

**Perspectives of Juvenile Justice Professionals on Factors Impacting Recidivism of
Crossover Youth of Color in the United States.**

By

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Dedication

First, and most importantly, praise and thanks be to God for his mercies and giving me the inspiration, wisdom, strength, and endurance to complete this dissertation. This dissertation is dedicated to my phenomenal mother, Jean Matthews, who has been a source of strength, support, patience, and motivation for me throughout this entire experience. I am truly blessed to have such an amazing mother.

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Section One: Research Overview

This study has investigated some of the elements that influence recidivism within crossover youth of color in the juvenile justice system across the United States from the perspective of youth professionals focusing on programs and services. The information is essential to professionals working in the criminal legal system since it provides insight into the factors that impact youth recidivism in foster care throughout the criminal legal system. The risks of juvenile offenders returning to illegal activities upon incarceration are significant. To help curb recidivism, the findings have prompted individuals, policy makers, social workers, shareholders, etc., to do something but think about what learning their opinions could realistically do.

Understanding how recidivism for youth in foster care falls within the purview of social work concerns is necessary to address the problem and help adolescents before they fall through the cracks. In the United States, many youths who age out of foster care end up in jail, homeless with no family or friends, or worse. There has been a lot of speculation on what causes these social problems, one thing we can do as social workers is to understand what sets these problems into motion so we can better prevent them from happening. The research which was research was classified as exploratory since it helped in increasing knowledge or understanding. My research was conducted through a quantitative research method. My survey was distributed through Qualtrics to all youth professionals. In the solicitation, the researcher describes the study's goals, risks, benefits, and requirements for participation and permission. Research participation was voluntary and participants were free to discontinue the study.

This study lead to findings that are helpful to social workers since it equips them with knowledge of what youth professionals perceive to be factors impacting recidivism among

youthful offenders. Understanding these factors allows them to develop approaches and strategic plans to reduce the reoffending rate.

The research adheres to the ethical standards of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), such as respecting the dignity of the crossover youths who are brought under their care. Following this code, the study's researchers provided quality service and maintained professionalism. According to NASW, it recommends that the handling and treatment of crossover youths in the Juvenile justice system be done differently from the treatment of adults (DiFranks, 2008). The treatment must be differentiated in every phase, for instance, prevention, early intervention, formal diversion, detention, post-release, incarceration, and residential care. The NASW also indicates that crossover youth are still at a different development stage. Therefore, they should be handled appropriately. To support these provisions, the NASW suggests installing overall system improvement. In this case, the NASW indicates that there should be a functioning reporting system to help social workers address the issues affecting the crossover youth. With the reporting system in place, there is a faster response to problems. It also involves using oversight persons to identify the challenges of crossover youths. Another strategy is to work with qualified social workers who understand the need and care strategy of crossover youth. Social workers must be able to conduct counseling and offer education to crossover youths to help them recover from their problems and reduce the reoffending rate (DiFranks, 2008).

Furthermore, the youth professionals entrusted with the care of crossover youths in the juvenile justice system must be culturally competent to avoid issues of discrimination that have been part and parcel of the juvenile justice system. Consequently, the youth professional must also be able to give cross-cultural services such as early sustained prevention

efforts, advocacy, assessment of the person-in-environment and development stages, communication at all levels (youth, family, and systems), knowledge of children's developmental issues, awareness of the decision-making limitations of children and youths and access to resources for children and youths. The nature of the youths' services determines how fast they can learn from their mistakes and reform or return to their criminal acts.

Section Two: Study Problem

United States Juvenile Justice System

The United States Juvenile Justice System is a complex system designed to address juvenile delinquency issues. My study has explored the history and current state of the juvenile justice system in the United States. I have discussed the roles of different youth professionals in the system, such as judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and social workers, and the various laws, policies, and programs in place to ensure that juveniles are treated fairly and receive the necessary services and interventions. Additionally, this section has examined the impact of race and socio-economic status on juvenile justice outcomes, as well as the challenges and successes of the system.

The juvenile justice system is a correction area for youths who were found to have committed criminal offenses. They were systems designed to help crossover youth reform from their illegal ways and be better people in society. Like other nations, the United States has had a juvenile justice system for decades. The first court system was started in 1899 in Chicago to handle the cases surrounding children under sixteen. The courts would define the punishment (Huggins-Hoyt et al., 2019). According to Human Rights Watch, before the 1890 's, children were tried in the same court as adults, and as a result, many crossover youths were executed before reaching the age of 14. The primary aim of forming the juvenile justice system in the United States was to replace jails. Also, the court proceedings were to be non-adversarial, operating on behalf of rather than against the Juvenile. Furthermore, the juvenile system was to lift the burden of long jail terms for the less disadvantaged.

Statistics from the Juvenile Law Center indicate that in 2018 over 43,580 children and adolescents in America in foster care were transferred to the juvenile justice system (Garcia et

al., 2019). However, a further study indicated that black adolescents are twice as likely to be moved from foster care as white adolescents because of their high association with criminal activities (Baciu et al., 2017).

The law was an important step in the state's efforts to protect and rehabilitate troubled crossover youth. It established a separate home for young offenders, providing them with a safe and supportive environment to help them get back on the right track. The home provided educational and vocational training programs and therapeutic services designed to address the underlying causes of their criminal behavior. The facility also strongly emphasized family involvement, offering counseling and support to the children and their families. The goal of this program was to reduce recidivism and help troubled crossover youths become productive members of society. At the same time, the state also took steps to ensure that juvenile offenders were not exposed to the harsher punishments meted out to adults. Juvenile courts were established to ensure that minors were not tried or sentenced as adults. Special detention centers and reformatories were set up to provide care and rehabilitation for young offenders.

The Juvenile courts and child protective institutions provide two different functions and are frequently administered separately. There is a distinct difference between child protection and the services provided. The primary responsibility of a child welfare agency is to investigate allegations to ensure the safety of the children. The juvenile correctional service's fundamental aims are to make youngsters responsible for misconduct, including criminality and misbehavior, protect public security, foster nonaggressive growth, meet health requirements, and avoid repeated offenses. After completing a thorough investigation, the agency will refer the family to an external community-based organization that will provide the necessary services to address any safety concerns identified during the protective investigation. In rare cases where services

cannot adequately address safety concerns, foster care placement can be explored. Foster care is always reserved as a last alternative. When children are placed into foster care, the primary goal is always permanency. Therefore, foster care is a temporary home for children whose parents are dead or cannot take care of them. Certified care manages foster care homes that specialize in taking care of children.

Several factors have contributed to the higher referral rates for Black crossover youth compared to White children (Beatz et al. 2021). For instance, lawmakers that foster care increases adult criminality; therefore, Black youth face a lot of transfers to the juvenile system, where they are supposed to be protected and given good guidance (Beatz et al. 2021).

Juvenile Court

There has been extensive discussion regarding recidivism in children of color who transfer from the foster care system to the juvenile court system in all major American cities and states. These discussions primarily occur during legislative meetings after a senator introduces a bill. In March 2022, The Maryland Senate passed a substantial juvenile justice reform measure after more deaths and harsh measures children were being subjected to were recorded. Children in the foster care system died in the state's custody due to inadequate health care and mental health support. This prompted the Maryland Senate to take action and pass the Juvenile Justice Reform Measure.

This measure seeks to address the disproportionate incarceration rates of children of color by providing educational and therapeutic programming to help combat recidivism. It also requires the Department of Juvenile Services to provide more resources and access to mental health services for children in the foster care system. The bill also allows for more flexibility in sentencing so that children of color are not unfairly punished for minor infractions. According to

the new statement, children younger than 13 will not be subject to juvenile court jurisdiction for delinquency proceedings and may not be charged with a crime (Witte, 2022). As a result of this new policy, the age has increased to reflect crossover youth under 13. Before this new policy, the age limit for crossover youth to access online services was usually set at 12 years old.

Maryland vs. Virginia Recidivism

The Virginia State Department of Correction has researched the rate of recidivism among crossover youths in Maryland to be 46.5 percent which is the highest in the country. In contrast, the Virginia rate is 21.3% (Maryland Department of Justice, 2022). The reoffending rate is reduced in Virginia because, according to Moffet's age-crime curve, the rate of crime among crossover youth reduces as they enter adulthood hence the reason for the reduced crime rate (Loeber et al., 2015). Furthermore, punitive measures such as lengthy jail terms and high fines for offensive actions have helped reduce the crime rate. This argument is supported by the example of Virginia, which has seen a reduction in crime rates due to its implementation of such measures. However, the effectiveness of this approach is still up for debate, and its morality may be questionable. According to the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, released youth in Maryland are likely to be rearrested within three years (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2015).

Traversing two systems

Adolescents involved in juvenile justice and child welfare systems as a consequence of criminal behavior and abuse are frequently referred to as "dual-active" youths since they are involved in both approaches (Dierkhising et al., 2018). Children who undergo child protection assistance have an increased likelihood of recidivism and engagement with the juvenile correctional system in the future. There exists growing attention to studying individuals who transition from foster care to juvenile justice services, with the twin objective of prenatal

enriching theory and application and legislative inference. Prenatal enrichment theory believes prenatal experience alters a child's behavior and brain before birth. The mother's environment during the pregnancy has a high chance of influencing the behaviors. In United States, the child protection system is concerned with allegations of maltreatment and abuse. They help the child's family offer better care for their children by making service referrals and providing the family with tools to ensure their safety. However, foster care is a system that takes care of children who have been taken away from their families (Beatz et al., 2021). Children are often removed from their homes and placed into foster care due to severe child abuse or neglect. The system is a bridge to the birth parents, enabling the children to return home safely and keep their families connected. The system also helps children locate a permanent home. Crossover youths who undergo child protection assistance have an increased likelihood of recidivism and engagement with the juvenile correctional system in the future.

There are discrepancies between the two systems based on Race and Ethnicity. For instance, African Americans and Indigenous or Alaska Native American children are vastly overrepresented in both the criminal justice and juvenile justice departments nationally (Spinney et al., 2018). Even though Maryland statistics reveal that Hispanic children can be found in the child welfare system, they are not treated equally. Summers (2012) found that Hispanic adolescents are disproportionately represented in the foster care systems in more than 14 states.

Many adolescents who need psychological treatment are served by the two systems together. According to Spinney et al. (2018), numerous children who require assistance may not obtain it. The above is especially true for adolescents of minority communities who are underrepresented in the workforce and whose families may lack health insurance. Instead, all these institutions provide services to adolescents who may be at heightened potential danger and

have significant requirements. Both systems, simultaneously or sequentially, serve a considerable number of children and households (Dierkhising et al., 2018).

According to the 2020 Maryland child welfare data snapshot, children's service organizations in Maryland receive around 59,000 referrals related to children each year (Maryland Department of Human Services, 2020). Also, there were over 7,000 cases of child maltreatment in the state of Maryland in 2020. The role of the service providers is to facilitate the education, psychological, Employment and health services to crossover youth of color. Children and teenagers engaged in the child protection system are often taken from their families in some of the most extreme circumstances (Beatz et al., 2021). According to the Virginia Department of Social Services, in 2021, more than 5,400 children were registered in the foster care system in Maryland State (Buchanan, 2018). One of the most prevalent reasons for a child being removed from their parents and placed into foster care is neglect or abuse . Some contributing factors are drug usage, caregivers' incapability to handle a child's violent behavior state, poor housing, and parent imprisonment (Font et al., 2019).

History of Recidivism in the United States Juvenile Justice system

Historically, the issue of recidivism in crossover youth transitioning to the juvenile system has often been challenging, with most of those figures involving people of color. People of color have experienced heightened difficulty navigating the plans due to the lack of resources, which is majorly caused by the increased rate of discrimination in American society. Some of the many resources are counseling, mentorship, and educational programs. Previous research has established the risk of juvenile court process participation for minors obtaining child welfare assistance. For example, since the 1980s, the number of incarcerated White crossover youths has declined by 75 percent. At the same time, the number of imprisoned children of color has also

reduced though they still hold the highest percentage of incarceration, at five times the rate of White Americans. Nationally, one in 81 Black adults in the U.S. is serving time in state prison (Herz et al., 2010).

Historically, policies have aimed to identify possible solutions by identifying recidivism causes. Many approaches have been implemented to encourage employers and educational institutions to provide juvenile offenders with a second opportunity to access these programs. One example of these programs would be the second chance initiative. Through federally sponsored Second Chance programs, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) helps to strengthen families across America and provides crossover youth with educational and vocational opportunities, employment and housing assistance, mental and physical healthcare, family programming, substance use treatment to help them overcome barriers to successful reentry (Brady & Peck, 2021). Many of the policies are geared towards safeguarding employers from implementing discriminatory practices. Psychoeducation and employment are some programs that can be used to reduce recidivism. Employment ensures that the offenders are busy after their release, whereas education ensures that offenders are equipped with the knowledge, helping them make good choices (Beatz et al. 2021). However, these policies have never effectively solved such problems because judicial decisions have still been harsh on crossover youths of color. Often, sentences are prescribed in law, and judges have little or no discretion. A possible reason for the failures of these policies is due to a large number of unemployed individuals, making it difficult for them to find employment opportunities to adequately address the crossover youth unemployment crisis. The crossover youth unemployment crisis has been exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, lack of support from the youths' families due to their poor background (La Vigne et al., 2008).

Furthermore, post-incarceration impacts the trust between the child and their family; this lack of confidence leads to isolation for the individual; hence it becomes hard to undertake the programs (Brady & Peck, 2021). According to a report by Beatz et al., 2021, Pennsylvania has improved the policies and programs to reduce arrests and end racial discrimination within the juvenile justice system, such as bail reform, skills training, and job placement.

This study was able to provide insight into what youth professionals perceive as factors for Recidivism among crossover youth. Specifically, this study answered the most fundamental research problem questions. First, the study was able to determine the reasons or factors causing Recidivism among crossover youths of color by administering questionnaires to the participants. The above factors helped in understanding the nature of such elements. Lastly, the researcher has a guiding research question that seeks to identify and explore services that may be essential in reducing Recidivism among crossover youths of color. The following chapter will present a literature review of services geared towards addressing Recidivism among the crossover youth of color across different Juvenile Justice Systems.

Crossover Youth Recidivism rate in the United States

Reoffending refers to the recurrence of illegal conduct just after an individual has been sanctioned or prosecuted for a previous offense (National Institute of Justice, 2014). Recidivism refers to unlawful behavior resulting in the accused being apprehended, charged, or imprisoned again before or after three years following discharge. There is a crucial relationship connecting the idea of Recidivism and the rising volume of studies on criminal deviance, which is being conducted. The term desisting describes how an individual achieves a continuous condition of non-offending behavior (National Institute of Justice, 2014). A person freed from incarceration

would either recidivate or stop doing it again (National Institute of Justice, 2014). The study on deviance and intervention strategies is similar to how remedies and punishments impact the cycle of deviance (National Institute of Justice, 2014). Recidivism has already been considered in the evaluation of Maryland prisons.

Database Search

Racial disproportionality in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems has been an ongoing problem in the United States. Research has shown that crossover youth of color, particularly African American youth, are disproportionately represented in the foster care and juvenile justice systems. This research has examined racial disproportionality among crossover youth in United States, including the foster care and juvenile justice systems and available programs and services to address the issue. Throughout my research we have discussed the implications of disproportionality and potential strategies and solutions to address it.

A Comprehensive search was completed with the following search terms, Crossover youth AND Racial Disproportionality, Child and Racial Disproportionality, Juvenile Justice AND Foster Care, Youth of Color AND Foster Care, Youth of Color AND Juvenile Justice System, Juvenile Justice System and foster care system

A systematic search was undertaken to determine whether the crossover youth of color who move from the foster care system to the justice system are at risk of Recidivism in the United States. Literature for this search included both peer-reviewed journals and dissertations. Thirty-seven sources were selected from 158 abstracts from the below-mentioned databases. The articles chosen were reliable and relevant to my search criteria. Seven articles were selected from Google Scholar, five papers were selected from Ebsco Discovery Services, eight articles were selected from AFCARS (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), six articles were reviewed from Child Welfare Information Gateway, six papers were chosen from Yeshiva University Library, and six parts were selected from the Encyclopedia of Social Work.

For literature related to Recidivism in crossover youth, inclusion criteria for the articles consisted of articles that focused on recidivism of crossover youth in the United States. Exclusion criteria included articles written more than ten years ago, articles not peer-reviewed, articles that did not have any of my search terms, book reviews, and articles not based in this country. All research was reviewed for the quality of content and relevance to each topic.

Literature Review

During my research, I have explored existing literature findings under seven critical themes. The seven themes include factors impacting recidivism within crossover youth of color in the U.S. juvenile justice system, the efficacy of current services, factors leading to recidivism, disparity in services and dual hypothesis. This literature review explored existing findings to assess the nature of the problem and various attempts which have already been made to make improvements. This study has primarily focused on youth across the United States

Theme 1: Factors Impacting Recidivism within Crossover Youth of Color in the U.S. Juvenile Justice System

Recidivism is a concept in the criminal justice system that refers to individuals' relapse into criminal actions. Relapse occurs when individuals undergo intervention or receive sanctions after committing a crime. Therefore, individuals are likely to be rearrested, reconvicted, or re-imprisoned after their release because of engaging in criminal activities despite receiving sanctions (Reardon, 2022). Crossover youths of color are at risk of recidivism because of the attributes that characterize their lives. The youths move to the criminal justice system after the Child Welfare System releases them. Crossover youths suffer high rates of maltreatment than their peers without contact with the child welfare system (Reardon, 2022). Crossover youths are at increased risk of adverse outcomes than their counterparts who are still accommodated within the Child Welfare System. For instance, crossover youths will likely depict poor relations with their caregivers and substance abuse (Reardon, 2022). Additionally, their protective factors, like positive interactions with learning institutions and family support, escalates their recidivism risk more than the non-crossover youths (Reardon, 2022). Crossover youths are also likely to develop trauma that undermines their outcomes later in life. For instance, exposure to adverse

childhood experiences, including residing in unstable households and witnessing violence, neglect, and abuse, exposes them to risk-taking behavior, limited job opportunities, behavioral health challenges, and poor health outcomes (Reardon, 2022).

A significant percentage of crossover youths are African Americans. The data mirrors racial injustices in the juvenile and child welfare systems. A Los Angeles study concluded that 10% of the general population comprised African American youths (Kolivoski et al., 2017). However, the African American group represents 37% of the referrals to Child Welfare Programs, 63% of the crossover youths, and 28% of the probation referrals (Kolivoski et al., 2017). Multiple cultural and structural factors contribute to more African American overrepresentation among crossover youths. Mainly, they include residing in poor and segregated neighborhoods, making them increasingly visible to law enforcement and social service agencies (Kolivoski et al., 2017). The neighborhoods also increase crossover youths' likelihood of contacting the juvenile justice and Child Welfare system. The analysis confirms that the risk factors impacting recidivism within crossover youth of color in the U.S. juvenile justice system are embedded within the community, school, peer, family, and individual domains. Likewise, factors like substance abuse, trauma, inconsistent parenting, and family disruptions increase crossover youth's risk of re-offending and offending within the juvenile justice system (Kolivoski et al., 2017). Addressing these factors will ensure that African American crossover youths lead meaningful lives. Specifically, the government should collaborate with significant stakeholders to tackle factors that increase recidivism among crossover youths of color.

Theme 2: Specific Factors that Lead to Recidivism

Reentry Identification Challenges

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) provides states with a data-driven approach to managing criminal justice populations and investing savings in strategies to reduce recidivism and improve public safety (The Justice Reinvestment initiative, 2021). The Justice Reinvestment Legislation does not mention reentrants' difficulty getting identifying credentials following their discharge. According La Vigne et al. (2008), necessary identity credentials are frequently forgotten throughout detention. Government-issued identity cards, social insurance credentials, and birth certifications are required to secure accommodation, establish occupational qualifications, open banking accounts, and gain entrance to beneficial services, including Medicare. Reentrants who lack documentation and paperwork may not only be incapable of receiving practical reentry assistance but might also become compelled to engage in delinquent behavior to meet necessities (La Vigne et al., 2008).

Parole and Probation Complications

The majority of reentrants in Maryland are parole monitored over a certain amount of time due to state regulations on post-release. It allows the reentrants to familiarize themselves with the community, especially if they have long sentences and makes them feel free when they reach their maximum jail terms. It is according to Sec. 12.08.01.18 of the general parole consideration. Diller et al. (2009) define parole as the "required monitoring" of reentrants that involves obligatory contact with a parole official and involvement in regulated activities. The term reentrants refers to a justice-involved youth who is reacclimated to society after incarceration. Probation is an additional alternative that officers may order in place of jail or immediately after imprisonment to decrease the offender's sentence. Existing probation and parole regulations do not consider or adapt to the context in which most reentrants rejoin. Numerous parolees return to the impoverished neighborhoods where they were born and raised.

As a result, a parolee might prefer to relocate to a region with higher employment rates. Nevertheless, Maryland's present parole laws demand the majority of probation officers and parolees obtain authorization before changing their residence or workplace (Maryland Judiciary, 2015).

A parole officer or individual on parole might need additional training to boost their regular duties, such as counseling and ways of associating with the parole to increase their effectiveness, especially when the reentrants are under their care. It will help minimize challenges experienced when obtaining authorization to shift jobs and acquire clearance. Additionally, parole includes regular contact with parole officials based in the district headquarters where the reentrant resides (Durnescu, 2010). It gets more challenging for people living in extreme poverty who may have difficulty obtaining transportation or may be unable to take leave away from their duties. It is because most black parole officials have not only been discriminated against when seeking services such as leaves but have also lost their jobs when they do so. There is minimal information on parole and youth of color (McNeeley, 2018).

Education

Davis et al. (2014) performed a meta-analysis of the research on penitentiary instruction that satisfied specified criteria for assessing an acceptable treatment, measurement instrument, and study methodology. The study found that offenders who engaged in prison education programs had a 43 percent reduced chance of recidivating than individuals who did not. Similarly, reentrants who received penitentiary training such as English language learning, obtaining a certification in high school completion, post-secondary schooling, technical programs, and work experience were 48 percent more likely to receive work than reentrants who did not get penitentiary training (Davis et al., 2014). Most of these academic

activities, such as vocational training, may begin when a person is incarcerated and extend after release, in conjunction with services and support, to boost a reentrant's probability of obtaining work and effectively reintegrating into the community. In 2016, the RAND Corporation reported that individuals who participate in any educational program while in prison are 43 percent less likely to return to prison. In addition to reducing recidivism, education can decrease rates from generation to generation, where prisoners come out with knowledge and different expertise (Bender, 2018).

Maryland prison facilities already provide prison learning; nevertheless, not many institutions offer all types of corrective training and support programs. For example, not many jails provide vocational education leading to transferable certifications. Furthermore, student numbers are restricted due to resource constraints, and long waits are common. Maryland tackles technological education with an offline educational program (NYSBA, 2016) designed to raise individual awareness of the Internet's capacity for open positions, educational materials, and various social and community assets.

Theme 3: Exploration of Current Services and their Effectiveness and Accessibility to Crossover Youth of Color

JRA Policy Act

Maryland enacted the Justice Reinvestment Amendment (JRA) throughout the 2016 parliamentary sessions, while its provisions took effect in 2017. The JRA's mission is to lower Maryland's incarceration rate and utilize the cost savings to enhance the services and therapy accessible to youthful offenders before, during, and post imprisonment to decrease recurrence. The JRA intended to accomplish this objective by using financially liberal measures on social issues (Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform, 2022). The policy's primary provisions are

reductions in sentences for minor offenses, rehabilitation diversions for drug-related crimes, and cutbacks in probation and parole for ex-offenders with a satisfactory adherence history. Finally, the legislation provides ex-offenders with customized safety and requirements assessments, early review, decreased monitoring, and time credits to reduce the length of an inmate's incarceration in exchange for exemplary conduct and certifications in recovery. The primary outcome, in this case, has been the ex-offenders striving to minimize crime cases and live productive lives. Furthermore, the study by Young et al. (2017) indicates that the cost of rehabilitation has also been reduced by half with the introduction of these legislations (Young et al., 2017).

The introduction of these laws has resulted in a range of services designed to support individuals in their rehabilitation journey. These services include access to mental health professionals, educational and vocational programs, housing and employment services, and other community-based resources. These services are tailored to meet the needs of individuals and are designed to address the mental health and social needs of individuals in recovery. Additionally, these services are often integrated with community-based organizations, such as faith-based groups or non-profits, to provide a comprehensive support system for individuals in recovery.

In addition to the services offered, research has also documented the positive impacts of these services. Studies have found that individuals who receive support in their recovery process are more likely to maintain sobriety, have better mental and physical health, and experience improved quality of life (Young et al., 2017). Furthermore, these services have also been found to reduce the costs associated with relapses, such as hospitalizations and other

medical costs. As such, the support services provided by these laws have effectively improved overall health outcomes and reduced the costs associated with relapse.

Theme 4: Disparity in Services

Reoffending among youths in Maryland State is an issue that is exacerbated by several disparities, including inadequate job opportunities and poor education. However, there is an inherent disparity caused by less support from the correctional facilities that do not care how the youth will survive on their own (Bell et al., 2019). The correctional facilities are responsible for ensuring that they provide individuals with enough certifications, so they may have opportunities to apply for jobs with particular regard to their ages. On the other hand, crossover youths who have not yet reached working age should receive an education that is a straightforward service they are not adequately receiving (Bell et al., 2019).

The Justice Policy Institute (2021) report on Maryland describes how the state has the most extreme racial disparities accounting for up to 60 percent of those incarcerated for the long term in the United States, rooted in policing practices targeting those communities of color who have historically experienced a systematic lack of investment and opportunity among these disadvantaged neighborhoods (Justice Policy Institute, 2021). It has included overly imposed punitive rules in sentencing, parole, and the correction system that emphasizes punishment, lacking needed attention given to effective programming and rehabilitative services, and failure to provide what has been proven outcomes are improving public safety.

The disparity in the criminal justice system refers to the fact that people of color are more likely to be subjected to harsher punishments and sentences than their white counterparts for similar or identical offenses. For example, Black people are more than five times more likely to be incarcerated than white people in the United States and face longer sentences for the same

crimes. Furthermore, African Americans are also more likely to be referred for prosecution, charged with a crime, and convicted than whites. Studies have also shown that Black people are more likely to be given parole than white people for similar offenses but are more likely to be denied parole or revoked.

This disparity particularly fails the older Juvenile or emerging adults in the criminal justice system by exacerbating racial inequities while consistently applying incarceration practices for decades beyond any benefit to public safety (Justice Policy Institute, 2021). Maryland continues lagging even as other states awaken to the need to think differently about this issue (Justice Policy Institute, 2021). In New York, the probation departments of Albany, Monroe, Onondaga, Schenectady, and Westchester counties, which applied to participate in the federally funded training, are expected to work alongside community organizations, correction and police officers, defense attorneys, and the juveniles' relatives to ensure that youth of color are as equitably diverted to community programs as White youths convicted of similar offenses (Medelis & Victorio, 2021).

Theme 5: Role of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Socioeconomic Status in Determining the Risk of Recidivism

Role of Race and Ethnicity in Determining Recidivism

In Maryland, Black crossover youth are overrepresented in the juvenile system, just like in many other jurisdictions. Barrett and Katsiyannis (2015), using a large sample of data from South Carolina's young justice agency, did research to examine race differences for predictors of repeat offenders. The large sample consisted of over 100,000 youths detained for different criminal offenses. The study included other variables such as adverse parenting, mental health,

school-related disabilities, and the nature of first offenses in determining the risk of recidivism for both Black and White youth. The study determined that the first offense's mental health history and characteristics were significant predictors of White youth recidivism. On the other hand, gender, poverty, and school identification status were noted as strong determinants of predicted rates of Black youth recidivism.

Folorunsho (2019) indicated that Black youth were likelier to recidivate than White youth. In further findings, he noted that African American youth opposed to black had a higher risk of recidivism. Although the White crossover youth also experienced recidivism, their rates were lower than those of the minority because most criminal activities were connected with blacks. Folorunsho's findings confirm that other studies have already suggested that minority groups are more likely to experience recidivism than their white counterparts. He further identifies African American youth as the most at-risk subgroup. He attributes this increased risk to the fact that most criminal activities are linked to black people. In his research, Folorunsho also presented factors related to this phenomenon. He found that poverty, lack of access to quality education, and the prevalence of substance abuse were all significant predictors of recidivism among minority youth. He further noted that these factors are exacerbated by racial disparities in the criminal justice system, as minority youth are more likely to be arrested, charged, and convicted than white youth.

How Socioeconomic Disparities Contribute to Increase in Reoffending

With mass incarceration, employment opportunities have been affected to a large extent, especially for repeat offenders. After leaving prison, most offenders have difficulty finding meaningful employment, which causes their socioeconomic status to deteriorate, thus increasing their probability of recidivating (The Prevention of Recidivism and the Social Reintegration of

Offenders, 2022). Additionally, former offenders are more likely to receive lower wages than non-offenders (Flores, 2018). It may act as a further catalyst for offenders to engage in crime to make ends meet. The issue is further compounded by offenders returning to the same areas and neighborhoods that they come from. Since the people there are already familiar with them, it makes it hard for the offenders to access opportunities, thus making it more probable for them to recidivate (Vidal et al., 2018). According to Jung et al. (2010), since the offenders spend a lot of time in prison, they lack the necessary skills and training to enter the employment market, leaving them short of options for making an income (Jung et al., 2010). It is made worse by the fact that very few employers are willing to invest in teaching skills to unskilled former offenders, especially after their reputations have been jeopardized after being part of the Juvenile system.

Theme 6: Services to address Recidivism

Employment Programs

One of the solutions to the problem is the introduction of employment programs in the Maryland prison system especially targeting juvenile offenders at high risk to enable them to qualify for various opportunities once they are out. The employment program places the offenders in a better position to enter the job market because of the skills gained. Although these programs are not mainly targeted at reducing recidivism, studies have shown that some work programs had the effect of lowering recidivism, although this reduction has been minimal (Nieuwbeerta et al., 2017). According to Nieuwbeerta, one-way Maryland can improve this is by introducing job placement assistance. For these programs to succeed, the prison services would have to improve and deepen relationships with employers and institutions willing to hire employees with criminal backgrounds. Also, by initiating follow-up services with released inmates, employers would become more comfortable hiring employees with criminal

backgrounds. However, Nieuwbeerta et al. (2017) state that a job alone is not enough to keep offenders away from reoffending. They should be provided with an income-earning activity that keeps them busy and prevents them from returning to criminal activity due to a lack of means of daily survival.

Research has shown that job placement assistance can significantly increase the likelihood of children entering a successful career. It has been shown to improve the quality of employment outcomes among crossover youth, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Job placement assistance can provide crossover youth with the resources needed to access available job opportunities, such as job search skills, resume building, and job interview preparation. Furthermore, it can help crossover youth to overcome employment barriers such as lack of experience and education. It can also support crossover youth's need to transition into the workforce and remain employed (Pellicena et al., 2020). In addition, job placement assistance can help children develop the skills needed to succeed in the labor market. It can provide crossover youth with training and mentorship that can help them to develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their chosen field. It can also provide crossover youth access to networks and resources that can benefit the job search process. Furthermore, job placement assistance can provide crossover youth with the support needed to develop soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and self-regulation.

Programs for Treatment of Drug Abuse

Andrade et al. (2018), in their identification of the link between substance abuse and prison recidivism, argued that therapeutic communities effectively reduced Recidivism and, to a lesser extent, drug use after offenders were released from prison. A therapeutic community is a community geared towards effectuating positive change in the lives of individuals with mental

health concerns or a history of drug history. In addition, after-prison care reduced the rate of offenders returning to prison. After-prison care refers to services geared towards reacclimating youthful offenders into society. The high rate of substance abuse by young prisoners has resulted in substance abuse being identified as a significant cause of Recidivism. Over half of the crimes that offenders are incarcerated for is substance abuse related. Drug treatment programs have posted encouraging results in the battle against Recidivism (Andrade et al.,2018). Illegal drug use increases the likelihood of continued involvement in criminal activity, with high rates of relapse and Recidivism found among drug-involved offenders; 68% of drug offenders are rearrested within three years of release from prison (Boudon, 2003).

Theme 7: Dual-Systems Hypothesis

Other existing literature studies analyze youth criminology within two elements: divergent/delinquent behavior versus distinct correctional institutions' choices regarding Recidivism. For example, adolescents engaged in the foster care and juvenile justice systems due to other criminal conduct or mistreatment are sometimes described and regarded as dual or dually engaged adolescents (Kim et al., 2020). That means that if a particular youth is involved in foster care and at the same time has roots in the justice system, such a person becomes a crossover youth. According to Kim et al. (2020), the term "divergent" and "dual systems" arise because these foster youths find themselves in different situations and institutions, which forces them to engage in other criminal activities because of their difference in upbringing compared to individuals brought up in well-set-up families. For example, differences in upbringing may relate to factors such as the loss of both parents, which forces the individual to transition to foster care. In such situations, these children may exhibit stress elements with negative attitudes, which may compel them to exhibit aggressive behaviors and end up participating in criminal activities.

Often, aggressive behaviors result in violent actions. In another example, many children who participate in illegal activities lack well-set-up families, resulting from a poor background. The lack of financial stability forces parents to work multiple jobs and take on other responsibilities that take away from their time to be supportive and nurture their children. These issues, such as divorce and poor background, may force children to exhibit the same unwanted behaviors as participating in crime because of the feeling that no one cares for them, including the distortion in parental relationships.

Subsequently, in various studies that tested the dual-systems hypothesis, the researchers reiterate that these adolescent groups exhibit several identical risk variables and related features as adolescents active in both foster care and Juvenile justice institutions. For example, as explained above, these adolescents in both institutions exhibit the same factors, including poor upbringing, lack of education, and lack of Employment and mental health services. The above cohort is often exposed to a higher concentration of risk aspects, more complicated risk elements, and fewer preventative variables (Dierkhising et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2020). For example, some of the risk factors among these adolescents may include a lack of family members to take care of them, parental drug abuse problems, child neglect, stress, and trauma (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2021). In another investigation by Vidal (2018), the researchers utilized the dual-systems hypothesis to explore the difficulties institutions face in providing integrated treatments to dual-system adolescents and associated caregivers or parents. According to Vidal et al. (2018), examples entail difficulties in incorporating and harmonizing diagnostic processes, utilizing risk assessment instruments to measure susceptibility to posttraumatic stress, fostering cross-system cooperation and

synchronization, and offering entry to evidence-oriented family-associated activities therapeutic care tailored toward this high-risk group.

Ultimately, in supporting the research analysis and data inquiry, the researcher will utilize the above dual-systems hypothesis and close relations to social identity theory and the contact hypothesis. The dual-systems assumption is a subsystem closely tied to contact theory and social identity theory which was critical in understanding the outcomes of youth's crossover from child welfare systems to juvenile justice systems.

Conclusion

This study examined the perception of youth professional on the impact of services geared towards addressing Recidivism among the youth of color in the Juvenile Justice System across the United States. The foster care system severely affects youth of color due to the challenges they face in the design, making them likely candidates for Recidivism once they enter the justice system. Black males from poor backgrounds are more at risk of Recidivism. There is a need for research to investigate the effectiveness of services to address Recidivism.

Furthermore, the role of youth professionals is critical in helping to reduce the rate of reoffending because they do not allow to give emotional support to the criminals. Still, they also provide therapeutic services such as counseling to the crossover youth offenders while trying to educate them on the benefits of living a life free of crime. Consequently, with most of the criminal activities connected to household poverty, giving employment programs places the crossover youth in a better place to earn a living once released from prison.

Section Four: Theoretical Framework

This research examined the perception of youth professionals on the impact of services geared towards addressing Recidivism among crossover youth of color in the Juvenile Justice System across the United States. Various researchers have developed theories and hypotheses that may help explain youths' crossover from child welfare to juvenile justice. These theories help researchers examine racial disparity within the justice system while utilizing various assessment tools in their predictions. This section discusses these theories and hypotheses, including rational choice, dual-systems, contact, and social identity theories.

Rational Choice Theory

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) is a social theory developed by economists and political scientists to explain individual behavior. It is based on the assumption that individuals are rational, self-interested actors who weigh the costs and benefits of each action they take and make decisions accordingly. RCT posits that individuals will make decisions that maximize their utility or satisfaction and minimize costs. The theory's tenet is that individuals are motivated by self-interest and will make decisions that are most beneficial to them. This is based on the idea that people are rational actors and will weigh each decision's pros and cons (Kruis et al., 2020). This means that they will consider the immediate and long-term effects of their decisions and the potential risks or costs associated with them. The theory also assumes that individuals will act in their self-interest, even if it involves a cost to others. RCT has been applied to various social and economic problems, including poverty, crime, and public policy. It has been used to explain why people engage in certain behaviors, such as why some people are more likely to commit crimes than others.

RCT has also been applied to social work in general. For example, the theory has been used to explain why some individuals are more likely to seek out social services than others. It has also been used to explain why individuals may engage in certain behaviors, such as substance abuse, and why they may not be able to access or utilize social services. The application of RCT to the problem of poverty is particularly relevant. RCT can also be used to analyze the economic incentives for individuals to stay in poverty and the economic costs associated with leaving it.

Pratt (2008) proposes that practitioners and scholars can understand the justice system in America through rational choice theory, which argues that the decision to engage in criminal activity is based on a reasoned evaluation of risk and benefit. According to this theory, individuals who participate in crime have reasoned goals regarding why they participate in that particular crime. In this sense, the theory claims that individuals who participate in crimes have made decisions for themselves based on their personal choices. For example, individuals who lack family support may participate in criminal activity if they believe they would reap a reward from supporting the illegal activity.

Thus, by applying this theory, we may develop an idea of why these adolescents participate in such criminal activities. The rational thought would be understanding their personal choices, relating to them, and concluding those individual choices. Critics of this theory argue that children and adolescents lack fully developed brains to make informed and rational decisions which may make this theory ineffective (Pratt, 2008). Here, Pratt argues that children are not adults and are incapable of making informed decisions based on their differences in brain development. However, Reyna and Farley (2006) indicate that in the absence of high-reward vices and personal variations that diminish self-consciousness and

control, assuming idealized circumstances, teenagers can reach reasonable decisions to attain their goals and aspirations. Font et al. (2018) indicate that it is in the heat of passion, in the presence of peers, on the spur of the moment, and in unfamiliar situations when trading off risks and benefits favors bad long-term outcomes. When behavioral inhibition is required for good results, adolescents are likely to reason more poorly than adults (Font et al., 2018.p. 250). Reyna and Farley (2006) explain that adolescent brain growth and development are imperfect. In that sense, high impulse control, pleasure acquisition, a strong desire for excitement, depressed mood, and many personal disparities also contribute to taking particular risks that would resist important threat-elimination initiatives (Reyna & Farley, 2006).

Nevertheless, this theory makes it easier to understand the complications surrounding the crossover of youths from foster care to the juvenile justice department or vice versa. For example, the logical choice theory makes it easier to understand various underlying elements that make adolescents participate in criminal activities. However, their decisions are influenced by factors such as peer groups, new environments, depressive symptoms, and personal attitudes, Reyna and Farley (2006). In that sense, the rational choice theory helps facilitate and understand these elements, their contributions to adolescents, and how they impact their decisions. For example, if a teenage offender is found guilty of a crime involving a rational choice involving peer influence, it would be necessary to investigate these other close friends or peers. Such is because when an individual gets out of the justice system, they may rejoin their peer group, leading to Recidivism.

From the lens of a criminologist, the rational choice theory posits that people make decisions by weighing the costs and benefits associated with their choices. This theory suggests that individuals are rational actors who decide which behavior to engage in depending on the

rewards and punishments associated with them. It also suggests that individuals choose actions that maximize their rewards and minimize punishments. For example, if a person believes that a certain behavior will bring them more rewards than punishments, they are more likely to engage in that behavior. From the perspective of authors Piquero & S. Tibbetts, rational choice theory can be seen as a means of understanding criminal behavior. According to their work, the rational choice theory is based on the idea that people make rational decisions based on their preferences and the rewards and punishments associated with them. They suggest that understanding the costs and benefits associated with different criminal behaviors makes it possible to better understand why criminals choose to commit certain crimes.

Cullen and Agnew's work on criminological theory also highlights the importance of rational choice theory in understanding criminal behavior. They suggest that rational choice theory can be used to explain why people make certain decisions and how those decisions can lead to criminal behavior (Cullen & Agnew n.p). They argue that understanding the rewards and punishments associated with different choices makes it possible to identify which decisions people are likely to make and how those decisions may lead to criminal behavior. Hoffman's work on delinquency theories also incorporates rational choice theory. He argues that understanding the rewards and punishments associated with different behaviors makes it possible to identify the motivations behind delinquent behavior (Hoffman, 2011). He suggests that understanding the costs and benefits of different behaviors makes it possible to better understand why people engage in delinquent behavior and how that behavior can be prevented or reduced.

According to rational choice theory, individuals deliberate their actions before committing a criminal act. NSW Government (n.d.) notes that the decisions to engage in criminal activities are constrained by information, cognitive ability, and time. These constraints undermine the reasoning ability of the offender. Therefore, the rational choice theory emphasizes that the intent to commit a crime and the reasoning process are within the offender's control. The rational choice theory further argues that criminals will engage in a crime if the benefits outweigh the consequences of their actions (Paternoster et al.,2017). The reasoning allows the offender to assess the risks of being caught against the expected benefits.

The rational choice crime prevention strategy concentrates on the criminal's decision-making process and uses deterrence strategies to prevent individuals from engaging in crime. For instance, improved surveillance and excellent urban planning will deter individuals from committing a crime because of the increased likelihood of being detected. Therefore, criminologists use rational choice theory to understand factors that motivate criminals to engage in crime. They also use the theory to evaluate the offender's viewpoints and the use of the environment to engage in criminal acts (NSW Government, n.d.). In this case, criminologists focus on the distinct stages of the offender's decision-making process before engaging in crime. In addition, the rational choice theory requires criminologists to consider separately the decision made in the distinct stages of criminal involvement in the crime. The strategy allows for a holistic understanding of the offender's choice-making and decisions to influence the implementation of appropriate interventions.

From an individual perspective, the rational choice theory maintains that individuals commit a crime if the benefits outweigh the consequences of their actions. Therefore, the offender's actions are rational and based on the due consideration of rewards and costs. In this

case, the diminishing value of the reward beneath the incurred costs causes individuals to stop their actions or terminate the relationship (Paternoster et al., 2017). Individuals optimize their rewards by utilizing resources within their environment. Based on the rational choice theory, individuals rank their choices based on their benefits or desirability and select the one that results in more significant benefits (Paternoster et al., 2017). The discussions emphasize that offenders and individuals control their choices and decisions. The environment, tradition, or unconscious drives do not influence their decisions. On the contrary, individuals utilize their rational considerations to evaluate the cost-benefit analysis of their actions (Paternoster et al., 2017). Although rational choice theory helps understand human behavior, it has faced significant criticism. Opponents argue that individuals do not always make rational decisions. People also do not always act rationally, thus limiting the theory's applicability.

Social Disorganization Theory

The emergence of social disorganization theory is attributable to twentieth-century social and environmental conditions, such as increased rates of juvenile delinquency. Thus, theorists like Parks and Burgess and Znaniecki and Thomas concentrated on accounting for high criminal and deviant behavior levels in society (Hesse & Hilal, 2009). According to their findings, crime and juvenile delinquency are attributable to the nature of the surrounding in which individuals live. For instance, an environment characterized by high poverty and immigration levels results in high delinquency and crime rates. Social disorganization resurfaced as a significant theoretical perspective in the mid-1980s (Hesse & Hilal, 2009). Initially, the theory was limited to neighborhoods' delinquency and crime distribution, arguing that neighborhood variation influenced crime rates.

However, the mid-1980s theory focused on multiple factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. For instance, the absence of neighborhood efficacy disrupts a community and increases youth's susceptibility to juvenile delinquency (Martinez, 2021). Likewise, family values influence a child's behavior and neighborhood ambiance. Notably, family values that adults teach children at home influences neighborhood children (Martinez, 2021). Therefore, inappropriate values contaminate the whole neighborhood, resulting in disorganization. Martinez (2021) further notes that children residing in disorganized communities have parents who were brought up in identical situations. Thus, parents should understand that the behaviors and values they were taught as kids will trigger an endless cycle of crime and juvenile delinquents. The conclusion suggests that social disorganization in communities or neighborhoods influences juvenile delinquency. An example of such societies is neighborhoods with fragile social controls where values and criminal traditions collide with the values of conventional institutional traditions, and social disorganization becomes a norm.

Social disorganization theory also notes that a neighborhood's physical and socio-economic status influences juvenile delinquency. In this case, neighborhoods adjacent to heavy industrial areas have higher delinquency levels (Dougherty, 2015). Likewise, low socio-economic neighborhoods have higher delinquency levels, including high numbers of African American and foreign-born heads (Dougherty, 2015). It is vital to note that it is not the ethnic composition of a neighborhood that causes crime. On the contrary, neighborhood attributes and conditions contribute to increased crime levels. For instance, family disruption, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, and low socioeconomic status contribute to violent and property offending among youths (Dougherty, 2015; Mallett et al., 2013). Therefore, community and neighborhood characteristics influence juvenile delinquency.

Social Identity and the Contact Theory

The Social Identity Theory (SIT), developed by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner, is a theory that is extremely useful in explaining the formation and maintenance of group identities. The theory's central tenets are that individuals form and maintain their identities through categorization, comparison, and self-evaluation (Harwood, 2020). This theory has been empirically supported in numerous studies, showing that when individuals categorize themselves into groups, they tend to evaluate their group favorably compared to other groups and attempt to maintain a positive image of their group.

The Theory is an extension of SIT and was developed by Gordon Allport to explain how group identities can be changed through contact with other groups. Allport proposed that contact between dissimilar groups in structured settings to reduce prejudice and increase understanding can lead to positive intergroup relations. He also suggested that when contact between groups is not structured in this manner, it can lead to negative outcomes and even increase prejudice. The Contact Theory has been applied to various social work practices, from school desegregation and racial reconciliation to community-based programs that promote intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 2021). Several studies have found that structured contact between different groups in a safe and supportive environment can lead to increased understanding, positive attitudes towards outgroups, and improved intergroup relations.

The Contact Theory can be applied to the problem by encouraging structured contact between individuals from different social identities. Structured contact can be achieved through group discussions, role-playing activities, and other activities that encourage individuals to interact in a safe and non-threatening environment. This type of contact can help individuals to understand one another's perspectives and to appreciate one another's differences (Pettigrew,

2021). Additionally, it can help reduce prejudice and increase positive attitudes and behaviors towards outgroups. Thus, the Contact Theory has the potential to be an effective strategy for reducing prejudice and increasing understanding between different social identities.

According to Tajfel & Turner (2004), no studies have linked the social identity theory to youth crossover from child welfare to juvenile justice systems. Therefore, this research will be among the first to suggest this link. That is because the research topic centers on youths of color: the social identity theory will give a central context of how such racial identities inform the juvenile justice department, including the child welfare system. The social identity theory asserts that humans naturally tend to boost their self-esteem by elevating the prestige of a community to which they belong. As a result, people split the universe into "they" and "we," or in or out-groups, emphasizing out-groups (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). Therefore, by applying this theory, it would be easier to understand racial factors such as prejudice and discrimination and how they play a part in the juvenile justice system and foster care system.

Finally, social identity theory would be critical in understanding the causal of racial disparities within juvenile justice systems and whether it has something to do with the youth's crossover from the foster system to correctional facilities. Such is because children of color are at high risk of experiencing systemic hate and racism (Dierkhising et al., 2019), owing to their minority status the United States, for that matter. After identifying the black youths, the contact theory begins to take shape. That is because, through the contact theory element, these youths of color may come together and interact in educational programs set forth by the justice and foster care institutions to share personal narratives and learn from one another.

Similarly, the contact theory postulates that when two sides with similar social identities and shared objectives work together, they can minimize stereotypical views, cultural biases, and unequal treatment through collaboration, systemic backing, legal issues or traditions, and effective interactions (Vezzali, 2016). Through the contact theory, practitioners and scholars may understand how these youths of color may work and collaborate to avoid cases of Recidivism. It also explains how the foster care department may work and partner with the juvenile justice department to ensure that these individuals do not go through possible racial discrimination and prejudices, affecting their wellbeing and leading to recidivism. It can be done by creating awareness among the care providers and understanding the need for equal treatment of all youths under their care. Therefore, this theory offers a gateway to maintaining healthy relationships and equity between the justice system and foster care, including the youths of color involved with these two departments.

In summary, the social identity theory indicates that individual is responsible for their choice of behavior and decisions; in the case of the youths are limited to their won thinking because they are under strict regulations, and most of their decision is influenced by those above them. Also, factors such as exposure to other inmates give them the view of being criminal orientated to self, hence developing criminal attitudes. This can lead to various behaviors, such as conformity and groupthink. Individuals may also act in a way that promotes the group's interests and values, even if it goes against their values and beliefs. This is due to a desire to maintain a positive social identity and to be accepted by the group. Ultimately, social identity theory suggests that individuals are heavily influenced by their social groups, and thus their behavior and decisions are shaped by those groups.

Theoretical Summary

The above sections have explored various existing theories and hypotheses, including rational choice theory, social identity theory, contact theory and social disorganization theory. The social identity theory helped inform the cases of racial disparity within the juvenile justice system and the foster care system by explaining issues of systemic racism.

In contrast, the contact theory helped generate the necessary intervention approaches like collaboration and communication. Ultimately, the existing dual-systems hypothesis would help correlate the views present within the discussed three fundamental theories, including rational choice theory, contract theory, and social identity theory, to identify incidences of Recidivism within the youth crossover from foster care to the juvenile justice systems. The following section will present various methodological aspects that formed the primary roots of this research.

Section Five: Research Question

This study aimed at examining the perception of youth professional on the impact of services geared towards addressing Recidivism among the youth of color in the Juvenile Justice System across the United States. Because of the difficulties in the design of the foster care system, youth of color are disproportionately affected, making them likely candidates for recidivism once they enter the justice system. To explore the purpose of the study, the following research questions (RQ) together with hypotheses were explored.

RQ1: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on addressing Recidivism?

HP1: Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of addressing Recidivism?

RQ2: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on External-Recidivism?

HP 1: Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of External recidivism?

RQ3: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on Internal-Recidivism?

HP1: Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of Internal Recidivism?

Section Six: Research Methodology

This study utilized a quantitative research design to derive findings and test the research hypotheses. The author believes that the quantitative methodology gave enough room to explore the study hypothesis without limitations. The author believes that the quantitative method provides enough space to explore the study hypothesis within the constraints. Quantitative studies allow for a broader generalization than qualitative research (Queirós et al., 2017). This study was a cross-sectional study that took on an exploratory approach.

The researcher collected data via a survey, which sits well with the research objectives and questions. The researcher believes that surveys were the most effective data collection technique because they are convenient for the participants to respond to. The advantages of surveys include reaching a large population and, therefore, a greater statistical power, the ability to gather large amounts of information, and the availability of validated models (Khunduja et al. 2013). Since this research explored the perception of Recidivism of crossover youths of color in the juvenile justice system, a survey is the best approach to collect that data. The following section outlines the survey questions with supporting literature to facilitate the validity of the survey questions on the importance of foster care to youths of color.

Survey Questions

The survey took a look at youth professionals' perspective of services on Recidivism of crossover youth of color in the juvenile justice system. The survey was classified as cross-sectional. When using the cross-sectional research method, researchers can collect data on a few variables to see how they affect a specific condition (Dermatol, 2016). The survey can be found in Appendix D.

Throughout the survey, the researcher discover the percentage of youth the respondents have worked with who are categorized as crossover youth. This question is essential as it features in literary studies like the research by Huang et al. (2015), which states that there is a high percentage of crossover youths in America. Therefore, you need to know this because a person's experience with the population will make a difference in how much they know about it. According to Huang et al. (2015), the number of crossover youth may fall among repeat offenders. Exploring whether or not crossover youth fall among repeat offenders supports the research hypothesis regarding whether crossover youth may engage in repeat criminal activities.

Since existing research indicates that minority ethnic groups in the United States represent the majority of populations within the foster care and justice system (AFCARS, 2022) Exploring what services youth of color benefit from to address Recidivism is necessary because it gives the answers relating to the items that people believe may help avoid cases of Recidivism, as highlighted in the literature (Owen et al., 2020). Those services will include education, Employment, mental health, drugs and alcohol initiatives, and family support.

Engaging respondents about a crossover youth's likelihood of reoffending helps explain the high percentage cited in the existing literature, demonstrating that youths of color are more likely to engage in criminal activities and re-offend than their white counterparts (Dragomir & Tadros, 2020).

Youth professional's role within the juvenile justice department is essential because they have the power to ensure positive program implementation within these two departments to help avoid cases of Recidivism (Owen et al., 2020). Assessing the level of expected crossover youth engagement in services and programs is necessary to determine whether it would be possible to eradicate Recidivism (Yi & Wildeman, 2018).

Participants

To understand how services, impact the Recidivism of crossover youth of color in the juvenile justice system, 50 individuals who work directly with juveniles in the capacity of Lawyers, social workers, correction officer, Advocate, therapist and probation officers were surveyed. The initial participants will be recruited through direct contact with the employer. Throughout my research, I used convenient sampling to recruit participants for this study. The employer distributed the survey to employees who directly interact with youth in the juvenile justice system. The survey was distributed via email.

Participants were recruited directly from The Second Chance, Hope Health System, EveryMind community-based organizations and Institute for the Development of African American Youth, Inc.

The Second Chance is the most effective solution for reducing recidivism, unemployment and homelessness; empowering participants to make sustainable personal changes that positively impact society.

Institute for the Development of African American Youth, Inc. (IDAAY) was founded by S. Archye Leacock and a colleague in May 1991. This organization has been formed in response to the alarming statistics characterizing the high level of violence reflected in the lives of disadvantaged crossover youth in the Philadelphia area.

The Hope Health System is a foundation that is deeply rooted in the belief that the success of every child and adult lies in a stable family of supportive networks. HHS provides services to its clients through an interdisciplinary team approach, which includes input from the client, appropriate school officials, appropriate health providers, and the families of significant others of each client (Padgett, 2008). All their services are provided to promote equality

regardless of color, social class, and social status. The programs are designed to work directly with juvenile youth who are currently or formerly incarcerated.

Similarly, EveryMind is a community-based organization located in Montgomery County, Maryland. EveryMind recognizes that investing in children and youth now will mean a more vibrant, productive workforce and community moving forward. Prevention and early intervention services help them identify and address the needs of at-risk children and their families and provide more intensive case management and counseling when needed. EveryMind realizes that mental health issues are not bound by economics or Ethnicity, and that's why our services are in place for everyone (Padgett, 2008). Because every mind needs support, attention, and care, the researcher will provide the survey directly to the director of juvenile services via email. This email is included in Appendix B. The survey was then be distributed to departmental staff for completion.

Survey participants are youth professionals. The participants all have experience working with youth in one of the previously mentioned capacities. The participant is currently or formerly employed in this capacity. The minimum education level is a bachelor's degree. The youth professional must be employed within the United States. Participants were used from outside the four organizations selected for this research.

Hypothesis	Variable Name	Definition	Level of Measurement	Variable Use	Analysis
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<p>H1: Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of addressing Recidivism.</p>	<p>Addressing Recidivism</p>	<p>Contributing to the elimination of recidivism</p> <p>Q12, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19, Q31, Q36, Q32, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q45, Q22, Q49, Q50, Q51, Q52 Q40, Q53, Q54, Q55, Q56, Q57, Q58, Q59</p>	<p>Discontinuous</p>	<p>Independent</p>	<p>Mann-Whitney U</p>
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<p>HP 2:</p> <p>Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of External recidivism.</p>	<p>External Recidivism</p>	<p>External Recidivism refers to the societal factors that may surround an individual and contribute to their recidivism.</p> <p>Q12, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19, Q31, Q36, Q32, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q45, Q22, Q49, Q50, Q51, Q52 Q40, Q53, Q54, Q55, Q56, Q57, Q58, Q59</p>	<p>Discontinuous</p>	<p>Independent</p>	<p>Mann-Whitney U</p>
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<p>HP 3:</p> <p>Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of Internal Recidivism.</p>	<p>Internal Recidivism</p>	<p>Internal recidivism is based on the individual's characteristic, personality, and other traits.</p> <p>Q14, Q23, Q28, Q33, Q46, Q22, Q49, Q50, Q51, Q52, Q53, Q54, Q55</p>	<p>Discontinuous</p>	<p>Independent</p>	<p>Mann-Whitney U</p>
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Data Collection and Analysis

This study collected data using Qualtrics. Using surveys to ask questions about sensitive topics can often produce inaccurate survey estimates distorted by social desirability bias (Tourangeau and Yan, 2007). Krumpal (2011) reviewed the empirical literature on the determinants of social desirability bias and found that using a self-administered survey increased respondents' inclination to accurately discuss sensitive topics (i.e., racial attitudes, mental health, sexual orientation, and sexual activities).

Along with the online survey, each participant received a copy of the informed consent. A copy of the informed consent is included in Appendix A. The informed consent outlined the participant's rights and responsibilities as a research participant. Participants were also advised that the data was collected and stored on a computer hard drive. This computer was password protected and locked away in a secure cabinet when the researcher does not use it. The computer was stored in a bedroom within the researcher's home. The information was held on a cloud drive for Qualtrics before being downloaded to the researcher's computer. The computer requires a two-level authentication before accessing the data. The data was only be accessed by the researcher and dissertation committee members. No Identifiable information was collected throughout the study.

Study Variables

The data was analyzed using Stata Corp LLC Version 17. The survey collected demographic information to describe the studied population. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze these measures and to look for correlations and associations between phenomena. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic

characteristics of the study participants, including frequency distributions, graphs, and measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, median). Descriptive statistics were used to ensure that the data are normally distributed and that no assumptions were violated such that the inferential statistics would be invalid. Inferential statistics will be used to test associations between variables to assess whether and how strongly the variables are related to each other (Anastas, 1999).

Ethical Considerations

The researcher distributed a solicitation that explained the study and its purpose, risks, benefits of the study, participation, and consent which can be found in Appendix A. It also indicated that their participation is voluntary, and they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The solicitation, which includes the consent form, distributed the information by a third party to prevent the researcher from having the participants' personal information. The solicitation letter was forwarded to the agency Director, the director then distributes it to the employees, and a survey link was included. The informed consent also indicate that the survey will remain anonymous and will not be shared with their employer.

After deciding to participate in the study and clicking the survey link, participants were able to complete the online survey. Participants were reminded that their identities will be kept anonymous. Participants were reminded that due to the survey being anonymous, their responses will not be connected to them. So, there is no risk of the participant being identified. Lastly, the researcher will ensure that all guidelines provided by Yeshiva's University's Institutional Review Board are followed.

In research, confidentiality and issues of privacy remain of critical concern. According to the National Association of Social Workers (2021), youth professionals must not share clients'

confidential records with any third party without the client's consent. The same will apply to this research.

Section Seven: Limitations of the Study

The proposed study had several limitations that influenced the findings. First, online surveys require participants to access the Internet and be computer literate (Baron et al., 2002). An additional limitation is the concern of missing data, as participants may be unlikely to fill out lengthy surveys online (Krug, 2005 as cited in Hoerger, Quirk & Weed, 2011). The researcher limited the number of questions asked on the survey to a maximum of 20 questions. Furthermore, participants were able self-select to be in the study, which impacted the findings. Therefore, the researcher was unaware of who chose not to participate in the research or their reasons for not participating. Social desirability bias occurs when respondents answer questions that they believe will make them look good to others, concealing their accurate opinions or experiences (Nikolopoulou, 2022). The participants may not work directly in one of the disciplines mentioned above. However, they do have experience working directly with youth. Also, their experience, such as institutional racism and dissatisfaction at the job, maybe the reason that may lead to the desirable bias. Furthermore, working with many youths may prevent them from having a deep insight into factors leading to an increase in Recidivism, leading to variation in responses.

Section Eight: Results

Introduction

This study aimed at examining the perception of youth professional on the impact of services geared towards addressing Recidivism among the youth of color in the Juvenile Justice System across the United States. Because of the difficulties in the design of the foster care system, youth of color are disproportionately affected, making them likely candidates for recidivism once they enter the justice system. To explore the purpose of the study, the following research questions (RQ) together with hypotheses were explored.

RQ1: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on addressing Recidivism?

RQ2: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on External-Recidivism?

RQ3: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on Internal-Recidivism?

This chapter's goal is to present the study's findings. Following the demographic characteristics of the sampled participants, the validity and reliability of the tools used in the study are presented. Based on the research questions, the findings revealed through statistical analysis of the data are presented in the results section. The chapter is concluded with a summary.

Sample Population

Participants were recruited from several community-based youth-serving organizations, including Second Chance, Hope Health System, Every Mind community-based organization, the Institute for the Development of African American Youth, Inc and many more . The majority of participants (56.7%) had five or more years of experience working in the juvenile justice or child welfare fields (Table 1). The participants were mostly Black or African American (76.1%), with the majority (99.3%) having a bachelor’s degree or above. In terms of race, non-Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish individuals led the group, accounting for 80.5% of all participants.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics

	n	%
Work Experience		
0 - 12 Months	3	2.3
1 - 2 plus Years	21	15.8
3 - 4 plus Years	34	25.6
5 - 6 plus Years	39	29.3
7 - 8 plus Years	23	17.3

Over nine years	13	9.8
Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	.8
Asian	6	4.9
Black or African American	102	76.1
White	25	18.7
Highest Level of Education		
High School	1	.7
College (Undergraduate)	66	48.9
Graduate School (Masters)	64	47.4
Graduate School (Advanced Degree)	4	3.0
Race		
Hispanic or Latino or Spanish	26	19.6
Non-Hispanic or Latino or Spanish	107	80.5

In addition to demographic information, participants were asked about their experience working with young adults in the juvenile justice profession. Table 2 below summarizes the findings. When asked what percentage of the youths with whom they had worked were classified as a crossover, the participants stated that 81.5% of the youth with whom they had worked fell into that category. All of the participants agreed that nearly all male youths were likely to recidivate, with 20% to 39% of the crossover youth reoffending. The majority of participants (63%) worked with young people under the age of 18, the majority of whom were Black or African American (88.1%).

Table 2*Characteristics of Youths Worked with by Participants*

	n	%
Percentage of the youth defined as crossover		
Below 20%	7	5.2
20 - 39%	110	81.5
60 - 79%	15	11.1
80% and above	3	2.2
Gender More likely to recidivate		
Male	131	99.3
Female	1	.7
Percentage of crossover youth reoffended?		
Below 20%	43	32.1
20 - 39%	57	42.5
40 - 59%	29	21.6
60 - 79%	4	3.0
80% and above	1	.8
Age group of youth worked with the most?		
Under 15	25	18.5
15 - 16	40	29.6
17 - 18	20	14.8
19 - 20	8	5.9
21 - 22	7	5.2

All of the above	35	25.9
Ethnicities of youth the most experience work		
Black or African American.	118	88.1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Island	1	.8
White.	3	2.2
Hispanic/ Latino	12	9.0

Results

Validity and Reliability of the Data

The study's instrument included a series of questions that probed participants' knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes concerning recidivism, with a focus on addressing it and measuring both external and internal recidivism. The responses to the several Likert items were averaged to create a composite score that represented the participant's overall attitude or perception of the construct under discussion. Cronbach's alpha approach was used to assess the construct's reliability. Cronbach's Alpha values commonly vary from 0 to 1. A score of 1 indicates strong measurement consistency, whereas 0 indicates total inconsistency. Although negative coefficients are uncommon, they can suggest faulty scoring, for as when a survey item with derogatory phrasing is not reversed assessed appropriately (Cho & Kim, 2015). The reliability test result, presented in Table 3, revealed that the tool's constructs had a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than the recommended cut-off value of .70. This finding indicates that the measures had significant internal consistency across all constructs, with higher scores indicating greater reliability.

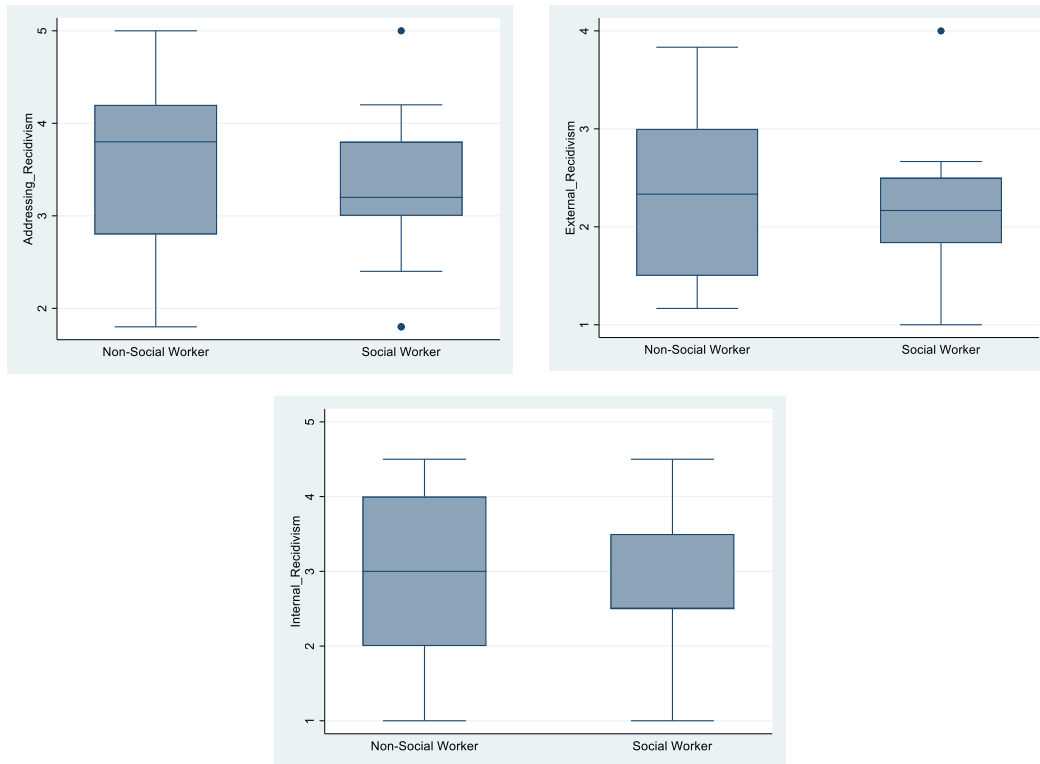
Table 3*Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics*

	n	Item	Cronbach's	
	n	Items	Mean	Alpha
Addressing Recidivism	135	5	3.513	.969
External Recidivism	133	6	2.262	.930
Internal Recidivism	133	2	2.816	.889

The assumption that no notable outliers should exist was evaluated visually using a box plot to aid in illustrating the distribution of data based on the two independent categories.

Outliers were detected in two of the three dependent variables of addressing recidivism and external recidivism, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1*Box Plots Showing Distribution of Values*



The Shapiro-Wilk normality test (Table 4) was used to test the assumption that the dependent variable should be approximately normally distributed for each category of the independent variable. The null hypothesis for the Shapiro-Wilk test is that the sample is distributed normally. The p-values of the tests (Table 4) revealed mixed findings, with some data deviating from the assumption of normality.

Table 4

Shapiro–Wilk Normality Test

		n	Statistics	z	p
Addressing	Non-Social Worker	53	.964	1.198	.115
Recidivism	Social Worker	77	.945	2.845	.002
External	Non-Social Worker	53	.952	1.841	.033
Recidivism	Social Worker	77	.927	3.466	.000

Internal	Non-Social Worker	53	.961	1.390	.082
Recidivism	Social Worker	77	.979	.776	.219

Finally, the assumption that there is a need for variance homogeneity was tested using Levene's test for variance homogeneity. When the groups being compared have comparable sample sizes, it is not frequently essential to meet the homogeneity assumption; nevertheless, the data obtained had unequal sizes, so this test was required. The null hypothesis for Levene's test is that the populations variances of the groups being compared are all equal. The Levene's test (Table 5) revealed that the variances for the variables were not equal across the independent variable groups.

Table 5

Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance

	Statistic	df1	df2	P-Value
Addressing Recidivism	22.573	1	128	< .0001
External Recidivism	34.910	1	128	< .0001
Internal Recidivism	40.775	1	128	< .0001

Descriptive Statistics

Table 6 summarizes the descriptive analysis of the main variables involved in the study, including measures of dispersion of means and standard deviations, as well as measures of distribution of skewness and kurtosis. The standard deviations are relatively small, while the

skewness and kurtosis, which indicate the end points of the distribution, are large, indicating the data to be skewed.

Table 6

Descriptive Analysis of Main Variables

	n	Min	Max	M	SD	Skew	Kurt
Addressing Recidivism	135	1.8	5.0	3.513	.817	-.047	2.596
Non-Social Worker	53	1.8	5.0	3.585	.998	-.413	2.060
Social Worker	77	1.8	5.0	3.366	.570	.075	3.420
External Recidivism	133	1.0	4.4	2.262	.669	.751	3.861
Non-Social Worker	53	1.2	3.8	2.321	.780	.030	1.849
Social Worker	77	1.0	4.0	2.145	.413	.776	7.372
Internal Recidivism	133	1.0	4.5	2.816	.932	.151	2.199
Non-Social Worker	53	1.0	4.5	2.962	1.192	-.125	1.547
Social Worker	77	1.0	4.5	2.675	.673	.158	2.897

The first research question evaluated whether there were differences in perspectives of tackling recidivism between social workers and other professionals. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to see if there were any differences, and the results are presented in table 7 below. A Mann-Whitney U test revealed no statistically significant difference in social workers' and other professionals' perspectives of tackling recidivism, $U = 2438, p = .0597$.

Table 7*Mann-Whitney U test - Addressing Recidivism*

Worker	n	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value
Non-Social Worker	53	73	2438	.0597
Social Worker	77	60.34		

The second question postulated if there were differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on external recidivism. A Mann-Whitney U test was performed on the score of the two groups (non-social and social workers). The differences between the rank totals of 3805 (non-social workers) and 4710 (social workers) were not significant, $U = 2438, p = .1141$.

Table 8*Mann-Whitney U test - External Recidivism*

Worker	n	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value
Non-Social Worker	53	71.79	2374	.1141
Social Worker	77	61.17		

The last research question was framed as if there were differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on Internal-Recidivism. The Mann-Whitney U Test was

conducted to examine the differences and no significant differences ($U = 2352$, $p = .140$.) were found among the two categories of participants (non-social and social workers).

Table 9

Mann-Whitney U test - Internal Recidivism

Worker	n	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value
Non-Social Worker	53	71.38	2352	.140
Social Worker	77	61.45		

An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there is a difference in addressing recidivism between social worker and non-social worker. The results indicate no significant difference between non-social workers ($M = 3.585$, $SD = 0.998$) and social workers ($M = 3.366$, $SD = 0.570$), $t(75) = 1.444$, $p = .0765 > .05$.

Another independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there is a difference in external recidivism between social worker and non-social worker. The results indicate no significant difference between non-social workers ($M = 2.321$, $SD = 0.780$) and social workers ($M = 2.145$, $SD = 0.413$), $t(72) = 1.504$, $p = .0685 > .05$.

The results on independent samples t-test in internal recidivism between social worker and non-social worker indicate no significant difference between non-social workers (M = 2.962, SD = 1.192) and social workers (M = 2.675, SD = 0.673), $t(75) = 1.587$, $p = .0584 > .05$.

	n	M	SD	mean difference	t-stat	p- value
<hr/>						
Addressing Recidivism	135	3.513	0.817			
Non-Social Worker	53	3.585	0.998	0.219	1.444	0.0765
Social Worker	77	3.366	0.570			
<hr/>						
External Recidivism	133	2.262	0.669			
Non-Social Worker	53	2.321	0.780	0.176	1.504	0.0685
Social Worker	77	2.145	0.413			
<hr/>						
Internal Recidivism	133	2.816	0.932			
Non-Social Worker	53	2.962	1.192	0.287	1.587	0.0584
Social Worker	77	2.675	0.673			
<hr/>						

Summary

The goal of this quantitative research project was to examine youth professionals'

perceptions of the impact of services aimed at reducing recidivism among youngsters of color in the Juvenile Justice System across the United States. The primary research issues have been investigated, and results based on the Mann-Whitney U tests have been generated. The findings of this study revealed no statistically significant differences in opinions of recidivism between social workers and other professionals.

Section Nine: Discussion

This section will discuss the Perspectives of Juvenile Justice Professionals on Factors Impacting Recidivism of Crossover Youth of Color in the United States. One issue is the overrepresentation of certain racial and ethnic groups, particularly Black and Indigenous youth, in the juvenile justice system. Another important aspect is the connection between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. The goal is to provide better support and resources to prevent recidivism and improve outcomes for these vulnerable populations. Policies and programs have been implemented to address this issue, including Second Chance initiatives focusing on education, employment, and support services for reentry into society.

However, systemic issues, lack of employment opportunities, and strained family relationships can hinder the success of these programs.

Discussion of Findings

RQ1: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on addressing Recidivism?

RQ2: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on External-Recidivism?

RQ3: Is there differences between social workers and other professionals in perceptions on Internal-Recidivism?

The findings suggest no significant differences between social workers and other professionals in their perceptions of addressing recidivism, external recidivism, and internal recidivism. Though the external and internal recidivism scales are not validated, it lays the foundation for creating validated scales that could be used with crossover youth. A confirmatory factor analysis can be used in the future to validate the scales. Gordon Allport's interaction Theory focuses on how various groups' interactions may shape and alter group identities. This theory states that organized interactions between groups in a welcoming setting may promote good intergroup relations and lessen prejudice (Saul Mcleod, 2023). The Contact Theory may be used in this study by promoting controlled interactions between people with various social identities, such as young people of color and professionals working in the juvenile justice system

(Racial and Ethnic Disparity in Juvenile Justice Processing, 2022). This interaction may promote tolerance, good attitudes, and inclusive behaviors. Henri Tajfel and John Turner's Social Identity Theory (SIT) outlines how group identities are created and maintained (Travis Dixon, 2017). It proposes that people organize themselves into groups, favorably compare their group to others, and maintain a good perception of it (Saul Mcleod, 2023). SIT aids in understanding how racial identities influence the juvenile justice system and the child welfare system in the setting of this study. It highlights how racial variables, such as prejudice and discrimination, play a part in the racial inequalities that exist in the juvenile justice system. SIT, and the Contact Theory may promote dialogue and comprehension among young people of color in educational settings.

The dual system hypothesis contends that crossover adolescents' involvement in juvenile justice and child welfare systems increases their risk of recidivism. Because these systems typically operate independently and with different goals, norms, and practices, services for crossover adolescents are sometimes fragmented and inconsistent. The dual system notion claims that crossover children have unique challenges that increase their risk of recidivism. During the transition from the child welfare system to the juvenile justice system, the continuity of care and support may be disturbed, leading to a lack of stability and unequal treatment. Crossover adolescents may be more prone to commit crimes due to trauma and bad experiences in both systems, such as abuse, neglect, or exposure to violence. The two-system Theory contends that adolescents of color, especially African Americans, comprise a disproportionate share of the crossover youth population. Several structural and systemic issues, such as racial prejudices and disparities in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, causes this overrepresentation. African American adolescents are more likely to suffer abuse, be referred to the child welfare system, and then end up in the juvenile prison system, continuing the cycle of engagement and

raising the likelihood that they will reoffend. As the dual system theory shows, a coordinated and all-encompassing strategy is required to meet the demands of crossover kids. It highlights the value of cooperation and communication between the juvenile justice and child welfare systems and the need for trauma-informed and culturally appropriate therapies. The likelihood of recidivism may be reduced, and these adolescents can achieve better results in their transition to adulthood by addressing the particular difficulties that crossover youth confront and offering the right support and resources. The risk that someone engaged in the juvenile justice system would commit an offense again is a recidivism rate. Recidivist rates must be understood to evaluate the success of current programs and services to prevent young people from reoffending. According to studies, reoffence rate for crossover kids of color in the juvenile justice system in the United States differ. These disparities are influenced by characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic position, and risk factors. These solutions often include a thorough and multi-system approach, which includes community-based services, educational and vocational programs, and mental health assistance. It is crucial to remember that the effectiveness of treatments might differ based on the unique circumstances and requirements of crossing youngsters. (Improving Cultural Competence Quick Guice for Clinicians, 2014)

Limitations:

During my systematic review of the available literature, it was discovered that there is a limited amount of literature available regarding my research topic. Despite the literature on crossover juveniles, there may still be information gaps due to the few studies that have been done in this field. Further study is required to completely comprehend the intricacies and complexity of the dual system concept and its effects on crossover adolescent.

Throughout my research there was several problems with methodology. During my research I have encountered problems proving a connection between system engagement and recidivism and considering confounding factors. These factors may impact the validity and reliability of my research results.

Social Work Policy

Throughout my research, several gaps in social work policies were identified a lack of appropriate programs to address crossover youth recidivism and lack of knowdge regarding crossover youth and their service needs to curb recidivism. Based on these gaps, I have made a few recommendations that would address these gaps. My first recommendation would be to implement policies that encourage communication and cooperation between child welfare organizations, juvenile justice systems, and other relevant parties. A more thorough knowledge of crossover adolescents and their needs may be facilitated via improved cooperation and communication, which will improve intervention techniques. Early intervention and preventive measures should be prioritized to address the underlying causes of crossover youth and recidivism. Implement evidence-based programs focusing on risk factors such as trauma, drug addiction, mental health conditions, and academic difficulties. Putting money into prevention may lessen the possibility of crossover and ensuing recidivism.

My second recommendation would be to introduce policies that require interventions to be tailored to the specific needs of crossover youth. In doing so, I would recommend considering the crossover adolescents' needs and experiences. Consider issues including a history of trauma, educational gaps, mental health assistance, and family reunion as you develop treatments to meet these needs.

Social Work Practice

In effort to improve efficiency within social work practice, I would recommend improving data gathering and analysis. Based on my research, I would recommend developing data gathering and analysis techniques to get more precise and thorough data on crossover adolescents. Better comparisons and assessments across jurisdictions may be made possible by standardized and consistent data-gathering processes. Studies that follow crossover youth throughout time and conduct longitudinal analyses may provide important insights into the efficiency of treatments. Furthermore, I would examine the effects of diversion programs. This recommendation would require us to Look at the results of programs designed to keep crossover kids out of the formal judicial system.

Based on the disparities identified in my research, I would recommend addressing racial and ethnic disparities. I would recommend doing so by taking a look into and deal with racial and ethnic differences in crossover youth's experiences and results. The main goals of research should be to understand the underlying causes of these gaps and create treatments that advance equality and fairness within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Social Work Education

Due to the lack of data regarding this particular topic, I would recommend conducting long-term follow-up studies. These studies would be geared towards evaluating the educational attainment, employment results, and general well-being of crossover adolescents into adulthood, conduct long-term follow-up studies. When developing focused interventions, longitudinal

research may help provide light on the long-term effects of system participation on crossover adolescents.

Furthermore, I would consider intersectionality and multiple identities in future studies when examining how different identities (such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability) overlap and affect the experiences and outcomes of crossover adolescents. Providing more specialized interventions and assistance is possible by being aware of the particular difficulties that certain crossover youth subgroups encounter.

Due to a lack of resources, I would recommend directing federal funds towards educating social workers on how to equitably distribute services. Furthermore, there is a great need for implicit bias training to address the bias in social workers and their perception towards crossover youths. Social Workers should be required to complete continuing education credits related to implicit bias towards crossover youths.

investigate the effects of family support in decreasing recidivism among kids who have crossed over. Study whether family-centered therapies, such as family counseling, parenting classes, and support services, help foster good outcomes and prevent other system engagement.

Summary:

This study took a look at the United States Child welfare System as it relates to Crossover youths of color. My study specifically examined initiatives to alleviate juvenile delinquency, emphasizing the disproportionate number of Black adolescents. It also examines how the juvenile justice and child welfare systems are related and the need for more resources and assistance to reduce recidivism and enhance outcomes for vulnerable groups.

My study addresses policies and efforts, such as Second Chance programs, that seek to provide youth opportunities for education, employment, and social services to help them successfully reintegrate into society. My study explores several concepts that help us understand juvenile misbehavior and how the child welfare system gave way to the juvenile justice system. These theories include the Contact Theory, the Social Identity Theory (SIT) by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, the Interaction Theory by Gordon Allport, the Dual-Systems Theory, and the Rational Choice Theory. These concepts lighten the relationship between racial identities, social dynamics, personal decision-making, brain development and delinquent behavior, and the disproportionate representation of certain racial groups in the juvenile justice system. It strongly emphasizes the need for cooperation and communication among many institutions, trauma-informed and culturally competent treatment, and specialized interventions to deal with the issues crossover adolescents face. In the conclusion of my study, I have made several recommendations for practice and further study, including improving system coordination and collaboration, prioritizing early intervention and preventive measures, tailoring interventions to individual needs, improving data collection and analysis, examining the effects of diversion programs and family support, addressing racial and ethnic disparities, conducting long-term follow-up studies, and conducting comparative research.

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Appendix A
Informed Consent

Project Title: Factors that impact Recidivism for foster care youth in the juvenile justice system across the United States.

- You are invited to participate in a research study that examines the perspectives of youth professionals who have worked directly with crossover youths in the juvenile justice system across the United States. This research study aims to look at issues influencing the crossover youth of color in foster homes within the United States juvenile justice system and how it affects their wellbeing in society via the lens of existing theories and quantitative research. Deion Adams is conducting this study.

- There is one qualification to participate in this study: You are required to work directly with crossover youth of color in United States who have been incarcerated.

- Participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an anonymous survey.

- Participating in this study may not benefit you directly, but it will help us learn about factors impacting recidivism for foster care youth in the juvenile justice system Across the United States. You may find answers to some of the questions upsetting, but we expect this would not differ

from what you discuss with family or friends. You may skip any questions you don't want to answer and discontinue the survey anytime.

- The information you will share with us if you participate in this study will be confidential to the full extent of the law. The data will be collected through a Qualtrics online survey and stored on a computer hard drive. This computer will be password protected and locked away in a secure cabinet when the researcher does not use it. The computer will be stored in a bedroom within the researcher's home. The information will be stored on a cloud for Qualtrics before being downloaded to the researcher's computer. The computer will require a two-level authentication before accessing the data. The researcher will only access the data.
- Is there any audio/video recording? There is no audio or video recording for the survey.
- What are the dangers to me? The Institutional Review Board at Yeshiva University has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants. Your participation **WILL NOT AFFECT YOUR EMPLOYMENT.**
- How will you keep my information confidential? All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. All data will be kept in a locked file cabinet and password-protected computer.

Please note: You must be 18 or older to participate in this study.

By completing this survey, you consent to participate in this study.

**Please print or save a copy of this form for your records. **

Appendix B

Dear Participants,

My name is Deion Adams. I'm currently enrolled at Yeshiva University, Wurzweiler School of social work. I'm in the research phase of completing the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy in Social Welfare (Ph.D.) degree. My research interest includes child welfare and the juvenile justice system.

You are invited to participate in a research study that examines the perspectives of youth professionals who have worked directly or indirectly with crossover youths in the juvenile justice system across the United States. This research study aims to look at factors impacting Recidivism within youth of color in the Juvenile Justice System across the United States from a youth professionals' perspective.

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Deion Adams is conducting this research study at Yeshiva University. It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete the online survey.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

Please click the link below to participate in the survey:

If you are interested in learning more about this study, contact the researcher: Deion Adams: at 347-322-5652 or Dradams@mail.yu.edu. You may also contact Dr. Christine Vyshedsky, Dissertation Chair and Assistant Professor of Social Work at Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University, at her email address, christine.vyshedsky@yu.edu or by phone at 646- 592-6841.

This research project was approved through a special review process to protect the Participants' safety, welfare, and confidentiality.

Appendix C



Completion Date 05-May-2022
Expiration Date 04-May-2025
Record ID 47630208

This is to certify that:

Deion Adams

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
(Curriculum Group)
Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
(Course Learner Group)
1 - RCR
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

WCG IRB



Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wbbd05b33-2c71-48db-9e5f-ff7f6a38d37e-47630208

Appendix D

Survey Questions

This survey will examine the perception of youth professionals on how they view the impact of services to address Recidivism of crossover youth of color in the juvenile justice system.

Recidivism: The tendency of a convicted criminal to reoffend.

Crossover youth: A young person involved in child welfare and the justice system.

Stakeholders: A party interested in the welfare of youth and can affect the Outcome of youth.

1. How long have you worked in the Juvenile Justice/ Child Welfare Field?

0-12 Months

1-2 plus Years

3-4 plus Years

5-6 plus Years

7-8 plus Years

Over nine years

2. What is your title within the Juvenile Justice System?

3. What is your Ethnicity/Race?

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

White

Hispanic/ Latino

4. What is your highest level of education?

High School

College (Undergraduate)

Graduate School (Masters)

Graduate School (Advanced Terminal Degree)

5. What specific degree do you hold?

6. Which State are you geographically located in?

7. What percentage of the youth with which you have worked is defined as crossover youth?

Below 20%

20-39%

40-59%

60-79%

80% and up

8. Which gender is more likely to recidivate?

Male

Female

9. What percentage of crossover youth that you have worked with have reoffended?

Below 20%

20-39%

40-59%

60-79%

80% and up

10. What is the age group of youth you have worked with the most?

Under 15

15-16

17-18

19-20

21-22

11. Which of the following ethnicities of youth do you have the most experience working with?

American Indian or Alaska Native.

Asian.

Black or African American.

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

White.

Hispanic/ Latino

12. Is Educational services important in addressing Recidivism in crossover youth of color.

Yes or No

13. Is Employment services important in addressing Recidivism in crossover youth of color.

Yes or No

14. Is Mental Health services important in addressing Recidivism in crossover youth of color.

Yes or No

15. Is Substance Use services important in addressing Recidivism in crossover youth of color.

Yes or No

16. Is Family Support services important in addressing Recidivism in crossover youth of color.

Yes or No

17. How likely would it be for the crossover youth of color to reoffend after engaging in any services?

Likely

Unlikely

18. Place the following characteristics of an effective program in order of importance in addressing Recidivism in crossover youth of color.

_ Culturally Sensitive

_ Outcome Driven

_ Strong Community Partnership

_ Person-Centered Approach

_ Please specify_____.

19. On a scale of one to five, five being the greatest and one being the least. how impactful would geography be in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

20. On a scale of one to five, five being the greatest and one being the least. how impactful would Economic factors be in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

21. On a scale of one to five, five being the greatest and one being the least. how impactful would Legislature be in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

22. On a scale of one to five, five being the greatest and one being the least. how impactful would Ethnicity be in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

23. On a scale of one to five, five being the greatest and one being the least. Which factor is least impactful in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

Geographical Location

Economic

Legislature

Ethnicity

Please specify _____.

24. On a scale of one to five, five being the greatest and one being the least. Which factor is most impactful in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

Geographical Location

Economic

Legislature

Ethnicity

Please specify _____.

25. How important is the stakeholders' role in distributing programs within the Juvenile Justice System? (Stakeholders: A stakeholder is a party interested in the welfare of youth and can affect the Outcome of youth.)

Extremely Important

Important

Not Important

Extremely Not Important

26. Which stakeholders play a role in distributing programs within the juvenile justice system?

Judges

Prosecutors

Child Welfare Agencies

Elected Officials

Please specify

27. Do you believe there is an equitable distribution of services to address Recidivism within crossover youth of color?

Yes

No

Unsure

For questions 25-31, Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

28. Are rehabilitative services effective in addressing Recidivism within crossover youth?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

29. Youth of color are more likely to reoffend compared to White youth.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

30. Recidivism is a rational choice.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

31. Recidivism is an unconscious choice.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

32. Peer pressure leads to recidivism.

_ Strongly Agree

– Agree

_ Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

33. Poverty leads to recidivism.

_ Strongly Agree

– Agree

_ Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

34. I feel like the White youth I have been working with are engaged.

_ Strongly Agree

– Agree

_ Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

35. I feel like the youth of color that I have been working with are engaged.

_ Strongly Agree

– Agree

_ Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

36. There are incentives to encourage employers and educational institutions to provide juvenile offenders with a second opportunity to access services.

_ Strongly Agree

– Agree

_ Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

–I don't know

37. I believe recidivism is a cycle that can't be broken.

_ Strongly Agree

– Agree

_ Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

38. I believe that more should be done to address recidivism.

_ Strongly Agree

– Agree

_ Disagree

-Strongly Disagree

39. I believe that poverty plays a role in recidivism.

_ Strongly Agree

- Agree

_ Disagree

-Strongly Disagree

40. I believe that recidivism is a choice.

_ Strongly Agree

- Agree

_ Disagree

-Strongly Disagree

41. I believe that minority communities are overrepresented in recidivism statistic?

_ Strongly Agree

- Agree

_ Disagree

-Strongly Disagree

42. I believe that crossover youth of color are destined to a recidivist.

_ Strongly Agree

- Agree

_ Disagree

–Strongly Disagree

43. Base on your perception, who is more likely to recidivate?

__Boys

__Girls

Appendix E

<p>H1: Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of addressing Recidivism?</p>	<p>Addressing Recidivism</p> <p>Q12, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19, Q31, Q36, Q32, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q45, Q22, Q49, Q50, Q51, Q52 Q40, Q53, Q54, Q55, Q56, Q57, Q58, Q59</p>	<p>Contributing to the elimination of recidivism</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Dependent</p>
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Q15 Are educational services important in addressing recidivism? (Not important- Extremely important)

Q16 Are employment services important in addressing Recidivism? (Not important- Extremely important)

Q17 Are Mental Health services important in addressing Recidivism? (Not important- Extremely important)

Q18 Are Substance abuse services important in addressing Recidivism? (Not important- Extremely important)

Q19 Are Family Support services important in addressing Recidivism? (Not important- Extremely important)

Q36 Peer pressure leads to recidivism. (SA-SD)

Q32 Rehabilitative services are effective in addressing Recidivism within crossover youth.

Q33, I believe recidivism is a cycle that can't be broken. (SA-SD)

Q42, I believe that more should be done to address recidivism. (SA-SD)

Q43, I believe that poverty plays a role in recidivism. (SA-SD)

Q45, I believe that minority communities are overrepresented in recidivism statistics. (SA-SD)

Q49 How effective is cultural sensitivity at addressing recidivism in crossover youth of color?

Q50 How effective is outcome driven services at addressing recidivism in crossover youth of color?

Q51 How effective is strong community partnership at addressing recidivism in crossover youth of color?

Q52 How effective is a person-centered approach at addressing recidivism in crossover youth of color?

<p>HP 2: Based on the perception of individuals who work directly with</p>	<p>External Recidivism Q14, Q23, Q28, Q33, Q46, Q22, Q49, Q50, Q51, Q52, Q53, Q54, Q55</p>	<p>External Recidivism refers to the societal</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Independent</p>
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<p>youth, there is no difference between social workers and other professionals on the perception of External recidivism?</p>		<p>factors that may surround an individual and contribute to their recidivism.</p>		
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Q14, which of the following ethnicities of youth do you have the most experience working with? (List of categories)

Q23, on a scale of one to ten, how impactful would geography be in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

Q28, on a scale of one to ten, how impactful would Ethnicity be in affecting accessibility to effective programs for crossover youth of color?

Q33, Youth of color are more likely to reoffend compared to White youth. (SA-SD)

Q46, I believe that crossover youth of color are destined to recidivate. (SA-SD)

Q22 Which is the most important characteristic of an effective program at addressing Recidivism in crossover youth of color.

