muslim must navigate not only a changed society, but also a new identity, a religious community that has little to offer returning Muslims (which is markedly different than the in-prison brotherhood), and old peer and family influences which are often unaccommodating and unsupportive of his new faith. These challenges, in sum, can result in a profound "disconnect" in which returning Muslims do not have "anywhere that can genuinely address their needs" and thus "come home even more scattered and disconnected" than their non-Muslim counterparts, in the words of a program director. As interviewees discussed, these unique challenges can also often result in reoffending. Such findings, though preliminary, can build problem and program theories, which is the first step in designing an evidence-based intervention for this population. These theories are developed in Chapter 5, and their development can be framed as a "sample exercise" that should be conducted *whenever* faith-based reentry programs are created.

A second major way in which the qualitative results of this study are "generalizable" is through the formation of this dissertation's broader theoretical framework for understanding and helping develop faith-based reentry programs. That framework, which is also presented in Chapter 5 alongside the development of problem and program theories, is in itself broad enough to apply to a variety of populations that are diverse in terms of faith, race/ethnicity, geographic location, and level of involvement in the criminal justice system.

Chapter 5: Developing a Theoretical Framework

A central purpose of this dissertation is to develop a theoretical basis for faith-based reentry programming—a theoretical framework that both captures the logic of such programs and assists and guides the development and evaluation of such interventions. Figure 4 began the construction of this theoretical framework, based on the insights gained from reviews of literature in criminology, sociology, and evidence-based practice. This chapter adds to that framework, drawing on the findings of the qualitative research with formerly incarcerated Muslims. To do so, the qualitative findings are first used to construct a "problem theory" for the population that was targeted by the qualitative research (namely, formerly incarcerated, converted African-American Muslims), which details the process by which this population desists from crime during reentry. This specific problem theory is then combined with the insights gained from earlier chapters to develop a broader theoretical framework that can be applied in contexts beyond the niche Muslim population to help understand how faith-based reentry programs may operate and how they can be properly evaluated. This framework is presented in Figure 8.

Following the discussion of the broader theoretical framework, this chapter then turns back to the minority Muslim population to develop a "program theory" for a hypothetical faith-based reentry program geared towards this population, with an in-depth discussion of the logic model of such an intervention, intervention points, and evaluation suggestions. As is discussed further below, developing problem and program theories is a critical task in the early stages of intervention development and should be conducted for any population. In this way, the construction of problem and program theories for faith-based reentry programming

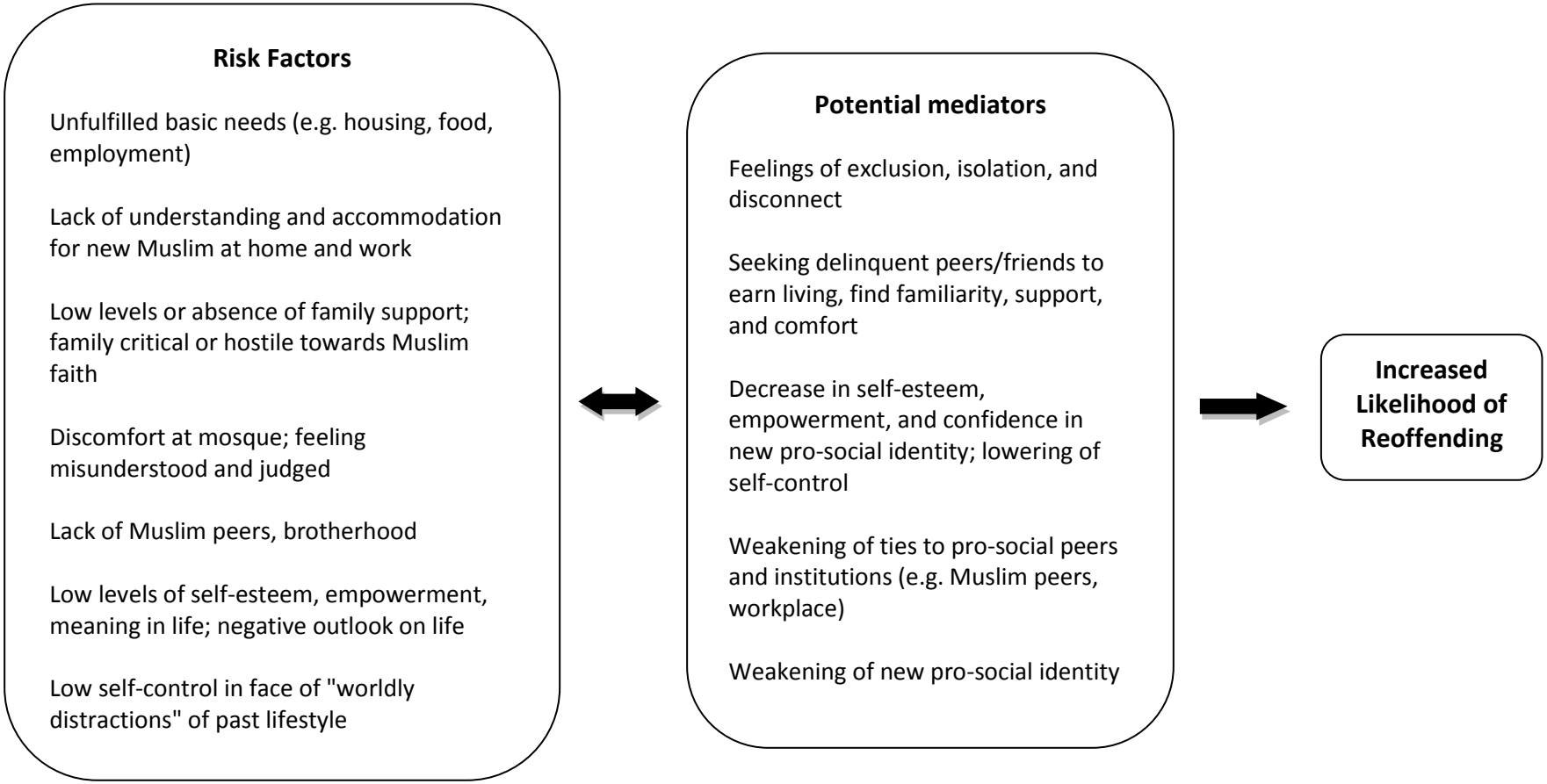
targeting a minority Muslim ex-prisoner population is a sort of "case study" or "best-practice" exercise that should be repeated for other populations.

5.1 Problem Theory

Developing problem theory for faith-based reentry programming involves identifying risk and protective factors that perpetuate or reduce re-offending during reentry. Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, & Day (2009) describe the term "risk chain" (p. 51) as a key concept in problem theory. In a risk chain, for example, x causes y, y causes z, and z causes w. According to this risk chain, there are three potential points of intervention, which problem theory subsequently explores.

The literature reviews supplied a range of theoretical risk and protective factors pertaining to reentry, religion, and crime, and illuminated some of the pathways that those who are reentering may take towards desistance. Some of these theories were more empirically supported than others. For example, individuals who form bonds through employment and marriage strengthen pro-social attachment, commitment, and involvement and are more likely to desist from criminal activity (Laub and Sampson, 2001). Religion may be a source of pro-social bonding for many reentering individuals. Yet, as previously discussed, these pathways are of questionable relevance outside of the Judeo-Christian context. Qualitative research is therefore critical to illuminating pathways towards successful reentry for minority faith groups, the most major of which are Muslims. To develop program theory, then, risk and protective factors, along with mediators, must be identified in light of the qualitative research conducted. Figure 5 below shows risk factors and potential mediators that were identified through the qualitative research.

Figure 5: Risk Factors for Reentering Muslims



Several risk factors and mediators emerged from the qualitative analysis, indicating that reentering Muslims[9] to whom these factors apply are at higher risk of reoffending after their release from incarceration. First, as many other studies have cited (e.g. Baer et al., 2006), those without housing and employment were more likely to reoffend. Three mechanisms through which this may occur are 1) the individual falls back to his old criminal lifestyle to obtain housing or earn income quickly, 2) his self esteem and sense of empowerment (e.g. the feeling of "self worth" from "a hard day's work," as one participant put it) is weakened, and 3) the immediacy of his basic needs makes finding pro-social peer support and brotherhood more difficult.

A second risk factor, tied to the first, is the lack of understanding and accommodation for the new Muslim in his residence and workplace, including not being able to pray, not being able to eat *halal* food, and co-residents' and co-workers' hostility towards Islam. This lack of understanding and accommodation can weaken a reentering Muslim's new pro-social identity and inhibit ties to pro-social peers and institutions such as the workplace.

Third, the lack of family support and presence of family members who are critical or hostile towards the Muslim faith can put the reentering Muslim at increased risk of reoffending. He may feel isolated and disconnected from his most immediate social network, seek the familiarity and support of old, criminal peers, or feel weak in his new identity. As interviewees mentioned, the need to feel understood and supported in one's new life as a Muslim is absolutely critical to ensuring successful reentry. This concept is discussed further below in the section on "protective factors."

[9] "Reentering Muslims" in the remainder of this dissertation refers to the population targeted in the qualitative research, i.e. formerly incarcerated adult male African American Muslim converts, unless otherwise specified.

Similarly, the reentering Muslim may feel a lack of comfort at the mosque, where he may feel misunderstood and judged. He may also face a dearth of Muslim peers and sense of "brotherhood" around him. These two factors, like the lack of family support, can put him at increased risk of reoffending through any of the mediators listed above. That is, he may feel excluded and disconnected, fall back to his old criminal lifestyle (and associating with old criminal peers) to find comfort and familiarity, suffer a lack of confidence in his new pro-social identity, and his tied to pro-social peers and institutions, particularly Muslim ones, may weaken.

Fourth, those with low self-esteem, a negative or pessimistic outlook on life, and who lack a sense of empowerment and purpose may be at increased risk of offending. These characteristics may not work through any mediators (or may mediate the relationship of other risk factors to offending). Alternatively, they may increase the Muslim's feeling of isolation, weaken his often new pro-social identity (especially if he is a convert), or discourage him from forging pro-social bonds by finding "brotherhood" or employment.

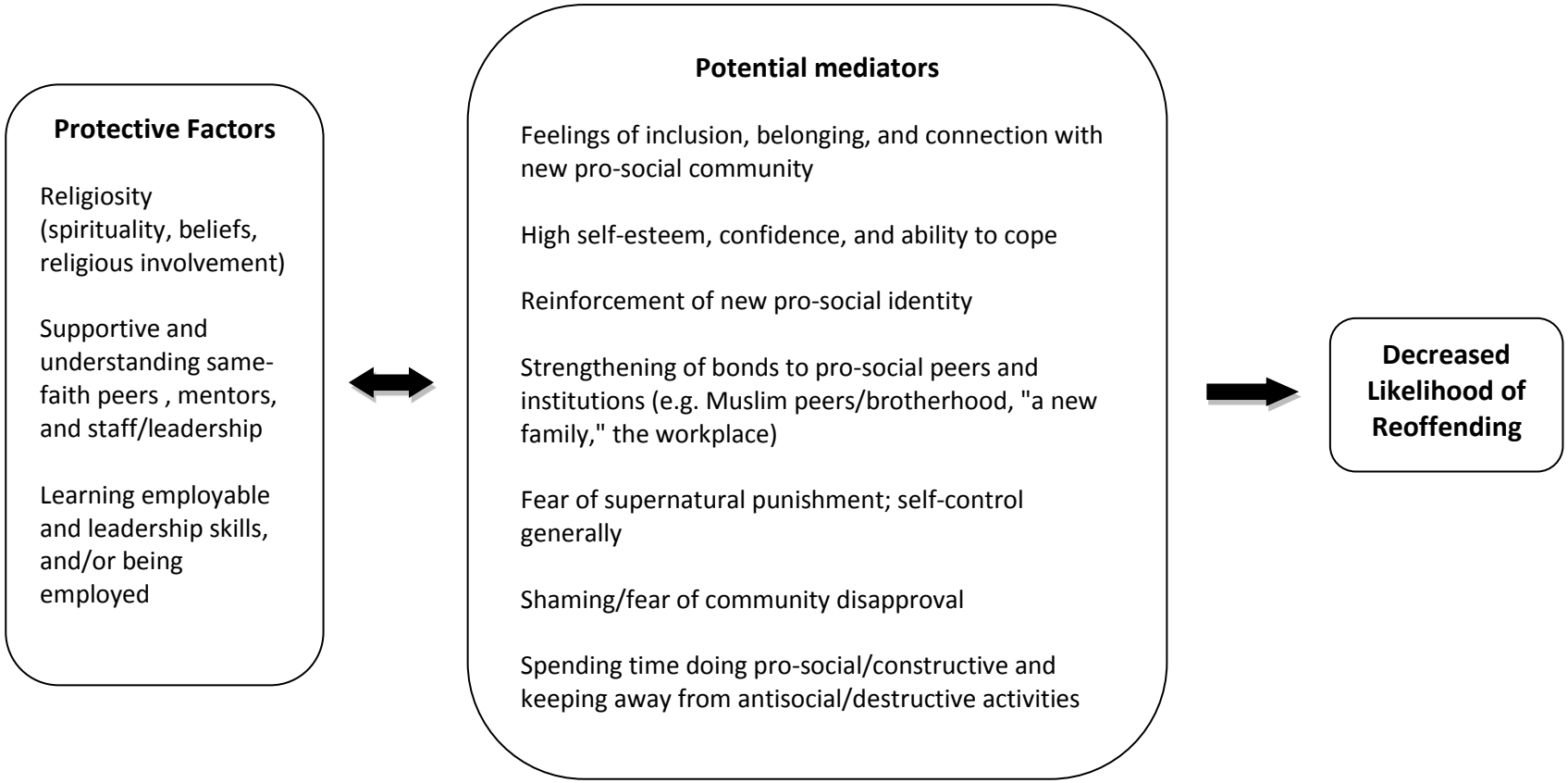
Finally, those reentering Muslims with low self-control in face of "worldly distractions"—whether because of biological, social, or other reasons—may be increasingly likely to reoffend. Even if they profess to be Muslim or are often surrounded by Muslim peers or within Muslim institutions, they may not be able to exert enough self-control when others around them are committing crimes or engaging in risky behavior, for example. Low levels of self-control may also mediate the relationships of other risk factors with increased offending.

These risk factors may or may not work through the mediators discussed depending on the individual, but they are supported by the research conducted.

Whether the pathway towards increased likelihood of reoffending proceeds linearly—that is, a risk factor works through a mediator which in turn increases the risk of reoffending—is another question. The pathway may be nonlinear, or circular. The two-sided arrow between "risk factors" and "potential mediators" in the diagram above represents the possibility that the mediators are both impacted by and impact risk factors themselves. That is, some listed risk factors may also serve as mediators in some pathways. For example, the lack of family support and understanding may weaken a reentering Muslim's new pro-social identity, which in turn may decrease his self-esteem and confidence, thereby pushing him back to his old, familiar criminal lifestyle and causing him to reoffend.

Problem theory also entails the analysis of protective factors. Figure 6 below depicts protective factors and potential mediators through which a reentering Muslim's likelihood of reoffending may decrease, based on the qualitative research and literature reviews previously conducted.

Figure 6: Protective Factors for Reentering Muslims



First, those Muslims who are more religious in terms of their spirituality, beliefs, and involvement in the faith may be less likely to reoffend. A number of processes may mediate this relationship. Those more highly religious may:

- be deterred from criminal behavior out of fear of supernatural punishment (hellfire theory) or fear of community disapproval (reintegrative shaming)
- have higher self-esteem, meaning and purpose, and a positive outlook on life (divine interactionism and spiritual capital theories), and be better able to cope
- have stronger bonds to pro-social peers and institutions such as the workplace (social bonding and social control theory)
- feel more included to and connected with a new pro-social community, and confident in their own pro-social identity (social bonding)
- may spend more time in a constructive, rather than antisocial/destructive environment (reference group theory)

Religiosity may also work cyclically to decrease the chance of reoffending – that is, working through mediators as well as other protective factors (such as being employed or having more employable skills).

The reinforcement of a new pro-social identity is a particularly important mediator and highly significant for reentering Muslims, most of whom convert within prison. As described above, religious conversion aligns with several concepts in desistance literature. Conversion may "knife off" a reentering individual from his surroundings and from criminal influences, be a "turning point" in one's life course, and develop a sense of agency, maturity, responsibility, and meaning and purpose in one's life (Laub & Sampson, 2001). Religious conversion often also creates a new "identity" that can promote long-term desistance (Maruna, 2001).

As a second protective factor, the presence of supportive and understanding peers, mentors, and leadership/staff may decrease the chances of reoffending among reentering Muslims by strengthening pro-social bonds (social bonding and social control), often creating a new "family" and "brotherhood" of sorts particularly for recent converts whose families are unsupportive or hostile. This support may also boost self-esteem, confidence, and feelings of inclusion in one's new faith community. It may also develop a sense of shame associated with risky or criminal behaviors. The "brotherhood" created by peer and mentor presence may also serve as a "control" on the behavior of formerly incarcerated Muslims through explicit reminders and checks on behavior, through exchanges of religious knowledge and teaching, through shaming, and by serving as a "reference group." If this supportive presence is exclusive enough, it may create a protective environment that separates the reentering Muslim from his antisocial peers and former lifestyle. The presence of practicing Muslim peers and staff may realize this "knifing off," especially if this presence is exclusive (i.e. the individual is completely separated from delinquent influences).

A third protective factor is the learning of employable and leadership skills which may result in employment itself. There are several ways in which these skills may reduce the chances of reoffending. One obvious way is that an increased set of employable skills may result in employment, which can reduce one's chances of offending (Baer et al., 2006). Learning leadership and "soft"/interpersonal skills may also make one more employable, more civically involved, and a better student (Smith, 2003; Tarlow, 2010). They may also make one a better community leader and mentor (an explicit goal of the Program A, the Muslim reentry program), increase one's confidence and self-esteem (Smith,

2003), reinforce their new pro-social identity, and increase their feeling of inclusion in (and strengthen their bonds to) a pro-social community (Gideon & Sung, 2011, p. 76). These skills may arise naturally through religious learning and involvement (that is, be a consequence of religion as Smith (2003) describes) or they may be a result of classes that a faith-based program implements. If the latter, then being involved in these classes and developing these skills may also reduce the likelihood of offending by diverting one's time towards constructive/pro-social activities and away from antisocial ones.

Thus, involvement in a faith-based program may encompass several protective factors that can reduce the likelihood that a reentering individual reoffends. These protective factors have direct implications for the theoretical formation of a program that seeks this end (see discussion on program theory).

5.1.1 Caveats and assumptions

The foregoing analysis is limited by a few assumptions upon which it is based. First, the analysis assumes that the effect of the Islamic faith, Muslim peers, and Muslim institutions is "pro-social." However, as Mears, Roman, Wolff, and Buck (2006) describe, the effect of faith may not always be positive, and can indeed be negative. In some instances, faith can exert an antisocial effect on reentering individuals that may encourage them to offend or to otherwise lead unhealthy lives. In the case of reentering Muslims, the potential for radicalization and alignment with extremist organizations and individuals may be one such negative influence (see HSPI Report, n.d.). As many interviewees remarked, feeling isolated from one's biological family and a sense that Muslim peers and community members were a new family were common among recently converted,

reentering Muslims. Yet, a "new family" might not always come from pro-social sub-communities. For those reentering Muslims who are involved with more "extremist" individuals and organizations, a stronger connection with this community may result in an overall antisocial and less integrative influence, and even certain types of offending. That is, the reentering Muslim may no longer steal or abuse alcohol, but they may commit, or seek to commit, terrorist acts. As discussed above, this phenomenon is rare. Less unusual is the situation in which reentering Muslims may find a new community and sense of family among Muslim peers, leaders, and institutions whose visions are less integrative and healthy (see, for example, Liebling, Arnold, & Straub, 2011). As a result, those reentering may become more isolated from—and less reintegrated into—their overall community and society in general because of their involvement with individuals and leaders who are extremist and who hold unhealthy, isolationist, or militant beliefs. One program director described the need to partner only with those mosques that espoused the "same reintegrative worldview" as his program in order to help ensure pro-social transformation.

Second, faith may have a conditional effect, as Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck (2006) mention. That is, the protective features of a faith-based program described above may be conditional on certain needs being met – for example, the basic needs of housing, food, and employment. If these needs are not met, then other protective features of the program such as support, understanding, spiritual/religious knowledge, and leadership development may not prevent reoffending. Some of the interviewees' responses suggested this type of conditional effect, such as comments about "eliminat[ing] basic needs immediately" and the following anecdote:

> I got a brother I know, beautiful Muslim brother – he's been incarcerated 13 times. But in the house he comes back to, it's not Islamic. His brother isn't Muslim. He does drugs, his wife does drugs, his father drinks. I bought him a coat, another brother bought him some clothes when he came out. Next day we came, it's all gone. His brother stole them. So these are the real stresses we go through. He's trying to stay away from institution, do his best to study the *deen* [i.e. practice Islam], do everything in his power to not go back, but it's hard.

Also significant is the fact that housing was mentioned as a component of nearly every ideal program. On the other hand, as this and other comments indicate, an effective fulfillment of basic needs is also conditional on ensuring that faith is properly accommodated. Muslims who have a home or a job might not be able to practice their faith in these settings, resulting in "stresses" that lead them back to criminal behavior. Recall the comment of one participant in the Muslim transitional home: "you can have a job, but still be under stress. I had a job, but I didn't love my peers and my company. They thought I was the bad guy. . . . Here, we all speak the same language." Several individuals framed spiritual wellness and basic needs as conditional on each other. As a director of the multifaith program stated,

> This program is set up to practice a new social life. A new way of thinking, the physical self. And the psychological part. If you start taking care of those, then the spiritual part will come into your awareness. And spirituality binds the whole parts together. And the parts can't be well until the whole is well. You can't focus just on work, or just on religion. So the program is set up to bring balance and allow spirituality to bind all it together.

Collectively taken, these comments indicate that faith-based programming conditionally impacts at least some reentering Muslims. Practically, this implies that a reentry program may not be able to foster long-term desistance if its participants' basic needs are left unmet, no matter how well the program establishes a brotherhood or fulfills faith-related needs. The program must address

basic needs and accommodate or foster faith synergistically, as further described below.

Third, a "threshold" effect (Mears, Roman, Wolff, & Buck, 2006) may exist, in which faith-based programming exerts protective influences only on those participants who have attained a certain threshold level of religiosity (measured variably), or exerts differential effects based on the level of religiosity of a participant. For example, spiritual knowledge that a participant gains from the program may deter him from offending out of fear of God's punishment, but this effect may presume a minimum level of belief in God, the hereafter, the concept of sin, etc. Or, a participant may be less likely to offend simply by virtue of being around pro-social rather than antisocial peers throughout the day (the "knifing off" effect) – an effect that may not require a threshold level of internal religiosity (i.e. a solid belief in God and his punishment for sins). Both theories are substantiated by the qualitative analysis, as some individuals' comments emphasized that cessation from crime was due to their spiritual beliefs in God and sin while others stressed the impact of spending time in a pro-social environment away from negative influences. The level of internal religiosity required for desistance under these two theories may be quite different. Another theory offered by the existing literature is that faith-based effects may require that the individual have some threshold level of self-control, a variable that may be positively correlated with religiosity (which makes this a tricky empirical question). These theories might have practical implications for the types of participants selected for certain faith-based programs or their expected levels of effect.

5.2 The Broader Theoretical Framework

In this sub-section, the insights from the development of problem theory, which draw on the findings of the qualitative research, are incorporated into a broader theoretical framework for understanding faith-based reentry programming. Figure 4, introduced earlier, encapsulates this framework. This diagram was created from the insights gained from the literature reviews and offers broad guidance about the relationship between a faith-based reentry program, religiosity, and reduced offending. It serves as a fitting prelude to the discussion of program theory. As Figure 4 shows, faith-based reentry programming may operate through countless pathways depending on how faith appears in the program, how it develops religiosity in an individual, and what pathways it uses to reduce reoffending. Under Area 3 in the diagram, the dotted box "From Qualitative Research" refers to the gaps in the existing literature that the qualitative research in this dissertation sought to fill.

This missing piece to Figure 4 is now provided in Figure 7. The box contains pathways that faith-based reentry programs might work through, as supported by the qualitative research. These pathways are similar to the protective factors and mediators through which they operate, described above, with additional details including existing sociological and criminological theories that describe elements of these pathways. Figure 8 provides an abridged version of the complete framework.

Figure 7: Faith Pathways Illuminated by Qualitative Research

FROM QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- Self-esteem, empowerment, meaning/purpose, outlook on life, coping ability (*Divine interactionism, spiritual capital, agency, coping*, via increased spiritual knowledge and reflection from classes, staff and peers; from support and understanding of staff and peers; employable and leadership skills development)

- Self-control and self-discipline (*Divine interactionism, Hellfire theory, spiritual capital, agency*, via increased spiritual knowledge and reflection from classes, staff and peers; via program structure and discipline)

- Confidence to succeed (*reference group theory, spiritual capital, agency,* via mentorship, success stories, peer presence, support/understanding of staff and peers)

- Employment and leadership skills (*learned competencies*), which lead to employment and builds social bonds with instructors, fellow students/trainees, workplace, community

- Checks on behavior and positive influence of peers (*reference group theory, social bonding, social control, reintegrative shaming, social ecology,* via brotherhood and bonds to new family, prosocial peers, mentors, staff, and institutions)

- Protective environment (*concept of 'knifing off'*, via faith-based residence, keeping away from antisocial temptations)

- Feeling of belonging and inclusion in new prosocial community and strengthening of new identity (*reintegrative shaming, identity transformation*, via brotherhood and bonds to new family, prosocial peers, mentors, staff, and institutions)

Figure 8: Abridged Version of Theoretical Framework

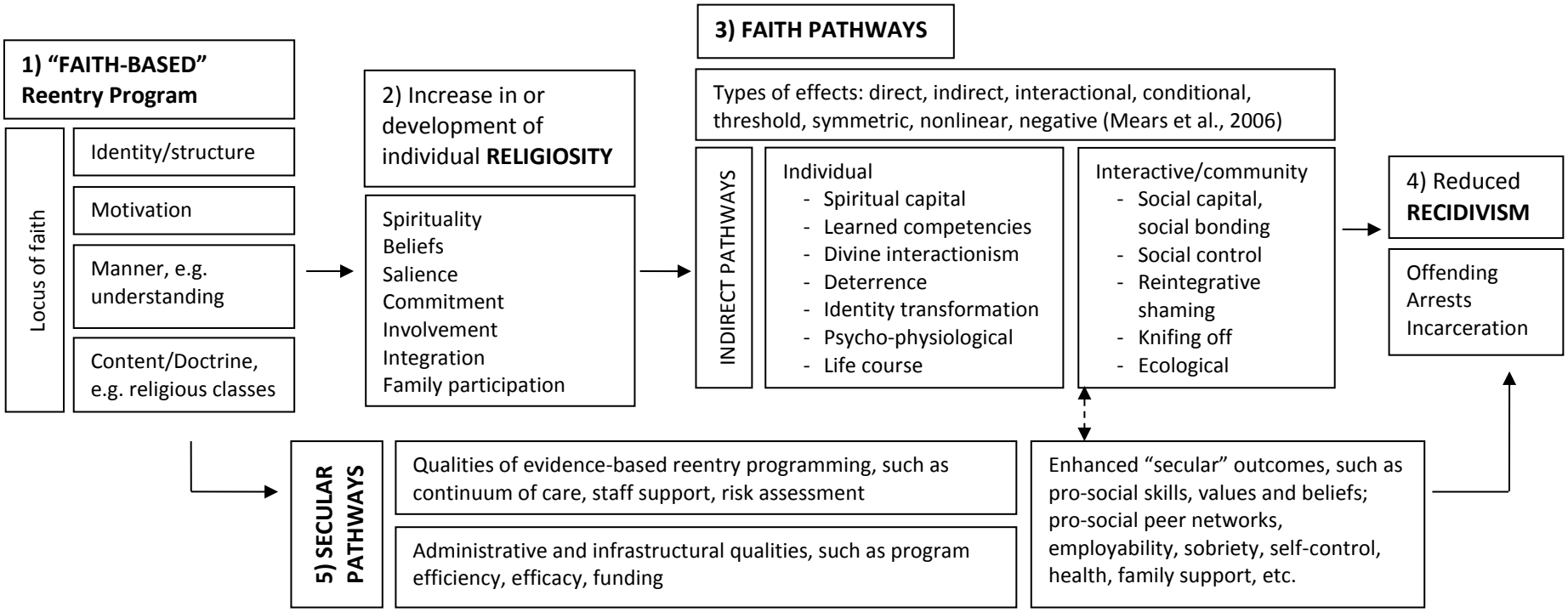


Figure 8 is intended to delineate a broad pseudo-program theory that 1) encapsulates the theoretical bases discussed and developed in this dissertation (both through the literature reviews and through the qualitative research), 2) is general enough to describe how faith-based reentry programs, in all their variety, might operate to reduce recidivism, 3) showcases a causal process framework that should be consulted in the creation of such programming, and 4) is a vital tool in informing the evaluation of such programming.

This framework is a fitting point of departure for the development of a narrower, truer program theory that actually delineates how an effective faith-based program might operate for reentering Muslims (i.e. the niche Muslim population targeted by the qualitative research) and how such a program can be evaluated. The development of this program theory is an exercise that should also be repeated when designing faith-based reentry programs for other groups.

5.3 Program Theory

Program theory seeks to outline the causal logic of an intervention, building upon problem theory, which outlined the risk and protective factors associated with reoffending among reentering Muslims. The development of programming entails specifying the target group of intervention, intervention points and change techniques, measures of change, and the likely impact of the intervention (Fischer, 2004). These aspects are discussed below and in the next sub-section.

5.3.1 Target group

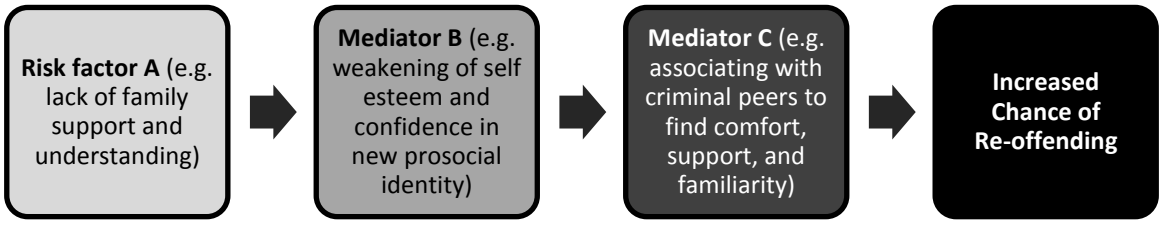
For the purposes of developing program theory, the target group is adult (over age 18) male Muslims (those who self-identify as Muslims) who were previously incarcerated in prison or jail, and who are African-American converts to

Islam. In practice, programs themselves may choose to limit their target group further – for example, seeking a certain level of faith commitment or excluding certain types of offenders.

5.3.2 Intervention points and change techniques

The risk factors described above offer a starting point for the development of points of intervention. These factors may affect offending directly, or may work through one or more mediators. In the latter case, a "risk chain" may offer several points of intervention. For example, if risk factor A affects mediator B, which in turn affects mediator C, which then increases the likelihood of offending, there are four intervention points: 1) to reduce risk factor A, 2) to impact mediator B, 3) to impact mediator C, and 4) to affect the relationship between C and offending. The figure below illustrates this risk chain, with a hypothetical example.

Figure 9: Sample Risk Chain



In this example, the lack of family support and understanding weakens a reentering individual's self-esteem and confidence in his new pro-social identity, which then causes him to seek the familiarity and comfort of his delinquent friends, which then increases the chances of his reoffending. Potential interventions in this example would tackle the 1) lack of family support, 2) weakening of self-

esteem/confidence, 3) seeking of support in criminal peers, and 4) committing of crimes due to association with delinquent peers.

Thus, potential intervention points address risk factors as well as mediators. The following table lists examples of basic interventions in each of these points. These interventions are not exhaustive or ideal. They are simply listed to indicate a point of departure for intervention development and some of the range of possible interventions. The term "Muslim housing" or "Muslim programming" in the table refers to housing or programming that is run by Muslims, exclusive to Muslim participants (by rule or in practice), has Islamic content, or is friendly and openly accommodating of Muslim needs, beliefs, and practices.

Table 17: Points of Intervention and Intervention Examples

	Points of Intervention	**Examples of Interventions**
Risk factors	Lack of basic needs (e.g. housing, food, employment)	Free or subsidized housing; halal food pantry; classes to develop employment and leadership skills; employment and employment referrals
	Lack of understanding and accommodation for new Muslim at home and work	Basic needs services (above); counseling/therapy with family to increase understanding; liaisons with other reentry programs and employers (e.g. mentors) to discuss Muslim needs and accommodation; diversity training for program -and employers; offering employment with or referrals to pre-screened employers who are understanding, accommodating; Muslim-friendly/-run/-exclusive housing that creates new family
	Lack of family support; family critical or hostile towards Muslim faith	Counseling/therapy with family and family-friendly events to increase understanding; Muslim housing that creates new family
	Lack of comfort at mosque; feeling misunderstood and judged	Muslim housing or programming that creates an understanding environment; mentorship with formerly incarcerated Muslim peer
	Lack of Muslim peers, brotherhood	Muslim housing or programming that creates an understanding environment; mentorship with formerly incarcerated Muslim peer
	Lack of self-esteem, empowerment, meaning in life; negative outlook on life	Spiritual classes, staff and peers that increase religiosity; employable and community leadership skills development classes and training; mentorship with peer; Muslim housing or programming that creates supportive environment; cognitive-behavior therapy and counseling
	Low self-control in face of "worldly distractions" of past lifestyle	Muslim housing that creates positive, supportive peer environment and provides checks on behavior via social bonding and discipline; peer-mentorship; spiritual classes that foster self-control; cognitive-behavior therapy and counseling that creates sense of agency
Mediators	Feelings of exclusion, isolation, and disconnect	Muslim housing or programming that creates an understanding and supportive environment and reinforces new pro-social identity through social control mechanisms ("checks on behavior"); mentorship with formerly incarcerated Muslim peer; spiritual classes that provide connection with God, self-control, and meaning in life; secular cognitive-behavior therapy and counseling that create sense of agency and self-control; training to increase community involvement and leadership
	Seeking delinquent peers/friends to earn living, find familiarity, support, and comfort	
	Decrease in self-esteem, empowerment, and confidence in new pro-social identity; weakening of new pro-social identity; lowering of self-control	
	Weakening of ties to pro-social peers and institutions (e.g. Muslim peers, workplace)	

Not all of the interventions listed share the same level of efficacy or practicality. More likely, several of the interventions listed would be offered in conjunction as part of a single program, in order to address as many of the links in the "risk chain" as possible. Additionally, not all of the listed interventions are "faith-based" (in the four-part definition used in this dissertation). Indeed, some may have both secular and faith-based forms. For example, to address the risk factor/mediator of decreased self-control, a faith-based intervention may offer spiritual or religious classes, while a secular intervention may offer cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT) or counseling to increase one's self-control, sense of responsibility, and motivation to do right. In the context of spiritual classes, one's belief in God, the purpose of life, and divine punishment operate to achieve this end (recall the discussion on divine interactionism, hellfire theory, and spiritual capital). In the secular context, CBT and counseling seek to enhance one's level of personal responsibility, motivation, stabilization, and self-control, while undoing the need for immediate gratification and a "criminal" attitude and values (Sung & Gideon, 2011, pp. 73-76). One such secular intervention is Reasoning and Rehabilitation, or R&R. A CBT strategy, R&R posits that cognitive habits can assist pro-social development. Specifically, R&R teaches offenders reasoning skills such as thinking before acting, anticipating consequences, and considering alternative actions, which in turn enhance self-control, conflict resolution, and communitarian attitudes (Sung & Gideon, 2011, p. 77). Other counseling interventions can promote self-determination and a feeling of agency and control which can stem offending (Burnett, 2004, p. 175; Kelly, 1997; Maruna 2001). Both secular and faith-based interventions in this case operate through similar mechanisms in order to effect pro-social changes in an individual.

Regardless of their exact characteristics, interventions may operate through several pathways to reduce the chances of reoffending. The concept of "change techniques" seeks to describe these pathways. Figure 8, which outlines the broader theoretical framework for how faith-based programming may operate, provides guidance for mapping such change techniques. To begin this discussion, one must turn to this figure. The manner in which the program is "faith-based" (Area 1 of the diagram) is the most critical question for the purposes of developing program theory. Should the program be entirely secular—i.e. have no religious components in terms of its identity, staff motivation, manner of conduct, and content? Should it be spiritual and non-denominational—for example, openly discussing God and involving prayer, but not citing or incorporating one particular religion? Should it be exclusive to one faith—with the program's identity, staff, and content all operating within one faith? Should it have elements of these three approaches? To answer this question, one must consider again the target population and desired outcome. For a faith-based intervention that seeks to reduce reoffending among reentering adult Muslims (the niche population discussed above), the research conducted in this dissertation suggests that the program should be Islam-based in the following ways:

- Muslim staff (for the positions most closely involved with the participants, such as program director/supervisor, counselor, religious leader, mentors, etc.)
- Some Islamic theological content, such as religious classes and prayer
- Rules or practices limiting the participants (or a significant number or majority of them) to those who are Muslim

Thus, not every single element in the ideal (i.e. most effective) program must be "faith-based." For example, classes teaching job-related skills need not incorporate religion and be taught by Muslims provided that other classes and staff

positions do so. But in the aforementioned three areas, being Islam-based will likely enhance the efficacy of the program. This conclusion is clear from the qualitative analysis. As discussed earlier, the reentering American Muslim population is a distinct one in several ways. First, the reentering Muslim has a distinct identity, both because of his (likely) conversion to Islam and because of his being a Muslim in prison. The reentering Muslim may also fit into unique narratives, as interviewees discussed, including those about coming from "jahiliyyah" (pre-Islamic, sinful ignorance) to Islam and "clichés" about "the black man coming home Muslim." Second, the challenges he faces during reentry often take on an added level of difficulty because of his Muslim faith – for example, addressing basic needs or reuniting with family. He must navigate not only a changed society, but also a new identity, a new religious community much different from in-prison brotherhood, and old peers and family often unsupportive of Islam. Additionally, he faces lack of support and religious accommodation among service providers and employers. These unique challenges can result in a sense of isolation and extreme disconnect, and eventually reoffending. Third, the reentering Muslim likely has high levels of religious salience, commitment, involvement coming out of prison. Numerous individuals commented on Islam being the "center of one's life" coming out of prison, how easy it was to "practice" in prison, the importance of Islamic actions, and their desire to learn more about the faith. Further, it is abundantly clear that reentering Muslims actively seek "brotherhood" through the company of other Muslims. Fourth, Islamic practices such as prayer as fasting, and beliefs in the "premium" on actually practicing the faith, provide structure, discipline, and self-control "naturally" to the reentering Muslim. Finally, and critically, those interviewed explicitly expressed that practice

and belief in Islam (i.e. becoming a better Muslim) would help them desist, while not being able to practice would cause them to reoffend.

These factors—all originating from and highly supported by the qualitative research—indicate that, to maximize the likelihood of desistance, reentering Muslims should be 1) among staff who are Muslim and thus sincerely understand Muslim beliefs, practices, and challenges; 2) exposed to Islamic religious content including teaching and prayer; and 3) among a cohort of peers who are Muslim, preferably living together in a home setting. To be sure, the presence of these program features is premised on a reentering Muslim's *voluntary* election to participate in such a program (in other words, the proposed elements would not be effective for someone whose conversion to Islam was insincere or who does not wish to be a part of such a faith-based program). While staff of another faith may be able accommodate Muslims, they may not be able to fully understand Muslims at the level of sincerity and non-judgment that reentering Muslims would prefer. They would probably also not be able to provide Islamic knowledge or advice, if necessary. Not every staff member need be Muslim, but in those roles with most direct contact with participants and that offer advice and counseling (such as mentors or counselors), being Muslim would be preferable, to provide the most complete support possible. Islamic religious content would fulfill a thirst to learn more about the faith and provide a continuation to the high levels of practice in prison. Finally, recreating the strong, in-prison brotherhood by surrounding the reentering Muslim with other formerly incarcerated Muslims would create pro-social control mechanisms, as previously discussed.

Again, to be clear, the aforementioned description is based on the qualitative research in this dissertation, from which it was apparent that reentering

Muslims shared certain distinct qualities, experiences, challenges, needs, and programming ideas, and feel strongly that there is a negative link between Islamic practice and criminal behavior. Based on the comments of formerly incarcerated Muslims, program administrators, and experts, the most theoretically effective faith-based program for this population should be Islam-based in the ways just described. Other elements of this program could be "secular"—such as skills training—or simply "spiritual" —such as individual prayer time. It should also be noted that – based on the qualitative and literature research—the "ideal" program should additionally

- be residential, to maximize the creation of pro-social peer bonding and assist "knifing off" from antisocial influences
- offer mentorship with fellow incarcerated Muslims
- incorporate a structured program schedule and discipline

According to some program administrators and experts, a counseling component would also be necessary to address mental health concerns and to develop the residents' self-esteem, agency, and sense of meaning in life, although formerly incarcerated interviewees neither discussed mental health nor felt a need for formal counseling.

Table 18 below summarizes the "ideal" program for reentering Muslims (again, "ideal" means most likely to be effective at reducing reoffending based on the research documented in this dissertation). The program's components are listed, along with mediators they may work through as well as the level of religiosity embodied in the component. For example, some components may be secular or spiritual, and need not be Muslim or Islam-based in themselves. Specifically, the house in which the program is located need not be *entirely* Muslim or Islam-based, though this exclusivity might be best for true immersion and realization of the other components. Some staff such as computer skills

teachers need not be Muslim, though mentors and other closely involved staff should be. Also, a significant number of the residents should be Muslim so that the peer effect (brotherhood) can be actualized. While formal religious instruction, prayer, and practice should be Islamic, individualized reflection, meditation, or worship time need not be and may be spiritual (meaning, non-denominational). Counseling sessions may be secular, but would be best – given the intimacy of the discussion and need for trust and understanding – if they were conducted by a Muslim and be open to Islamic involvement. Skills training, program structure, and discipline need not have any religious component, though they may include some Islamic elements.

Table 18: Description of Faith-based Program for Reentering Muslims

Goal of program: To minimize likelihood of reoffending		
Program component	**Mediators/causal pathways to reduce reoffending**	**Religiosity level (Muslim, secular, spiritual)**
1) Housing	Protective environment – separation/insulation from antisocial peers and temptations; fosters social bonding; fulfills basic need	May be secular or spiritual; best if Islamic
2) Muslim staff	Understanding, support, counseling, trustworthiness, and faith motivation reinforces client pro-social identity, develops self-esteem and confidence to succeed, social bonds, social control; increases spiritual knowledge; feeling of inclusion and belonging in new pro-social community	Some Muslim (most direct staff); some may be secular
3) Muslim co-residents	Brotherhood offers support, social control (checks on behavior), positive reference group; increases spiritual knowledge; reinforces pro-social identity, self-esteem, and confidence; feeling of inclusion and belonging in new pro-social community	Significant number or majority must be Muslim
4) Mentorship with formerly incarcerated Muslims	Understanding, support, counseling, trustworthiness, and faith motivation reinforces client pro-social identity, develops self-esteem and confidence to succeed, social bonds, social control; increases spiritual knowledge; feeling of inclusion and belonging in new pro-social community	Muslim
5) Religious classes and prayer	Fosters self-control, self-discipline, confidence, meaning in life, and agency; feeling of inclusion and belonging in new pro-social community	Muslim; some elements may be spiritual (e.g. individual meditation time)
6) Counseling	Develops self-esteem, empowerment, meaning/purpose, outlook on life, coping ability, confidence to succeed, and overall mental health	May be secular; better if spiritual and best if Muslim
7) Employable and leadership skills	Fulfills basic need; develops social bonds with instructors, students/trainees, employer, workplace, and community; social control	Secular; may have some spiritual or Muslim elements (e.g. religious references in leadership development)
8) Structured schedule and discipline	Fosters self-control, self-discipline, and agency	Secular; may have some spiritual or Muslim elements (e.g. prayer schedule)

Creating a table outlining program components and the theorized causal pathways through which these components will reduce reoffending should be a necessary exercise in the development of any reentry program. Faith-based reentry programs should additionally designate which components may be secular, which may be spiritual and not specific to any particular religion, and which should adhere to the tenets or practice of a specific religion.

5.3.3 Measuring change and likely impact

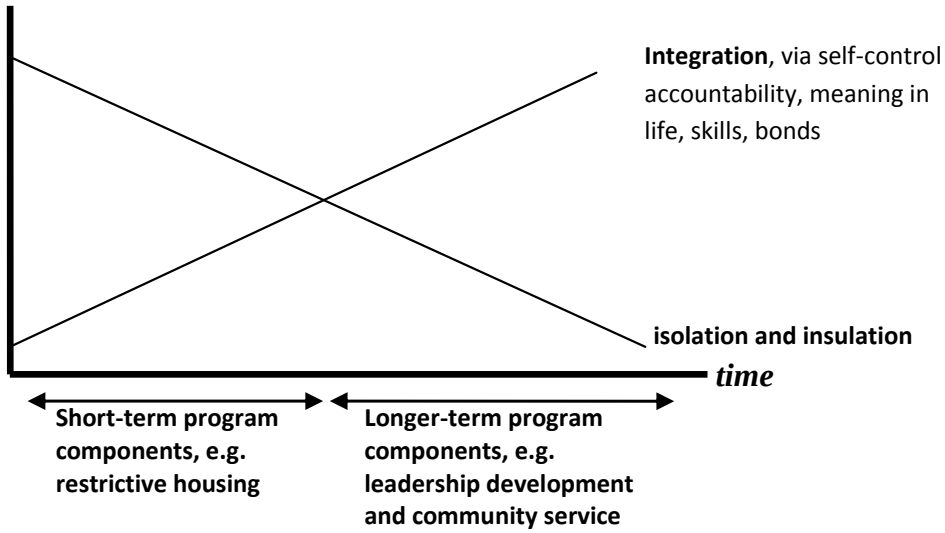
The goal of the ideal reentry program is to minimize the likelihood of reoffending. As such, the ultimate "change" sought by implementing this intervention is measured by the incidence of re-offending. Two critical measurement questions are the definition of "a crime" and the time frame in which incidence is measured. The time-frame question is another way of inquiring about whether the desistance sought is short-term or long-term. A related question is whether "crime" is the best way to measure successful reintegration into broader society and a cultivation of permanent commitment to pro-social values and one's welfare. These goals will, for the purposes of this discussion, be folded into the question of time-frame (presumably long-term desistance involves these goals, though there may be exceptions).

Ideally, for the purposes of measuring cessation from offending, crime would be any criminal violation of the law (misdemeanor or felony, nonviolent or violent) regardless of whether it is reported, and regardless of whether it results in arrest or incarceration. Practically, it is difficult to measure such crime. A combination of self-reported and official police data may be most effective, as it reconciled the two to address under-reporting concerns.

In terms of time-frame, Maruna (2001, 2004), Farrall and Maruna (2004), Maruna and Roy (2007), and Paternoster and Bushway (2009) note that long-term desistance often requires an intentional shift in the identity of the former offender, which brings along with it a changed mindset and changed values. For reentering Muslims, most of whom are new converts to Islam and who undergo a unique experience as a Muslim in prison, the presence of a "new identity" and "changed person" is clear. But this shift in itself is not sufficient to guarantee long-term desistance once the individual embarks on reentering society. As was obvious from the interviews, many reentering Muslims face such a profound paradigm shift upon reentry that maintaining their new identity is quite difficult. Reinforcement of this identity in the face of such difficulty is therefore critical and provides a justification for the viewpoints of those who advocate a "knifing off" or "lockdown" of reentering individuals to keep them insulated or isolated from deviant influences. The knifing off/lockdown concept seeks to foster the successful reintegration of the former prisoner, but the two concepts seem at odds: "knifing off," deemed necessary for desistance (Laub & Sampson, 2003), enhances isolation and insulation while the "reintegration" goal even simply on its face suggests the exact opposite. For reentering Muslims, there is an added question: does solidifying one's identity as a Muslim and "knifing off" from one's old, antisocial community or family increase insulation (within a Muslim sub-community) and hinder an overall, healthy "reintegration" within the broader society? Maruna and Roy (2007) argue that for some individuals, the "knifing off" process may be unnecessary or counter-productive, and healthier pathways to desistance may instead lie in repairing old relationships.

The confusion in these terms may be because the goal of reentry is unclearly articulated and variable. It may be to completely cease the commission of crime (regardless of one's level of isolation or integration), or it may be to make the former prisoner a productive, involved member of the society (even if he commits some occasional crimes), or both. This dissertation has been focused on reoffending as the stated goal of reentry, and that is also the way in which change and impact of the "ideal" program is measured. But the notion of reintegration has not been left untouched. Some of the interviewees discussed this issue directly, with the director of the Muslim reentry program describing one of its goals as creating community leaders. Indeed, the research in this dissertation has shown that reintegration and desistance from crime are related concepts and should be programmatically intertwined. As discussed previously, developing leadership skills among reentering Muslims is an aspect of the ideal program, because these skills foster the creation of pro-social bonds with individuals, institutions, and the community, thereby helping socially control behavior and curb reoffending. This does not, however, mean that knifing off/lockdown is not a part of the program. The ideal program will operate to sustain desistance into the long-term by leveraging both isolation and reintegration. How the program may do this is depicted in a basic way (linearly) in the graph below.

Figure 10: Example of short-term and long-term features of ideal program



To foster short term desistance in the face of the immediate and upfront challenges that reentering Muslims face, isolation and insulation must be – at least initially – features of the program. Creating a "protective" housing environment can insulate the individuals from antisocial influences and reinforce their new, pro-social identities. As the program works over time through its other elements to increase its participants' sense of self-control, accountability, meaning in life, leadership and job skills, and relationships and bonds with peers, mentors, and community, insulation may decrease as these characteristics are able to sustain one's desistance permanently (Frazier, 2011, p. 281).

Finally, the question of time frame also incorporates the length of the program itself and when it should be implemented during reentry. The research has not offered conclusive evidence for a specific length of time that a program must operate for it to be effective. In terms of when the program should take effect, the research suggested that reentry challenges were most salient, and the risk of recidivism greatest, immediately following release. Thus, the program should receive participants straight out of prison, perhaps arranging for direct

parole to the program – though it need not be exclusively limited to these individuals.

5.4 Practicalities of measuring change

Thus far, the discussion on "measuring outcomes" in a faith-based reentry program has focused on the desired outcome – reduced reoffending – but has not touched on how this might be measured in practice by faith-based organizations. FBOs face numerous challenges in evaluation, including:

1) Identifying and measuring the faith component in their programming
2) Addressing selection bias issues
3) Formulating proper control groups
4) Gathering long-term data
5) Capacity issues

As discussed previously, faith may be present in a number of ways in a faith-based programming – i.e. in the identity/structure of the organization, its staff motivation or manner of delivery, or in the content of services (Area 1 in Figure 8). Moreover, the faith components of an FBO may impact a participant's own faith in a variety of ways (Area 2 of Figure 8), or not at all. However, "modeling the faith component" is a critical need and challenge for FBOs engaging in evaluation (Fischer, 2004, p. 35). Ferguson, Dabir, Dortzbach, Dyrness, & Spruijt-Metz (2006) found in their systematic review of 29 faith-based program evaluations that only five "provide[d] specific measures for faith" and "more specific conclusions regarding faith as a programmatic factor remain outstanding given the lack of apparent theoretical frameworks to guide both the design on previous evaluation studies and the selection of relevant variables" (p. 10). Rarely do studies specify the ways in which faith is represented in the organization and programming or how they think an FBO's faith impacts a participant's individual-level faith. For

example, the "relationship between staff characteristics and client outcomes" has often been absent from FBO evaluations, along with variables related to community involvement and volunteering (Ferguson, Dabir, Dortzbach, Dyrness, & Spruijt-Metz, 2006, p. 11). The former is particularly important given the theoretical closeness between staff and client (substantiated in this dissertation)—perhaps a "therapeutic alliance," according to Fischer (2004, p. 36).

Faith must also be dissected as an intermediate *outcome* as well (Area 2 of Figure 8)—that is, the extent to which the program impacts the participant's own faith. To this end, studies must specify how they are measuring "faith" (Fischer, 2004, p. 36), whether, as discussed above, in terms of the individual's participation, beliefs, commitment, etc. The best way to construct these measurements is to look to participants' *own* conceptualizations of faith/religiosity, as illuminated through preliminary qualitative research. For example, the qualitative research in this dissertation discovered the importance of religious *practice* and participation in the reentering Muslim's quest to desist, as discussed above; accordingly, researchers should address both beliefs and practices when seeking to measure the Muslim participant's adherence to his faith. Finally, a study's faith component—as input, output, and outcome—should be incorporated into the program theory (also termed the "logic model" in non-profit parlance) and into plans for evaluation and measurement, as discussed below.

Selection bias issues arise because religiosity (measured through belief, participation, or in other ways) is related to a variety of "positive" emotional, social, and wellness outcomes, such as increased motivation to change, enhanced academic performance, and improved health (Fischer & Stelter, 2006, p. 109; Regnerus, 2002; Smith, 2003). Moreover, "religious" individuals may be more

likely to seek out faith-based programs in the first place (Fischer & Stelter, 2006, p. 106). Therefore, positive outcomes associated with the faith-based program might not be due to the program's features themselves but rather with pre-existing (or indirect) factors which, if systematic, can bias results. In any case, it may well be difficult for faith-based organizations to isolate the source of bias during outcomes measurement. Indeed, FBO evaluations have thus far "failed to identify appropriate mediating and moderating variables, such as budget, staff size, and resources [which] could have confounded the explanation of the true mechanisms by which faith-based programs operate" (Ferguson, Dabir, Dortzbach, Dyrness, & Spruijt-Metz, 2006, p. 10).

A related problem for FBOs engaging in evaluation is the formulation of proper control groups. In several evaluations of faith-based reentry programs, control groups have been absent entirely or have been inadequate (e.g. Farley & McClanahan, 2007; Johnson & Larson, 2003). In Ferguson, Dabir, Dortzbach, Dyrness, and Spruijt-Metz (2006)'s systematic review, less than a third of FBO outcome evaluations used comparison groups (p. 10). For example, Johnson and Larson (2003) reported lower recidivism rates for graduates of the InnerChange Freedom Initiative in comparison to non-completers, despite the fact that these two groups are not similar (i.e. no statistically significant differences are present) on non-treatment variables. Similarly, several reports highlight the lower recidivism rates for program participants compared to rates for those reentering state-wide or nationally (Jacobs, 2012). The latter is a less-than-ideal control because the two groups may systematically differ on many non-treatment variables. FBOs may not have the capacity to assign or create a more robust control group. For example, random assignment may not be ethically or practically feasible if some of those

who desire faith-based services do not receive them, while those who do not desire faith-based programming do, by random selection (Fischer & Stelter, 2006, p. 115). Ways to avoid these issues are discussed below.

In addition, FBOs have focused their attention on shorter-term outcomes, relying heavily on cross-sectional rather than longitudinal data (Ferguson, Dabir, Dortzbach, Dyrness, & Spruijt-Metz, 2006, p. 10). Particularly in the context of reentry, the question of long-term, lasting impact is critical. Reentry studies often look at whether clients have obtained a certain result (e.g. employment, lack of arrest, or lack of reincarceration) up to three years after release or program completion (e.g. Johnson & Larson, 2003; Jacobs, 2012). Longer-term measurements have been absent, likely because of the lack of capacity among FBOs dealing with reentry to engage in rigorous long-term evaluations.

Finally, many FBOs have issues related to capacity that prevent them from carrying out evaluations. As Fischer (2004) notes, "The available evidence suggests that many FBOs, because of their limited size and relative inexperience with outcomes measurement, may need specific assistance to develop capacity to collect, manage, and analyze their data" (p. 36). Many of the reports citing statistics showing success (for example, reduced recidivism as discussed above) are based on "simple summary statistics" from "in-house data compiled by the religious organizations and ministries themselves" (Johnson, Tompkins, & Webb, 2002, p. 15).

Fischer and Stelter (2006) highlight two avenues by which faith-based organizations may evaluate their programs: 1) by using the outcome measurement approach of secular non-profits, and 2) by implementing more rigorous evaluation designs. The outcome measurement approach has been specified in a number of

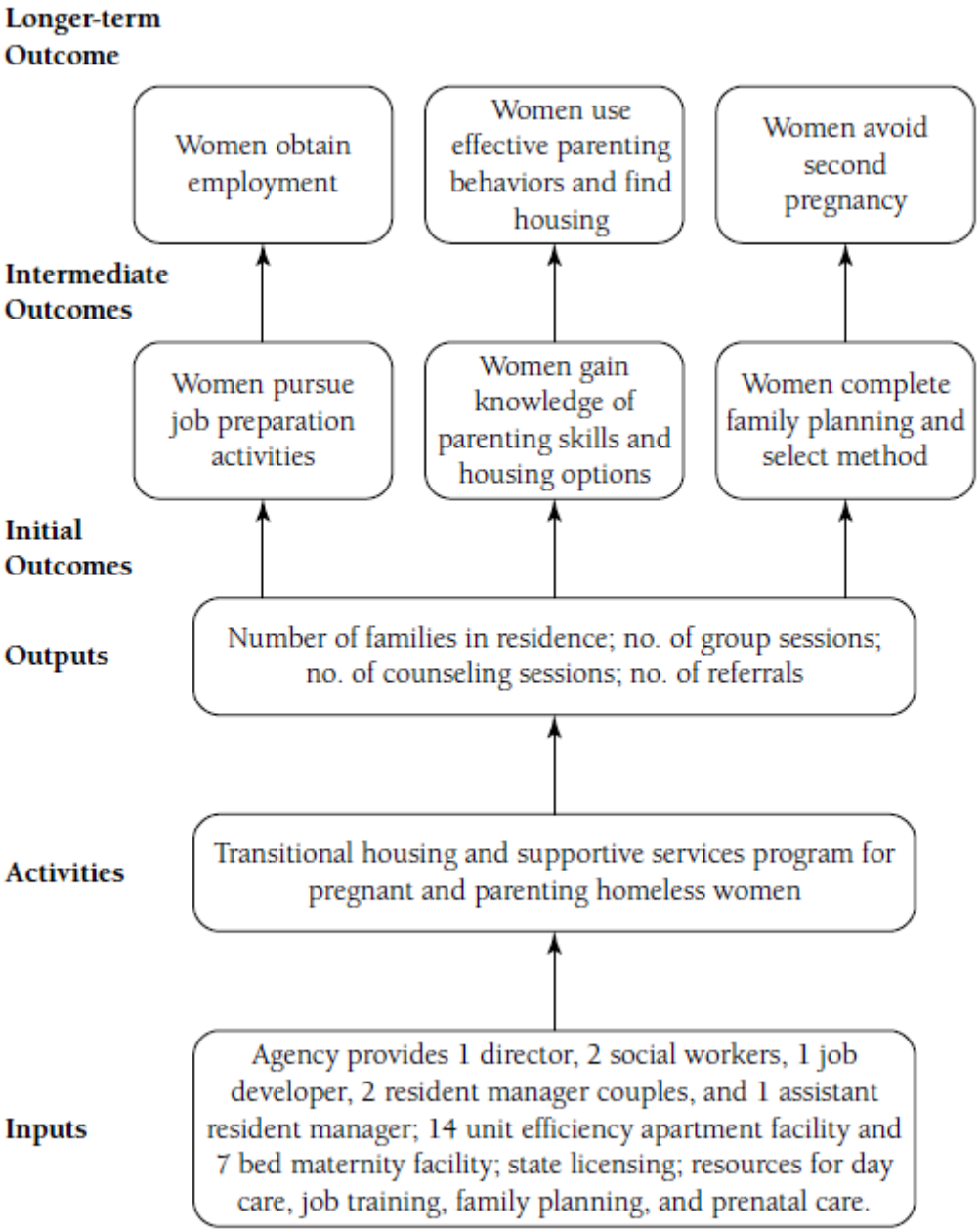
frameworks offered by government, foundations, think-tanks, and non-profit organizations (e.g. Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1995; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999; Lampkin & Hatry, 2003). The United Way outcome management framework as described in Hatry, Van Houten, Plantz, and Greenway (1996) has been cited as "the most widely disseminated approach to outcome measurement in the nonprofit sector" (Hendricks, Plantz, & Pritchard, 2008, p. 24). The United Way framework entails eight steps related to:

1) preparing for outcome measurement
2) selecting outcomes for measurement and constructing a logic model
3) specifying indicators for outcomes
4) identifying data sources and collection methods
5) testing the data collection and outcome measurement process
6) analyzing and reporting findings
7) implementing and monitoring the outcome measurement system
8) using the findings internally and externally

(Hatry, Van Houten, Plantz, & Greenway, 1996, pp. x-xii).

The second step is a critical one and entails constructing a logic model. A logic model is much like program theory-—indeed, sometimes the terms are used interchangeably (see Fischer & Stelter, 2006). For the purposes of this dissertation, the two terms differ because program theory is more theoretical and constructed generally to apply to a range of faith-based reentry approaches. A logic model, in contrast, would be specific to each FBO and its program. A logic model maps the relationship between inputs, outputs and outcomes. Fischer and Stelter (2006, p. 33) give the following sample logic model for a program for parenting women, reproduced below:

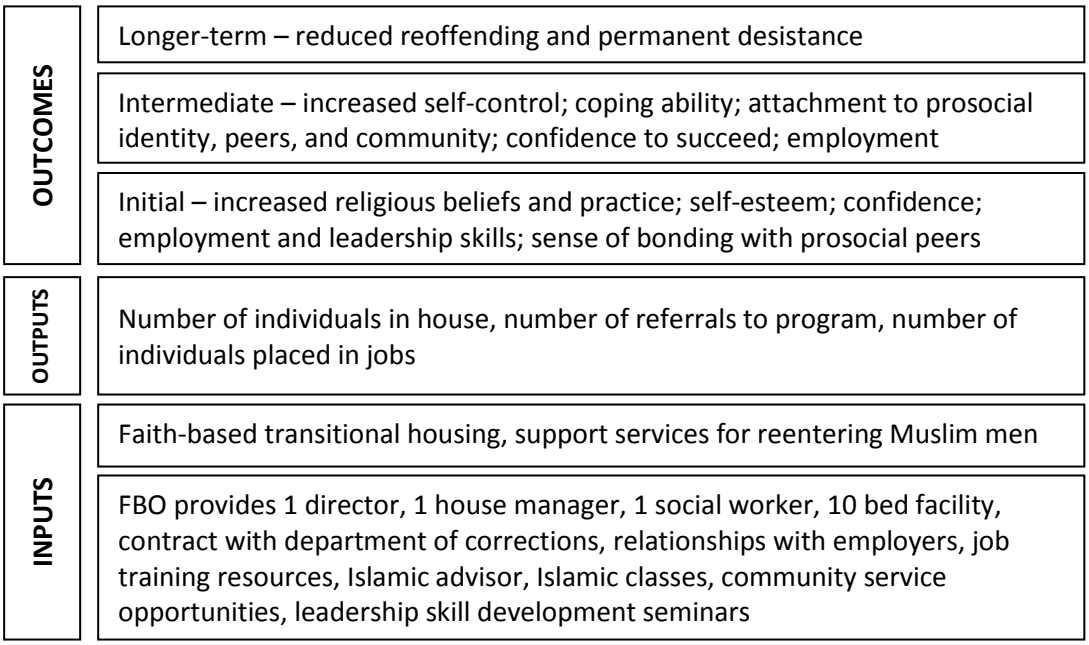
Figure 11: Sample Logic Model (Fischer & Stelter, 2006, p. 33)



Inputs are defined as "resources available to the program that allow and support provision of assistance," such as staff or materials (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, n.d., p. 2). Outputs are "the assistance or programs carried out by the agency that impact the target population," generally in numerical form, such as number of hours or number of referrals (p. 2). Outcomes are defined as "the changes in the lives of individuals, families, organizations or

the community as a result of a program" (p. 2). Outcomes may be initial, intermediate, or longer-term. Initial outcomes are the first benefits that accrue to participants and often include new attitudes, skills, or knowledge, while longer-term outcomes are desired as the ultimate ends of the program (Hatry, Van Houten, Plantz, & Greenway, 1996, p. 32). Intermediate outcomes link these two (p. 32). Outcomes should be gleaned from a variety of sources including participants, staff, volunteers, alumni, community members, and other organizations with similar programs (pp. 35-38). Based on the program theory discussion above, the following diagram illustrates a sample logic model of a FBO working to reduce recidivism among reentering Muslims:

Figure 12: Sample Logic Model for Muslim Reentry Program



Another key step in outcome measurement is data collection. Hatry, Van Houten, Plantz, and Greenway (1996) identify a range of data sources, including records, individuals (participants, staff, and others), community members, trained observers, and mechanical tests (p. 82). Each data source has its advantages and

disadvantages, as enumerated in the report (p. 86). The FBO must also determine how to collect the data (i.e. using which methods), at what point in time, and from what size sample (pp. 88-96). For example, non-profit organizations often collect data at the point of entry (baseline), during the program, upon exiting the program, and at a follow-up point (Fischer & Stelter, 2006, pp. 113-114). For the program theory and logic model above, the following describes potential data to be collected and its sources.

Table 19: Data and Sources for Outcome Measurement

Data to be Collected	**Sources**
Presence of "faith" in FBO [Area 1 of Figure 8]: Institutional or structural aspects of faith; measures of FBO capacity, financial status, engagement with community; community perceptions of effectiveness; staff dedication, manner of delivery, motivation and relationship with clients	Interviews and surveys with clients and staff; official records and statements, interviews with staff and community members, documents, records, financial reports
Individual measures of religiosity [Area 2 of Figure 8]: Spiritual knowledge, beliefs, practice	Surveys and interviews with participants, staff; observations of staff and trained observers
Self-control, bonding with prosocial peers, self-esteem, leadership skills	Surveys and interviews with participants, staff; observations of staff and trained observers
Pre-release/in-prison history (mental health, offenses) of participants	Criminal history record, disciplinary record in prison, mental health records
Participants' level of engagement in program	Attendance record; staff observations, surveys, and interviews
Employment	Program records; survey of employer and program director
Recidivism of participants	Records of arrests, offenses committed, and incarceration

FBOs may also implement more rigorous evaluation designs. Ferguson, Dabir, Dortzbach, Dyrness, an Spruijt-Metz (2006) found in their systematic review that "the most prevalent data analysis technique among the cohort of studies was descriptive statistics, which do not allow for more advanced models to

explain how faith-based programs operate nor what specifically contributes to their effectiveness." More rigorous research designs would address concerns related to selection bias and control groups through various means. In recognition of the ethical and practical issues related to randomization, Corrigan and Salzer (2003) suggest only randomizing individuals with no treatment preference. Another option is to randomize volunteers to variations of the program – such as the same program with different faith intensities, although this approach lacks a true no-service control group and large samples may be needed to detect differences between the variations (Fischer and Stelter, 2006, p. 115). Braver and Smith (1996) suggest randomizing before inviting participants to participate in one condition (i.e. a specific treatment variation or the control group) and conducting a lottery among agreeing participants to be randomly assigned to the various groups. Fischer and Stelter (2006, p. 116) suggest sorting participants first along their preference or indifference for faith-based programs, and then randomizing them into research groups within their preferences. This approach's limitations, however, include the lack of individual indifference towards faith-based programming, an absence of real choice among secular and faith-based service providers, and the confounding of outcome variables if faith-based outcomes or preferences are associated with decreased risk and increased protective factors (p. 118). An additional concern, explored in this dissertation, relates to how "faith" is interpreted for the purposes of identifying faith-disposed, faith-indifferent, and faith-averse participants. Christians and Muslims may both desire faith-based programming, but respond quite differently to the programming based on its nature. Additionally, those who are faith-disposed may be systematically different than those who are averse or indifferent, in ways that may confound outcomes or

inhibit comparisons. For example, those who are faith-disposed may have better coping abilities than others, and therefore may respond better to programming regardless of the programming itself.

A final randomization approach might entail selecting participants based on a standard set of entrance criteria and randomizing those who accept the invitation to join into a treatment group and a wait-list control group. This would address both self-selection bias as well as ethical issues of randomizing treatment. The control group would receive either secular services or no services at all for a period of time prior to then coming into the program. The control group would thus be willing to be a part of a faith-based program (presumably not faith-averse) and results would likely not be generalizable to those who are faith-averse.

Chapter 6: Policy Implications

The previous two chapters integrated the findings of the literature reviews and qualitative research, discussing key themes and developing the theoretical foundation both for faith-based reentry programming generally and for an evidence-based faith-based reentry program for formerly incarcerated Muslims. However, the discussion of such a reentry program took place in a legal and policy vacuum – that is, without regard to legal and policy-level realities and constraints. The last decade has witnessed a surge in government-FBO partnerships, with government agencies often actively "courting" FBOs to implement crucial interventions, particularly in relation to reentry and crime prevention, even though U.S. laws and government regulations restrict the operation of faith-based programs that receive government funding (see Sullivan, 2009; Department of Justice, 2013a). Indeed, the recent surge in government-FBO partnerships is a key reason why this research was undertaken at all (see Chapter 1).

Government-FBO partnerships have the potential to address many of the capacity and infrastructure-related issues raised in the previous chapter and, perhaps for this reason, were described by a quarter of interviewees as essential for the effectiveness of a faith-based reentry program. It is critical, therefore, to discuss how faith-based programs can partner with the government and maintain their efficacy in light of legal, financial, and practical constraints. This section discusses the implications of the findings of previous chapters on policy related to reentry and on the operation of government-FBO reentry partnerships.

6.1 Government-FBO Partnerships

As discussed in Chapter 1, recent years have seen a tremendous growth in the number of government-funded faith-based programs, particularly following the establishment of the federal government's faith-based initiative. Much of this programming has been in the area of reentry. Indeed, creating and funding reentry programming has been made a priority for government action under the Obama Administration, whose 2013 budget allocated $831 million to the Department of Justice for prisoner reentry programs (White House 2013 Budget Fact Sheet, 2012; White House 2013 Budget, 2012). When the partnership involves the FBO receiving government funds, legal requirements restrict the FBO's activities. This sub-section provides a case for partnering in light of the findings from previous chapters followed by a description of what such partnerships actually look like and the restrictions they face.

6.1.1 The Case for Partnering

As mentioned, the federal government has set up Offices of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships in key agencies, and each of these offices has done considerable outreach to faith-based organizations in recognition of the services that these organizations provide, their presence in areas of high crime and concentrated reentry, and their ability to build networks and provide resources in a low-cost way (Department of Justice, 2013). Many researchers have also noted the "valuable efficiencies" in partnership between government and FBOs (Frazier, 2011), whether it takes place within prison, in formal contracts with departments of correction, or via state funding for community reentry services. These "efficiencies" are a result of the broad range of services, large numbers of those

served, low cost (from few paid staff), and high potential capacity of FBOs (Willison, Brazzell, & Kim, 2010). One expert-professor interviewed in the present study discussed the fact that "many times [faith-based organizations] are the only positive institutions" in the neighborhoods in which crime and reentry are highly concentrated. Another expert, who conducts research on faith-based reentry, stressed that congregations are "assets" for the criminal justice system and other groups working in reentry because of their "value systems, pro-social skills, and capacity to build pro-social networks." Mentoring, in particular, has been noted in both government and academia as very important to successful reentry and an area in which FBOs have both particular skill and "the numbers" with which to execute (Johnson, 2008; Johnson & Larson, 2003; Frazier, 2011). Mentoring in the reentry context typically incorporates "help[ing] with transportation, job referrals, and . . . other issues affecting prisoner reentry" and discussing issues such as "family[,] employment[,] housing[,] [day-to-day] struggles[, and] spiritual issues" (Johnson and Larson, 2003).

The findings of the present research further support the notion that some FBOs may be able to provide highly effective reentry programming that fosters long-term desistance. Perhaps foremost among these findings is that the wholesale adoption of a new religious identity may be precisely the kind of "identity transformation" that can promote long-term desistance if reinforced upon reentry, as evidenced in the remarks of the formerly incarcerated Muslim converts who participated in this study. Faith-based programming during the difficult period of reentry may be the most effective way for some participants to maintain this pro-social new identity, undergo pro-social life changes like marriage and employment, and, as a result, permanently desist from criminal behavior in the long-term.

Additionally, for some participants, such as the Muslims interviewed in the qualitative study, faith-based reentry programming fulfills the void left by antisocial or non-existent families and integrates returning citizens into a community. As abundant criminological literature has shown, both "family" and "community" can play a key role in preventing crime (see Morenoff, Sampson, & Raudenbush, 2001; Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997; Laub & Sampson, 2001; Elliot, 1994; Sullivan, Mino, Nelson, & Pope, 2002; Agudelo, 2013). The present findings suggest that both "family" and "community" may come in the form of a faith-based reentry *program* and that this type of insular community may play a key role in the desistance process even when other interpersonal relationships are strained.

Despite this promise, evidence (of sufficient methodological rigor) showing the effectiveness of faith-based programming is lacking. Many FBOs might have the constituency, the passion, and the motivation to provide services, but lack the capacity to implement programming effectively or to conduct evaluations of their programming and meet reporting requirements as needed in a government partnership (Yoon & Nickel, 2008; De Vita & Wilson, 2001). Moreover, FBOs often lack sufficient capacity to implement evidence-based programming, present detailed records of their funding, or engage in self-evaluation with any kind of methodological rigor (Yoon & Nickel, 2008, p.50). This dissertation has documented evidence showing the promise of Islam-based programming for reentering Muslims seeking such programming, but faith-based organizations that could implement such a program (i.e. Muslim FBOs) would be even more likely than other FBOs to lack the capacity and infrastructure needed to partner with the government (as interviewees noted).

Partnerships between the government and FBOs can, therefore, be mutually beneficial. With its obvious interest in preventing crime, and in promoting long-term desistance, the government has appropriately sought to engage FBOs—albeit, in the reentry context, emphasizing more the "community"-based reasons for FBO success and nothing about the power of religious conversion, which is a delicate issue given the Constitutional separation of Church and State (see below). At the same time, FBOs could use government support to establish legitimacy, achieve financial stability, help participants transition smoothly from prison and access government entitlements, and bolster the FBOs' capacity to effectively provide and evaluate services. Indeed, a quarter of interviewees from this research saw government partnerships as critical to the success of a reentry program. The following section describes what these "partnerships" look like in practice.

6.1.2 Types of partnerships

Faith-based organizations may engage in a variety of partnerships with the government in the context of reentry. Generally, these partnerships involve diverse relationships, roles, strategies, processes, and resources (Department of Justice, 2013a). These partnerships may also be of several types:

- Networking (e.g. no defined structure, informational exchange)
- Cooperative (e.g. separate resources, individual-level interactions)
- Coordinative (e.g. project specific planning, compatible mission)
- Collaborative (e.g. formal division of labor, shared decision making, pooled resources)
- Collective (e.g. new mission and vision, joint decision making, shared management)

(Department of Justice, 2013a).

Specifically, government-FBO reentry partnerships often take the form of financial relationships in which the government provides grants to faith-based

organizations to work in various reentry-related areas, including within-prison services, employment training, mentoring, substance abuse treatment, housing, and family support services. The programming involved may the FBO's own programming, or the FBO might contract with the government to provide government-created programming. For example, the Innerchange Freedom Initiative (IFI) is a faith-based reentry program that operates in partnership with some states' departments of correction (Yoon & Nickel, 2008, p. 2). Several of the evaluations in the literature review portion of this dissertation examined the IFI program. The program begins 18 months to two years prior to release, and provides various in-prison and post-prison services (e.g. treatment, family services, computer training, etc.) most of which incorporate Christian prayer and teaching (see *Americans United v. Prison Fellowship Ministries*, 432 F. Supp. 2d 862, 914 (S.D. Iowa 2006)). The IFI program that once operated in an Iowa medium-security facility received funding from the state of Iowa, contracting with the Iowa Department of Corrections to provide pre-release residential programming (2006). After that IFI program was ruled unconstitutional by courts, some Iowa prisons implemented other faith-based programming aimed at reducing recidivism, such as the PLUS faith-based housing program that operates in three Iowa facilities and is similar to IFI in several respects (Hall, 2008).

FBOs may also contract with the government to provide transitional housing and community corrections (e.g. in the context of parole and probation) support services. Community corrections, which "supervises people who are under the authority of the criminal justice system but who are not in prison or jail" has become more popular recently as an alternative to incarceration (Vera, 2013, p. 5). Community corrections options vary, but FBOs often play a role in partnering or

taking the lead in this area. For example, the "Faith Works" program which incorporates Christian content in a halfway house setting, contracted with the state of Wisconsin to provide transitional services and received much attention as a result of the legal challenge it overcame (see *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639, 645 (2002)). Numerous other faith-based organizations have current contracts as residential reentry centers. For example, City of Faith contracts with state government to provide those nearing release or parole residential transitional services in three houses, including character classes, life skills training, education, family counseling, and employment services (City of Faith, 2012). In the context of transitional services, FBOs may be in close contact with, or work through, probation officers and the court system (see Farrall, 2004).

In recent years, FBOs have also implemented government-funded national programs. For example, FBOs were the lead providers for seven of the eleven sites for the adult Ready4Work program (Bauldry, Korom-Djakovic, McClanahan, McMaken, Kotloff, 2009). Ready4Work features employment-related services, case management, and mentoring (2009). The Prisoner Reentry Initiative was a government initiative that began in 2005, in which the Department of Labor funded ten faith-based organizations (and twenty community organizations) to provide employment-related services, including housing assistance, job training, and mentoring (Coffey Consulting et al., 2009, p. 1). Notably, faith-based organizations were the primary sources through which mentors were recruited (Coffey Consulting et al., 2009, p. 17).

FBOs may also partner with the government by being involved in reentry councils, roundtables, task forces, steering committees, and other advisory groups. The Second Chance Act, which was signed into law in 2008, provides funding for

numerous programs, including demonstration, mentoring, treatment, family-based substance abuse treatment, and career training projects (National Reentry Resource Center, 2013). Demonstration grant programs may provide funding for the development of a reentry task force, which often includes faith-based community partners, and this task force is a prerequisite for additional funding (National Reentry Resource Center, 2013; Bureau of Justice Administration, 2012). This task force in turn plans a comprehensive strategy to reduce recidivism and develops related programming (National Reentry Resource Center, 2013). For example, Johnson County in Kansas was awarded a Second Chance Act grant to develop reentry programming, and its grant required the involvement of community members in the task force (Johnson County, 2013). These community members include several faith-based groups, such as Catholic Social Services, Salvation Army, and Gracious Promise (Johnson County, 2013a).

6.1.3 Requirements for Federally-funded FBOs

When FBOs receive a federal grant, they become subject to several requirements imposed by the government. Many of these requirements pertain to reporting and evaluation. For example, federal agencies monitor grantees to ensure compliance with regards to their programming and their finances. Government funds must be used for the agreed-upon purpose. Recipients are legally required to file regular financial status reports and are subject to financial auditing if they receive grants above $500,000 (Government Accountability Office, 2006; White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, 2001).[10]

[10] Additional restrictions apply to FBOs that receive grants under four federal funding programs that are subject to Charitable Choice laws: 1) Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and 2) the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) programs (both overseen by the Department of Health and Human Services, DHHS), 3) programs for substance abuse and mental health (overseen

Government regulations also restrict conduct and clarify acceptable conduct as it pertains to the "faith-based" nature of the organization, based on the government's interpretation of the law. Perhaps the most important restriction on FBOs that receive direct federal grants is that they are prohibited from using this money for "inherently religious activities such as prayer, religious instruction, worship, or proselytization" (President's Advisory Council, 2010; Government Accountability Office, 2006; White House Office of FBCI, 2001). Such activities must take place in a separate place or at a separate time from the federally-funded services, and must be completely voluntary for beneficiaries (White House Office of FBCI, 2001; Executive Order 13559). That is, a beneficiary's decision to not participate in religious activities will not influence their receipt of secular services (White House Office of FBCI, 2001; Government Accountability Office, 2006). In addition, FBOs cannot discriminate against clients on the basis of religion (Government Accountability Office, 2006).

Federally funded FBOs nevertheless retain certain protections, even after receiving government grants. They may maintain control over their internal governance and need not remove religious art or symbols (2006). In addition, they can generally continue to make employment decisions on religious grounds (White House Office of FBCI, 2001).

These restrictions have their basis in the constitutional requirement to "separate church and state," as it is often termed. This requirement is discussed more specifically in the following sub-section.

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by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at DHHS), 4) the Welfare-to-Work program (overseen by the Department of Labor). Beneficiaries of services under Charitable Choice laws have a right to a non-religious service provider. Additionally, CSBG and SAMHSA grantees also must maintain separate accounts for the grants they receive.

6.2 Legal Concerns with Government-FBO Partnerships

One of the key concerns of those who oppose the expanded partnership between government and FBOs is that it violates the Establishment Clause, which begins the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Clause states, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion . . . ." (U.S. Constitution, Amendment I). This text, in simple terms, limits the conduct and programming of faith-based programs that receive government funding. Prior to 1988, the Establishment Clause largely prevented government funding of institutions that engaged in religious instruction, such as houses of worship and sectarian schools. Beginning with the Supreme Court's 1988 decision in *Bowen v. Kendrick*,[11] constitutional impediments to government funding of religious organizations began to loosen.

Over time, the Court has focused less on the religious nature of the organization receiving federal funding, and more on the specific nature of the funding scheme. A particularly important development in the Court's reasoning centered on the concept of "private choice," a funding scheme in which a provider receive government funds *indirectly*, though an individual's choice. This scheme, at least theoretically, ensures that that any religious indoctrination that occurs in the program is a result of an individual's *own choice*, not the government's (see *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*[12]). As applied to reentry, the private choice concept means that reentering individuals can select an overtly religious reentry program such as a halfway house or drug treatment program, via a voucher-like system, and government funds may pay for this program via the voucher. In contrast, an

[11] 487 U.S. 589 (1988).
[12] 536 U.S. 639 (2002).

overtly religious program that operates outside of a voucher-like system may be unconstitutional.[13]

Overall, the Supreme Court's jurisprudence alongside the legislative changes in the form of Charitable Choice laws and the FBCI have encouraged more faith-based groups to compete for federal funds for service provision (Black, Koopman, & Ryden, 2004; Lupu & Tuttle, 2008). As a result, faith-based reentry programs, as well as other faith-based programs, have become increasingly popular recipients of government assistance.

But such partnerships are not automatically lawful. In practice, the way in which "faith" actually appears in a government-funded program matters when it comes to whether the program is legal. At a general level, federally-funded FBOs characterized as "faith-based" by their identity, motivations, and delivery methods are constitutional under both direct and indirect (i.e. private choice) funding schemes. By contrast, federally-funded FBOs that are "faith-based" because of the religious content/doctrine in their funded services are unconstitutional if *directly* funded. Thus, no matter how effective directly funded services are, if they indoctrinate their clients, they violate the no-indoctrination principle and are thus unconstitutional. If these same services are *indirectly* funded, they may be constitutional since they involve private choice. For example, one court's

[13] For example, see Americans United for Separation of Church and State v. Prison Fellowship Ministries, 509 F.3d 406 (8th Cir. 2007). In this case, the InnerChange Freedom program, which operates in several U.S. prisons, was ruled unconstitutional as a program in Iowa prisons in 2006. The program involved Bible study, Christian classes, and group prayer, which contractually received government funds. The program was ruled unconstitutional because it "advanced religion" through elements such as prayer and Bible study, turned away prisoners who did not participate in religious aspects of the programs or lacked Christian beliefs, and did not give prisoners any choice to choose a secular program. Still, this case is a general exception to the overall trend of Establishment Clause cases. Other IFI programs exist in the nation's prisons, and have not been struck down, and other less explicitly religious prison programs would probably not violate the Establishment Clause (Volokh, 2011).

decision, *Freedom from Religion Foundation v. McCallum*,[14] found that Wisconsin parole officers were allowed to recommend to a parolee a halfway house that incorporated Christianity because the offender had a choice about whether to attend that program, and officers were required to offer a secular option as an alternative.[15] The Wisconsin program was a private choice, voucher-like program, in which government funds paid for a reentry program of the reentering individual's choice.

It should be noted that the effectiveness of a faith-based program is generally irrelevant to its constitutionality. Put simply, government-funded programs, no matter how effective, are *not* allowed to use "explicitly religious"[16] elements, unless the funding comes to the program through private choice. Thus, a faith-based reentry program could not use government funds to fund Bible-based counseling sessions *even if* those sessions were conclusively shown to be effective at reducing reoffending *unless*:

- The program separated out the Bible/prayer portion of the counseling in time or place, or
- The program was chosen through "private choice" by participants and government funds followed the participant's choice (as in *McCallum*)

The first of these options is quite difficult to do in practice, especially if the Bible/prayer element of the counseling is well-integrated into the counseling. For example, if the participant is counseled by using prophetic examples, prayers, and excerpts from religious text, it would be very hard to separate out these "explicitly religious" elements in time or place from the remainder of the counseling. Government funds, in all practicality, would not be able to fund this kind of religious counseling, no matter its effectiveness. Put another way, the regulations'

[14] 324 F.3d 880 (7th Cir. 2003).
[15] *Id.* at 881-82.
[16] "Explicitly religious" is the term that government regulations use to refer to prohibited religious activity (Executive Order 13279 at Section (2)(d), as amended by Executive Order 13559).

standard of prohibiting using federal funds for explicitly religious activities would be difficult to apply to the "content/doctrine" category of FBOs, though perhaps not to the identity, motivation, and manner of delivery categories of FBOs.

The challenge of using government funds legally is also especially difficult for FBOs that receive capacity-building grants. The Department of Health and Human Services, for example, awards two Compassion Capital Fund grants that help awardees build their capacity through improved management, staff training, and technical assistance (Government Accountability Office, 2006; Department of Health and Human Services, 2011). Building the capacity of an FBO, whether through staff training or building a computer database, may inevitably aid its religious activities, and thereby violate the no-indoctrination principle, without the possibility of separating these activities by time or place (Lupu & Tuttle, 2008).

A similar problem arises when FBOs use federal funds to pay staff salaries. FBOs are allowed to use federal grants to pay the salaries of those delivering funded services as long as the employee does not engage in inherently religious activities (White House Office of FBCI, 2001). Yet, realistically, it is probably rare that an FBO employee would never engage in such activities while employed at that organization, especially given that the FBO may likely have hired someone of their same faith, as they are allowed to do.

This discussion on the legal restrictions impacting faith-based organizations and their work illustrates a few things:

- Faith-based programming in partnership with the government is at the cutting edge of a legal debate (see Volokh, 2011; *Teen Ranch, Inc. v. Udow*, 479 F.3d 403 (6th Cir. 2007); *Americans United v. Prison Fellowship Ministries*, 432 F. Supp. 2d 862, 914 (S.D. Iowa 2006); *Freedom from Religion Found., Inc. v. McCallum*, 324 F.3d 880 (7th Cir. 2003); Lupu and Tuttle, 2008). The law on government funded faith-based programs is incoherent, and even its few bright line rules can have exceptions (e.g. private choice).

- There is much work to be done on a policy-making level to bring greater alignment between jurisprudence, policy, and practice. The term "explicitly religious" activities, for example, is not terribly clear.

- While some faith-based programs—including the faith-based program described in the previous chapter—show significant promise and/or evidence of effectiveness and ought to work with the government, those faith-based programs that do receive government funds have significant restrictions to navigate. If the program's religious components, such as prayer or study of religious text, are well intertwined with secular components, it will be difficult to receive government funds without altering the program, unless the funds proceed through private choice.

6.3 What Partnering Might Look Like In Practice

While government agencies have undoubtedly encouraged FBOs to apply to government grants, these calls for partnership have failed to mention the significant legal and regulatory restrictions that accompany such grants and how FBOs may address legal issues (see, as an example, Department of Justice, 2013a). In a government-funded faith-based program, for example, funds could not be used to purchase religious texts, to construct or maintain rooms in which spiritual services are provided, or to pay the salary of an individual providing religious services as well as job training. Further, the program could not restrict its clients to members of only one faith. If the program operates in partnership with the department of corrections or courts (for example, with parole and probation services), it could not be an exclusive partner; reentering individuals must always be offered a secular alternative.

Based on the evidence presented in previous chapters, an Islam-based program with the above-described elements has great potential to reduce reoffending among reentering Muslims electing such a program, and could serve as a transitional home or residence for those on parole or probation, operating in direct partnership with the government. The program may be a deserving recipient

of government funds due to its potential efficacy in promoting long-term desistance, but as such, it would be subject to restrictions. To avoid legal issues, the program should segregate its secular and religious activities. If government funds are used to construct the home, religious activities mandated by the program must be held outside of it. If government funds contribute to the program in any way, the program must not be exclusive to Muslims as a rule (i.e. it cannot exclude non-Muslims in its criteria for acceptance). To maintain efficacy for its Muslim residents, the program should have enough residents who are Muslim such that its "brotherhood" elements remain intact. As one of the few Islam-based programs, and if advertised as such, the program would probably attract mostly Muslim interest, and the "brotherhood" elements would probably not be at risk of being lost.

Faith-based programs have several options for addressing legal and capacity-related issues. One way to prevent fund diversion to religious activities is to require faith-based FBOs to maintain government funds for their social service programs in a separate account or to establish a distinct nonprofit organization for the social service programs (as many larger scale FBOs do) (De Vita & Wilson, 2001). This would simplify reporting and monitoring of federal funds. The determination of which FBOs may be required to create separate funding schemes may be a made on a case-by-case basis after judging the FBO's effectiveness to adequately meet federal reporting requirements. Another way to avoid legal issues is through individual choice mechanisms, such as vouchers. If a department of corrections gives reentering individuals vouchers so that they may go to the

transitional home of their choice,[17] the program could maintain its faith elements, and the above-described Islam-based program can maintain its Muslim participation without legal worry.

One policy recommendation that would address both capacity and legal issues would be to require that government funds, via a voucher-system, run through intermediary organizations. Intermediaries are defined as:

> Nongovernmental organizations, national faith-based and secular organizations, coalitions of organizations, or offices or positions within agencies specifically tasked to work with faith-based and community groups as liaisons between local service providers and government entities. They typically have an established organizational infrastructure and a history of working with government. They can act as fiscal agents for smaller groups, and in many cases, they offer training and technical assistance to faith-based and community organizations. (Yoon & Nickel, 2008, p. 7)

Examples of well-known intermediaries include United Way, Goodwill, and Catholic Charities (Yoon & Nickel, 2008, p. 7). "Perhaps the best recent example" of an intermediary according to Johnson (2008a) was the Compassion Capital Fund, through which the government had provided funds "to intermediary organizations across the country to provide training, technical, and financial assistance to faith- and community-based organizations" (p. 16).

Making it mandatory for FBOs to work with intermediary organizations will enhance the monitoring of funds, accountability to government, accurate and timely reporting, and rigor and objectiveness of evaluations. Essentially, the intermediary would contract with government to receive the funds, and then provide funds to FBOs. Intermediaries would alleviate the reporting and evaluation burdens imposed by government regulations—which many FBOs,

[17] To achieve genuine choice, the program must abide by the requirements of a constitutionally valid voucher program – i.e. the participant must not be steered towards religious providers and must have a menu of options, including secular ones, from which to choose.

particularly in the Muslim community would be ill-equipped to execute—by taking on these tasks. They can also help ensure the objectivity of the evaluation.

In addition to shouldering the reporting and evaluation responsibilities, intermediaries can help address some of the limitations in capacity and infrastructure affecting FBOs, including curriculum and program development, staff turnover, lack of a neutral space, and funding issues (Johnson & Larson, 2003). They can also provide training and technical assistance to help FBOs enhance their human capital, improve recordkeeping, evaluate services, interpret results, and align with best practices (Yoon & Nickel, 2008). Further, intermediaries can use their networks to help smaller scale FBOs that are often operating in isolation from each other (Johnson, 2008). Prisons (and prisoners) could also consult intermediaries to find references to faith-based organizations that would best fit individual needs. As Johnson (2008) summarizes,

> [I]ntermediary organizations may be the most important, yet underutilized, element in building successful prisoner reentry models that are intended to work with volunteers, especially volunteers who come from religious congregations. Intermediaries can be a bridge between ex-prisoners and social service providers and governmental agencies. Intermediaries can coordinate reentry efforts of faith-based and community-based organizations, volunteers, social services, mentors, and parole officers. Additionally, intermediaries can serve important roles by providing technical assistance and oversight to groups and organizations and offer ongoing training to strengthen capacity and sustainability. (p. 29)

The Bush Faith-Based and Community Initiatives office expanded the role of intermediaries in partnerships with FBOs (Johnson, 2008) though the idea of intermediaries is still "relatively new and underdeveloped" (Johnson, 2008). But even more novel is the idea that intermediaries can be useful—if not ideal—tools to help address constitutional concerns with government-FBO partnerships. Because the intermediary is not directly providing services (even if it is faith based) and can facilitate individual choice, they help make sure that the

participants' own choice directs government funds to a service provider. For faith-based reentry programs that effectively reduce recidivism, but that incorporate "explicitly religious" elements that would be hard to separate from secular components—such as the Islam-based program discussed in Chapter 5, lawfully using government funds may be quite difficult. A private choice scheme whereby the correctional system or other government entity can allocate government funds to the reentry program of an individual's own choice, perhaps through the assistance of an intermediary organization, could alleviate this difficulty while maintaining the efficacy of the program.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Future Steps

This dissertation has sought to help fill existing voids in the theoretical, evidence-based, and policy literature concerning faith-based reentry programming. Regarding theory, it has lent support to existing hypotheses about desistance and the relationship between religion and crime, explained their application to a minority faith group, offered new problem and program theories for a specific intervention, and established a broad-based theoretical framework for understanding, implementing, and evaluating faith-based reentry programming. Regarding evidence-based research, it has illuminated some of the unclear causal pathways between faith-based programming and reduced recidivism and offered theoretical and practical suggestions for enhancing the evaluation of such programs. Regarding policy, it has recommended ways in which faith-based programs may partner with the government, while staying faithful to what makes them effective and addressing their infrastructural and capacity-related needs.

The novel qualitative research on reentering Muslims conducted for this dissertation helped propose a hybrid theoretical framework for faith-based reentry programming that draws from sociological, criminological, and evidence-based literature. The framework suggests that faith-based reentry programming operates through a variety of theories, including social learning and attachment, informal social control, and identity transformation, and can also align with existing evidence-based principles for correctional interventions, including addressing criminogenic needs, matching programming to the needs and styles of participants, focusing on action-oriented behavioral change, and providing continuity of care (Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996; Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006; Dowden,

Antonowicz, & Andrews, 2003). As the program theory offered here shows, faith-based reentry programming can address criminal thinking head-on through spiritual teaching, model values and behaviors of a pro-social lifestyle through mentoring and therapeutic communities, offer continuity of care and the support of a wider faith network, and match the often most-desired need of a participant (particularly a new convert) by offering a faith-based approach.

However, this dissertation should not be taken as an endorsement of faith-based reentry programs above or to the exclusion of secular ones. Religion is not the only source of positive, pro-social influences that may change the direction of one's life. Other community programs, voluntary associations, educational institutions, or informal classes provide social networks and cultural capital that transform the lives of their participants (see Smith, 2003). This dissertation also fully recognizes that one faith-based approach does not fit the needs of all faith-groups or individuals. Indeed, applying a faith-based approach to non-adherents, non-practicing adherents, and non-volunteers may well be counter-productive. Moreover, to be effective at reducing reoffending, a faith-based program must have the capacity to be able to implement a program with fidelity, evaluate its outcomes, and ensure adherence to evidence-based principles.

This dissertation does, however, illustrate the kind of case-by-case, ground-up analysis that should occur when designing an intervention for a particular group, and recognizes that faith can play a critical role in promoting desistance for certain individuals. Although findings from the qualitative research provide tremendous insight into the needs and suitable programming for one particular faith group, the theoretical framework and discussion on development, implementation, and policy-related issues extend broadly.

At a time when government-FBO partnerships are increasingly popular and community-based groups are at the frontlines of administering reentry services, this dissertation has illuminated not only some of the methodological, practical, and legal challenges facing faith-based reentry programming, but also some of the promise and potential that some such programming has for recidivism reduction. Indeed, for participant-adherents who desire a faith-based approach, such programming has the potential to promote permanent desistance through social control and positive identity reformation, and its long-term impact makes it an attractive option for a more desistance-focused (Farrall, 2004) or success-over-surveillance (Vera, 2013, p. 15) reentry agenda. The policy analysis above offered solutions, such as private choice mechanisms and intermediary organizations, by which faith-based reentry programs need not compromise the religious content that is a part of their identity and that accounts for their appeal, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness.

Finally, this dissertation has several implications for the research agenda on faith-based programming moving forward. It has shown the importance of studying group-specific needs, looking to the perspectives of the population to direct the definition of "religion," "family," and "community." The nuanced concept of "community," and its role in desistance, must be further researched. Participants in this study felt, in a sense, multiple layers of "community," each with competing influences, some reintegrative (e.g. peers and program) and some disintegrative (e.g. broader religious community and society). This finding introduces a new puzzle: competing and "layered" formulations of "community" in the reentry process, particularly in the context of reentry interventions. Further research may seek to reconcile such conceptualizations with the concepts of

"knifing off" from the outside community, and with recreating the "protective prison environment." These new definitions of "community," moreover, should be situated among existing concepts, such as neighborhood collective efficacy (see Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush, 2001) and social controls in the form of families, neighborhood groups, workplaces, schools, faith communities, and peers (see Hunter, 1985). Finally, researchers may wish to further examine how the reentry process varies over time – that is, the extent to which the experiences of returning individuals differ based on how long they have been out of prison, and whether these differences depend on the seriousness or frequency of offending. On a methodological level, future studies—both qualitative and quantitative—must be mindful of defining religiosity broadly, sampling systematically and reducing bias, and addressing questions of generalizability and causality. Just as this study drew from other disciplines to establish a strong theoretical basis for intervention design, future research should not only be well-informed by theories across disciplines but also consider how its findings support, modify, or displace such theories.

APPENDIX A

Semi-structured Interview Questions (Piloted)

1. Background/context questions (to be asked at end of interview or when appropriate)
    a. Where are you from? Where do you live?
    b. How long ago were you incarcerated?
    c. How many times have you been incarcerated?
    d. How many years have you been incarcerated, in total?
    e. Where were you most recently incarcerated?
    f. Did you convert to Islam in prison? How did you find Islam in prison?
    g. Did you participate (or were you required to participate) in any programs when you were released from prison?
    h. In any of the programs you participated in after being released, was there a component that had to do with faith, religion, or spirituality? (*Explain types of faith-based programs if needed.*) Were any of the programs located in or run by churches or mosques? Run by Christian organizations or Muslim organizations?
2. Challenges and needs
    a. Think back to when you were re-entering from prison, after becoming Muslim. What challenges did you face? Were there any challenges particular to you being Muslim or specific challenges you faced because you were Muslim? *Clarify unique challenges faced as a Muslim.* Do you think most Muslims face these same challenges when they are re-entering?
    b. How important is it for Muslims who are re-entering to have their needs as a Muslim met? What happens if these needs are not met?
3. Fulfilling needs
    a. What kind of programs or services could have helped you as a Muslim when you were re-entering? *Probe into elements of these programs.*
    b. Do you think a program, for example,
        i. with Islamic classes
        ii. with Muslim mentors/counselors
        iii. run by a mosque or Muslim organization

        could help you and others stop re-offending? How so? How not? (*For each element:*) Would this help stop other problems? *Listen for drug use, lack of motivation, apathy, family relations, employment, etc.* Which ones?
    c. If you could create a program for Muslims re-entering from prison, what would it look like? (*Probe into how faith is mentioned, e.g. classes, organization/leadership, staff, etc.*)
    d. Who should create these programs?
4. If participant is currently in a faith-based program:
    a. Describe your program to me: What's the goal of the program? What do you do in a typical day?
    b. Why did you join your program?
    c. How long have you been in your program?

   d. How is faith incorporated into your program?
   e. What do you like about your program? Has your program been helpful to you – in what ways?
      i. How has it helped you successfully enter back into the community?
      ii. Has the "faith component" (*replace with specific description, e.g. Islamic classes, Muslim leadership, etc.*) stopped you from re-offending? How so? How not?
      iii. Has the "faith component" (*replace with specific description*) improved some of your other behaviors (*example: drug abuse, interaction with family, employment*)? How so? How not?
   f. What do you dislike about your program? How has your program *not* helped you? How would you improve your program?
   g. As a *Muslim* who is re-entering from prison, how has this program helped you? What specific parts of the program have helped you as a Muslim?
   h. Do you think most of the other Muslims would agree with you?
   i. So, in your opinion, is it more helpful to Muslims to have a program that has a "Muslim/faith-based" component in it or to have one that doesn't? Why?
5. For program administrator(s) or other staff:
   a. Is there a need for Muslim reentry services (*e.g. Islamic classes, Muslim leadership, etc.*) for Muslims and in what ways?
   b. If yes, how could such a program help Muslims re-enter?
   c. Do you think a program
      i. with Islamic classes
      ii. with Muslim mentors/counselors
      iii. run by a mosque or Muslim organization

      could help formerly incarcerated Muslims stop re-offending? How so? How not? (*For each element:*) Would this help stop other problems? *Listen for drug use, lack of motivation, apathy, family relations, employment, etc.* Which ones?
   d. How is faith incorporated into your program? What other elements are included in the program?
   e. How are participants selected for your program?
   f. What does a typical day look like for participants in your program?
   g. How does the faith-component benefit the individuals and enhance their successful reentry?
   h. What are some weaknesses of your program? How would you improve your program?
   i. Do you think having a Muslim-faith element in your program curbs re-offending? How so or how not? Does it help other outcomes, and which ones?
   j. What implementation challenges has your program encountered thus far? (*Listen for: could relate to funding, job placement, stigma within the Muslim community, cross-agency coordination/cooperation.*)

k. If you could create a program for Muslims re-entering from prison, what would it look like? (*Probe into how faith is mentioned, e.g. classes, organization/leadership, staff, etc.*)

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