MOTHERS IN PRISON: HOW THEY DEFINE AND

FULFILL THEIR ROLE OF PARENT

WHILE INCARCERATED

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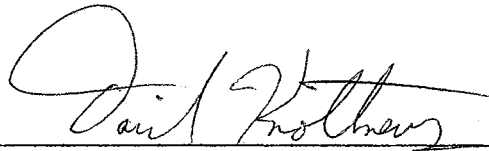the Degree of
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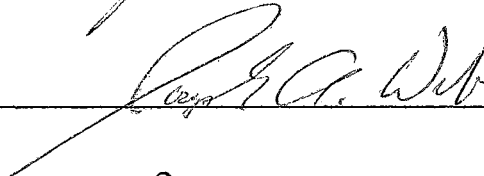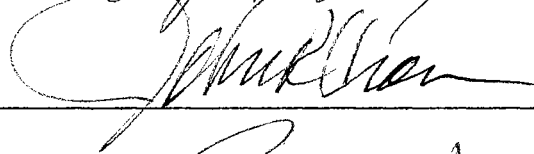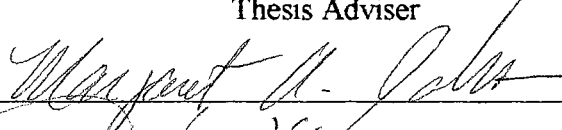
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Mothers in prison face an unique dilemma--although they hold the status of being a mother, they can no longer fulfill their role obligations in traditional ways. Because of this, incarcerated mothers may be subject to high levels of role strain and low levels of self-esteem from combining such seemingly incompatible roles of mother and inmate.

Although the total number of women inmates in the United States constitutes only a small percentage of the total inmate population (around 7 percent), this still represents over 56,000 women, and this segment of the inmate population continues to grow at a rate of over 11 percent each year (Beck & Gilliard, 1995). Between the years 1986 through 1991 the number of incarcerated men increased in this country by 53 percent, whereas, the number of incarcerated women increased by 75 percent (US Department of Justice, 1994). By the year 2000, it is estimated that over 106,000 women will be imprisoned (Beck & Gilliard, 1995). It is estimated that as many as 80% of the female prison population have children (Kiser, 1991).

Imprisonment is destructive to the parenting role (Baunach, 1985). However, the imprisonment of a mother is far more disruptive to her family than is the incarceration of a father. Studies have shown that 61 percent of incarcerated men's children remain with their mother when the he goes to prison, whereas, only 26 percent of incarcerated women's children remain with a continuous primary caretaker (Koban, 1983). Another

study found that about 90 percent of incarcerated father's children, under the age of eighteen, live with their children's mothers, whereas, less than 25 percent of the children of incarcerated mothers live with their fathers (Snell, 1989).

The Problem

During the late 1980s, the War on Drugs became a crime prevention strategy that dramatically increased the number of people that were sent to prison. Substance abuse underlies much of female criminality and explains why the number of incarcerated mothers is increasing every year (Beck & Gilliard, 1995). In 1994, for women, there were more arrests for drug offenses than for any other crime index category except larceny-theft, an increase of 20 percent from the previous year (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1994).

In one survey, 46 percent of the incarcerated, female respondents reported that they had used drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their offense. Drug-abusing women offenders is one of the fastest growing segments within the criminal justice system (Wellisch, Prendergast, & Anglin, 1994). It is estimated that 72 percent of women in state prisons have used drugs at some point in their lives (Wolf-Harlow, 1992).

Inmate mothers are found to be as concerned about their children as are non-criminal mothers, but due to institutional constraints they cannot express their love in socially approved ways (LeFlore & Holston, 1989). This incompatibility among roles produces role strain for the incarcerated mother. Also, studies have shown that irrespective of marital status, the parental identity is more salient to a woman's self-

conception than it is to a man's (Simon, 1992). Because of this, being incarcerated could have consequences for an inmate mother's self-esteem.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to use identity salience theory to uncover how incarcerated mothers defined and fulfilled their role of mother while incarcerated. The goal of this study was to identify any novel identities, along with any novel behaviors, that incarcerated mothers may have adopted while incarcerated that enabled them to fulfill their maternal role obligations and helped them deal with role strain and maintain self-esteem. In addition, this study examined the effects that commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use had on role strain and self-esteem.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were met by answering and testing the following research questions, research hypotheses, and null hypotheses. The research questions which formed the basis for this study were:

Research Question 1: How do incarcerated mothers define the concept mother?

Research Question 2: Do incarcerated mothers, in their attempts to fulfill their maternal role obligations, adopt novel identities along with unique behaviors?

The research hypotheses used for this study were:

Research Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant relationship in role strain scores in regard to commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores.

Research Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant relationship in self-esteem scores in regard to commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores.

The following null hypotheses were used to test the research hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant relationship in role strain scores in regard to commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores.

Null Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant relationship in self-esteem scores in regard to commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores.

Significance of the Study

In our society, mothers are not typically involuntarily separated from their children. Consequently, there are few studies which show how mothers deal with the phenomenon of fulfilling their parental role obligations while not being physically present to do so. The studies that do exist typically concentrate on how children adjust when they are separated from a parent (Stanton, 1980). One study entitled, "An Exploration of the Feelings and Attitudes of Women Separated from Their Children Due to Incarceration," showed that imprisoned mothers do have concerns about being away from their children, and that the

majority expressed some guilt that their children were being deprived of their care (Stanton, 1980). This present study will help fill the void in the literature.

When mothers are incarcerated they do not give up their parental roles, responsibilities, concerns, or caring. The incarcerated mother finds herself in a bind. She is expected to follow standards of behavior that are universal for mothers but due to the conditions of her confinement, she cannot meet these standards in traditional ways. Expecting incarcerated mothers to adhere to the same standards of behavior as non-incarcerated mothers ignores the significant differences that exist. The net effect is that incarcerated mothers receive a "double punishment" for their offense (Beckerman, 1991, p. 180). Incarcerated mothers need support in their efforts to fulfill their social role of mother, and efforts should be made to maintain any positive perceptions that incarcerated mothers have about their parenting behaviors (LeFlore & Holston, 1989).

It is known that women in prison, due to their isolation from previous forms of interpersonal relationships, do develop unique social structures that involve novel identities and behaviors which help them fulfill their needs for affection and a continued intimate relationship with another person (Ward & Kassebaum, 1965; Giallombardo, 1966). These social structures tend to resemble family structures, with certain women taking on the roles of husbands, while others assume the roles of wives or children.

Part of this study's purpose was to identify other unknown forms of identities and behaviors that incarcerated mothers may adopt to help them fulfill their maternal role while not being physically present to do so. According to hypothesis #11 of Sheldon

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Stryker's (1980) structural identity salience theory, "external events cutting existing commitments will increase the probability of adoption of novel identities" (p. 84).

Previous studies have shown that parents who are highly committed to the parental identity are more vulnerable to strains in the parental role. Research done by Robin Simon (1992), suggested the need to take into account the social-psychological conditions under which the strains of adult roles, especially parental roles, become troublesome in the lives of women and men. When a mother becomes an inmate, she takes on the newly ascribed status of being an incarcerated mother and with this new status comes role strain. Another purpose of this study was to examine role strain among incarcerated mothers.

This study also considered how commitment, along with the length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, drug/alcohol use, and educational level, effected self-esteem. According to Sheldon Stryker's (1980) identity salience theory, hypothesis # 9, " The greater the commitment, the higher the identity salience, the greater impact the quality of role performance will have on self-esteem" (p. 84). Because incarcerated mothers are unable to fulfill their role obligations in traditional ways, it seemed possible that their self-esteem would be affected and this in turn could lead to further consequences. Dorothy C. Howze-Browne (1989) studied 29 females incarcerated in a county jail in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and concluded that incarcerated mothers may be at-risk for future parental difficulties due, in part, to their low levels of self-esteem.

Over 95 percent of all incarcerated people eventually leave prison (Butterfield, 1995) and despite their concerns about readjusting to the parenting role, most incarcerated mothers want and resume their parental responsibilities after incarceration, usually as the

head of their household (Baunach, 1985; Chapman, 1980). Most female inmates have come from deprived and unstable backgrounds and many have been extensively abused over time and face significant employment, financial, psychological, emotional, and social barriers (McCoy, Inciardi, & Metch, 1995). In light of these problems, it seemed appropriate to conclude that incarcerated mothers would benefit from meaningful vocational training and counseling while in prison. Such self-development activities could also heighten self-esteem and reduce recidivism (LeFlore & Holston, 1989). For these reasons, it is important to study incarcerated mothers to find ways to help them while they are incarcerated so they can be successfully reintegrated back into their communities.

The incarceration rate for female inmates in state correctional institutions nationwide is 40 per 100,000 (Beck & Gilliard, 1995). Oklahoma incarcerates women at one of the highest rates in the nation (115 per 100,000). Between 70 to 95 percent of these women have children. Most of these children stay with the inmate's mother or with the inmate's siblings during their mother's incarceration. There is concern that this can lead to a cycle of crime. In fact, studies have shown that children of incarcerated parents are almost six times more likely to become incarcerated themselves someday (Moses, 1995). Many incarcerated women are released back into the community without employable skills. Along with having their families disrupted and with all the other pressures, they are more at-risk to re-offend (Wakulich, 1998).

There is a need for policy-directed research in regards to incarcerated mothers (Beckerman, 1989). Previous research has shown that the prison stay produces distress on the mother-child relation. Rather than having correctional policies that exacerbate the

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distress of mothers and result in severed mother-child ties, policies should reflect concern

for the psycho-sociological importance of the mother-child relationship and promote

family bonding (Sametz, 1980; Hairston, 1991). The prevailing policies and attitudes

throughout the criminal justice system seem oriented toward undermining the capabilities

of those mothers who wish to fulfill their parental responsibilities. One important step to

the solution of this problem is for others to be made aware of its existence (Jose, 1985).

This research can help heighten the awareness of incarcerated mothers' problems and

could ultimately effect policies which could benefit incarcerated mothers, their children,

and society at large.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study the following definitions were operationally defined:

identities, salience hierarchies, commitment, significant others, role strain, and self-esteem.

Manford Kuhn (1960) wrote,

> George Herbert Mead suggested that a person's behavior is a function of his
> conception of his identity, and further, that this conception of his identity derives
> from the positions he occupies in society (pp. 53-54).

Thus, identity has a cognitive dimension that is linked to social structure through status

and associated roles (Ihinger-Tallman, Pasley, & Buehler, 1995). Stryker and Serpe

(1982) defined identities as:

> ...reflexively applied cognitions in the form of answers to the question "Who
> am I?" These answers are phrased in terms of the position in organized structures
> of social relationships to which one belongs and the social roles that attach to these
> positions (p. 206).

Identities, according to identity theory, are organized into salience hierarchies (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1995). Stryker and Serpe (1982) explained the concept of salience hierarchies as:

> This hierarchical organization of identities is defined by the probabilities of each of the various identities within it being brought into play in a given situation. Alternatively, it is defined by the probabilities each of the identities have of being invoked across a variety of situations. The location of an identity in this hierarchy is, by definition, its salience. Implied in this conceptualization and definition is the general proposition that an identity's location in a salience hierarchy will affect its threshold for being invoked in situations and thus the likelihood that behavior called for by the identity will ensue. Whether or not that behavior will, in fact, occur will clearly depend on the way that salience of an identity interacts with (1) defining characteristics of situations (such as the degree to which the situation permits alternative identities to be expressed behaviorally), and (2) other self characteristics (such as self-esteem or satisfaction). It is worth emphasizing that, from the viewpoint of identity theory, the organization of identities in a salience hierarchy is a specification of the sociological conceptualization of personality as a structure reflecting the roles persons play (p. 207).

Another important concept in identity theory is commitment. Stryker and Serpe (1982) defined commitment as

> the degree to which the person's relationships to specified sets of others depend on his or her being a particular kind of person, i.e., occupying a particular position in an organized structure of relationships and playing a particular role...(The concept of commitment) provides a useful way of conceiving "society's" relevance for social behavior, doing so by pointing to social networks--the number of others to whom one relates by occupancy of a given position, the importance to one of those others, the multiplexity of linkages, and so on--as the relevant considerations (p. 207).

For this study, the affective commitment factor was used to measure commitment. Stryker and Serpe (1994) described affective commitment as conceived in identity theory as, "the intensity of affect associated with relationships forgone, given the loss of a role and of the associated identity" (p. 27).

Significant others is another important concept that effects identity formation, salience hierarchy of identities, and the behavioral choices that a person makes and tends to either reinforce or change one's identities (Ihinger-Tallman et al.). Stryker and Serpe (1982) showed how the concept of significant others follows from symbolic interaction theory's development of the self:

> We come to know who and what we are through the interaction with others. We become objects to ourselves by attaching to ourselves symbols that emerge from our interaction with others, symbols having meanings growing out of that interaction. As any other symbols, self symbols have action implications: they tell us (as well as others) how we can be expected to behave in our ongoing activity (p. 202).

For this study, significant others was defined as the close family members and friends of the respondents.

For this study, role strain was defined as, "the felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations" (Stryker, 1980, p. 76).

The definition of the concept of self-esteem is taken from the book, Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes (Robinson & Shaver, 1973) and is explained as:

> ...liking and respect for oneself which has some realistic basis. Self-acceptance means accepting oneself. Self-acceptance and self-esteem are empirically and conceptually related (p. 45).

For this study, the self-acceptance factor was used to measure self-esteem.

Logical Assumptions

The subjects for this study were incarcerated mothers who voluntarily participated in filling out self-administered questionnaires. The logical assumption considered true for this study was that the subjects had the ability to report their perceptions accurately.

Summary

Chapter one introduced the concept of incarcerated mothers. Even though they hold the status of being a mother, they are unable to fulfill their role obligations in traditional ways. Due to the War on Drugs and other aggressive crime prevention strategies, the number of women (and consequently mothers) who are sent to prison continues to rise each year. Imprisonment is destructive to the parenting role and studies have shown that the parental identity is more salient to a woman's self-conception than it is to a man's.

This study used identity theory to uncover how incarcerated mothers define the concept of mother and to determine how they fulfill their maternal role obligations while incarcerated. One goal of this study was to identify novel identities along with unique behaviors that incarcerated mothers may have adopted in order to fulfill their maternal role obligations while incarcerated. Another purpose of this research was to determine if role strain and self-esteem were significantly effected by the incarcerated mother's commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical perspective used to guide this study was identity salience theory.

The basic idea of identity salience theory, developed by Sheldon Stryker, is quite clear. It

states that the greater a person's commitment to an identity, the greater the salience of

that identity, and that this in turn influences the behavioral choices that an individual

makes based on the available choices presented to the individual in a given situation

(Cook, Fine, & House, 1995, p. 45).

To understand how identity salience theory emerged, one must look at the root of

the theory, which is symbolic interactionism. Identity salience theory is a derivative of

symbolic interactionism that stems from the works of George Herbert Mead, Charles

Horton Cooley, John Dewey, W. I. Thomas, and Herbert Blumer. A very simplified

version of symbolic interactionism theory is, "... as society shapes self, this in turn shapes

social behavior" (Weigert, Teitge, & Teitge, 1986, pp. 22-23).

A Brief History of Symbolic Interactionism

George Herbert Mead's work contributed to the development of symbolic

interactionism. Mead (1934) believed that social psychological analysis must start with

ongoing social interaction (or social process) and from this process the mind, self, and

society emerged. Mead believed when people initiate activities relating to both their

physical and social environments, the mind emerged while in the context of problem solving. Like John Dewey, Mead did not believe people simply responded to stimuli that existed apart from their ongoing activities, rather things became the stimuli (or objects) and these objects took on meaning for persons engaged in problem solving. Thus, the meaning of an object is tied to the way it can be expected to function in the course of problem solving activities (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, pp. 201-202).

Both things and people acquire their meanings through ongoing activities. While participating in activities together, people communicate both vocally and by gestures, and it is through these interactions that self emerges. The vocal sounds and gestures become significant symbols. These significant symbols provide the meaning of the objects (things and people) that make up the social and physical environment (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, p. 202).

Those who had an impact on Mead's thinking included George Horton Cooley and W. I. Thomas. Cooley (1902) believed that the individual is not apart from society and that the personality developed from social life and from the communications among those sharing social life. Thomas (1966) believed that both the objective and subjective parts of human experiences were responsible for social behavior. He stated, "if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." These became symbolic interactionism's core assumptions (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, pp. 202-203).

Herbert Blumer (1969) was associated with the Chicago school of symbolic interactionism. He was the first to use the term "symbolic interaction." The Chicago symbolic interactionists did not believe it was appropriate to study people's behavior as a

function of their attitudes or roles, because they believed individuals were constantly constructing and reconstructing their own realities and were not just acting based on their previous roles and attitudes. They also believed researchers should try to understand the subjective realities that individuals constructed in their current situations (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, p. 24).

Blumer (1969) did not believe social psychologists should study specific variables or test hypotheses, because this assumed that a social structure already existed. Rather, he believed human interaction should be studied by using sensitizing concepts, which suggest the direction in which the researcher should look when attempting to understand behavior. Blumer also thought it was necessary for symbolic interactionists to develop their own unique research methods to study human behavior (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, p. 25).

Another school of thought emerged among symbolic interactionists known as the Iowa school. Manford Kuhn (1964) was most closely associated with this school. Kuhn believed symbolic interactionist researchers should use the same research methods that the other natural and social sciences used. Kuhn felt some of Mead's ideas were untestable. The technique that Kuhn frequently employed to test symbolic interactionism's ideas was the Twenty Statements Test (TST). This test consisted of twenty open-ended responses to the question, "Who am I?" (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, p. 25).

Other differences between the Chicago and the Iowa schools existed. While both schools agreed that social interaction is the means by which the concepts of self and others emerge, the Iowa school believed that the various roles people play influenced their social interactions by eliciting behavioral expectations about their self and others. Also, the Iowa

school interactionists did not believe people are predestined to fit into prescribed societal slots. Rather, they believed people often choose and even modify their roles, which in turn, shapes their role behaviors. While the Iowa school believed social structure puts limitations on social interactions, they did not believe social structure totally determines social interactions (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, p. 26).

Identity salience theory emerged from the Iowa school. It came to be known as the Indiana school of structural symbolic interactionism. While the Iowa school did shift the study of self and identity into the quantitative realm by the use of survey methods, its dependency on the TST as its primary measurement instrument limited its development. Sheldon Stryker and his colleagues from the Indiana school developed structural symbolic interactionism. Their focus was on linking self and society. They believed that the self is made up of a hierarchical set of identities, with each being tied to roles within the social structure (Cook et al., 1995, pp. 43-44).

Stryker's goal was to develop a symbolic interactionist perspective which dealt with macro-level social phenomena. He believed that symbolic interactionism needed to develop more precise concepts and better research procedures (Stryker, 1980, p. 96). He wanted to develop a satisfactory theoretical framework that would bridge social structure and the person, and could move to and from the person and large-scale social structures. He believed that a conceptual framework which facilitated analysis across all levels of organization and the person could be developed. To accomplish this, he borrowed ideas from role theory and integrated them with Mead's symbolic interactionism and developed identity salience theory (Ritzer, 1992, p. 618).

Stryker believed that focusing on just the individual without a corresponding focus on the social structure (or vice versa) is incomplete and that the reciprocity of society and the individual must not be overlooked. Therefore, he argued there must be a connective link between variations in social structure and variations in social individuals. To accomplish this, he delineated eight statements that make up the theoretical framework for his identity salience theory (Stryker, 1980, pp. 53-55). Stryker's theory is important to this study because the identity of an incarcerated mother is linked to the realities of her confinement and a system of rules that limits her interaction with her children.

The Concepts of Identity, Identity Salience, and Commitment

Stryker's identity theory raised the following issues: Behavioral consistency and inconsistency as people move from one situation to another; the amount of resistance exhibited by people as they respond to changes in the structure of their interpersonal relationships and social circumstances; the choices people make when confronted with conflicting role expectations; and the allocation of scarce resources for interpersonal interactions. To address these issues, Stryker introduced the concepts of identity, identity salience, and commitment (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, pp. 205-206).

The concept of identity is best understood by how the question, "Who am I?" is answered. The answer to this question represents the social roles found in the organized structures of social relationships to which an individual belongs. People can have several identities depending upon the number of distinct sets of structured relationships to which the individual belongs (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, p. 206).

Identity salience has to do with how the identities that make up self can be organized. Identities are organized into a salience hierarchy. The position of an identity is its salience. The identity's location in a salience hierarchy affects the likelihood that in appropriate situations the behavior called for by an identity will be displayed (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, pp. 206-207).

Commitment refers to the degree to which an individual's relationships to specified sets of others depend upon whether that individual is occupying a particular position in an organized structure of relationships and the degree to which the individual is playing the expected role (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, p. 207). Stryker (1980) explains his way of conceptualizing commitment,

> To the degree that one's relationships to specified sets of other persons depend on being a particular kind of person, one is committed to being that kind of person...Since entering into social relationships is premised on the attribution and acceptance of positions and associated roles, then commitments are premised on identities (pp. 61-62).

Putting these concepts together, one can conclude that commitment affects identity salience which in turn affects role-related behavioral choices. This is the theoretical premise which leads to Stryker's twelve hypotheses (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, p. 207).

Identity salience theory differs from other symbolic interactionist theories and is beneficial to social psychology by adding to the body of knowledge regarding role-related and choice-related behaviors. This theory provides researchers with new insights about people's identities because it is through one's identities by which a person is "known" to another person, since it is one's identities which make up the public aspects of "self"

(Cook et al., 1995, p. 42). Studying incarcerated mothers' identities are important because identity shapes role-related behaviors.

<div align="center">Review of the Literature</div>

Relevant literature was reviewed relating to the variables considered in this study. Attention was given to the variables of commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, drug/alcohol use, role strain, and self-esteem.

<u>Mothers in Prison</u>

Historically, mothers who committed illegal acts were looked upon by the courts and by members of society as being unfit parents who were irresponsible and incapable of properly performing their parental obligations because they knowingly risked the chance of imprisonment and subsequent separation from their children (Carron, 1984). Women, especially mothers, who did not conform to societal norms of expected behavior regarding social relationships and social statuses, were subjected to receiving harsher sentences by the state than did their male counterparts (Beckerman, 1991). However, studies have shown that incarcerated mothers are not significantly different from non-incarcerated mothers; both groups of mothers believe it is important for mothers to love their children and to guide them in socially appropriate behaviors and attitudes (LeFlore & Holston, 1989).

While several studies have focused on incarcerated women forming adaptive social structures in response to the "pains of imprisonment" (Ward & Kassebaum, 1965;

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Giallombardo, 1966; Tittle, 1969; Heffernan, 1972; Jensen & Jones, 1976; Alpert, Noblit, & Wiorkowski, 1977; Wilson, 1978; Hartnagel & Gillan, 1980; Zingraff & Zingraff, 1980; Alarid, 1997), the current literature lacks studies showing if incarcerated women adopt novel identities, along with novel behaviors, in order to preserve the identities they had before coming to prison.

Sykes (1958) pointed out that prisoners suffer from five types of deprivation. These include deprivations of liberty, goods and services, heterosexual relationships, autonomy, and security. One way prisoners adapt to the stress of deprivations is to join with their fellow captives in order to reap the benefits of mutual aid, loyalty, affection, and respect. Jones (1993) identified three types of relationships that can develop in response to the deprivations women experience in prison. They include the quasi-family, the couple, and close friendships.

Giallombardo (1966) and Heffernan (1972) also found evidence of "play families" in women's prisons. Some women adopted male roles, while others adopted female roles. These incarcerated women join make-believe family units while in prison to "relieve the tensions of prison life" as well as to fulfill their dependent or dominant role needs (Heffernan, 1972, p. 88). The most frequently assumed roles were that of mother, father, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister, aunt, and uncle. These roles tended to be ascribed based on the inmate's age (Giallombardo, 1966, pp. 210, 212).

Ward and Kassebaum (1965) found that typically a lesbian would play the masculine or butch role, while a heterosexual woman would assume the married female or femme role. Alarid (1997) found that homosexual services were often used in women's

prisons as part of an underground economy that helped fulfill physiological needs, support addictions, or designate inmate social status. However, Mahan (1984), in a study involving 26 women at an honor camp and 38 women at a detention center, found straight friendships were the most common and stable forms of relationships to exist.

Heffernan (1972) found that whether or not an incarcerated woman developed close relationships within the prison depended upon the amount of affective support she received from outside the prison. Women who decide to "go at it alone" or limit their relationships while in prison were only able to do so if they had continued support from outside the prison. However, it was noted, that those serving life sentences found it difficult to "go at it alone" even if they had continued support from the outside.

According to Giallombardo (1966),

> What actually takes place in the transition from hard time to easy time is that the inmate learns with the help of sister inmates to suspend deep emotional involvement in events taking place in outside society and to live completely in the very second of the present--in the prison world of the inmates (p. 134).

Giallombardo explained that the psychological withdrawal of an inmate from the outside world is an individual accomplishment which varies from one prisoner to another and that the transition of self to a prisoner is done through a process of psychological withdrawal. The transition is considered complete when the inmate no longer reacts to outside events, even matters pertaining to close family members (Giallombardo, 1966, p. 135).

Baunach (1985) found that incarcerated mothers who were serving longer sentences and had longer times to serve before being eligible for parole tended to see themselves more favorably than did mothers who had shorter sentences. She concluded that the reason for this was that mothers who were serving longer sentences became

adjusted to their plight, and therefore became more institutionalized (dependent upon the institution), than did mothers who were serving shorter sentences. One study found that total years spent in prison and race (being Black) were significant predictors for women becoming prisonized (Alpert, et al., 1977). However, becoming institutionalized or prisonization (taking on the general culture of the prison) can lead to serious consequences, as discussed by Koban (1983),

> imprisoned mothers are disculturated or made incapable of engaging in aspects of their lives associated with their responsibilities as mothers. This disculturation could have serious psychological effects on incarcerated mothers, causing them to lose confidence in their ability to accept responsibility for their children or to fear they will lose their children's love (p. 181).

She goes on to explain that incarcerated mothers are in effect, "penalized for their maternal identification."

Goffman (1961) also addressed this problem of disculturation and referred to it as, "an untraining which renders him (the inmate) temporarily incapable of managing certain features of daily life on the outside" (p. 13). Goffman (1961, pp. 61-63) pointed out that inmates shift between four different forms of adaptation, none being necessarily permanently fixed. These forms include: situational withdrawal; the intransigent line; colonization; and conversion. In the situational withdrawal form of adaptation, the inmate focuses only on those situations that are in their immediate presence, to the exclusion of everything else. In the intransigent line form of adaptation, the inmate defies the staff and policies of the institution and refuses to cooperate. During colonization, the inmate accepts the few outside aspects of life he/she is allowed to maintain and creates his/her whole world out of them. While in the colonization form of adaptation, the inmate feels

relatively contented. During the final stage of adaptation, conversion, the inmate becomes transformed into the "perfect inmate" and completely accepts the role the institution has defined for him/her. While this type of adaptation may be good for the management of the institution, it can lead to serious psychological problems for the inmate.

A large proportion of women who are arrested are charged with nonviolent offenses. Hairston (1991) studied 56 women confined to a county jail and found that over two-thirds had been arrested for nonviolent, economic crimes. The most common charges that these women were arrested for included larceny, theft, possession of drugs, writing bad checks, prostitution, and violation of probation or parole. Two-thirds of the women had served time before. Baunach's (1985, pp. 22, 24) study found similar results. Half of the 126 mothers studied had been convicted of property offenses, about one-third had been convicted of person offenses, and about one-fourth had been convicted on drug related offenses. The most common charges included forgery, larceny theft, and drug related offenses. Nearly half of the mothers had prior felony convictions.

In Hairston's (1991) study, 25 percent acknowledged that they had an alcohol problem and 50 percent admitted that they had a drug problem. These findings coincide with Janeksela's (1997) non-systematic discussions with various criminal justice personnel, in which he concluded that it appeared that the majority of females who were arrested had some type of alcohol and/or drug problem. In Baunach's (1985, p. 25) study, 43.6 percent of the incarcerated mothers indicated that they had sold and/or used drugs, or had been alcoholics prior to their current incarceration. This study showed a small but

significant difference between Black and White mothers, with Black mothers being convicted more often than White mothers of drug offenses.

Incarcerated mothers gave various motives for getting involved with drugs: A need to escape reality or to cope with problems; experimentation; coaxing by a significant other; as a way to remain alert; or as a result of an addiction to prescription drugs. Some mothers admitted that their drug involvement interfered with their relationships with their children and that their drug problem made them dependent on their children for support and guidance (Baunach, 1985, pp. 60, 63, 73). Still, these mothers, like most incarcerated mothers, want their children back once they are released from prison. Baunach (1985, pp. 73-74) recommended that in order to strengthen the mother-child bond, incarcerated mothers with drug problems need programs that educate them about the impressions their drug problems leave on their children.

Most of the women in the Hairston (1991) study tended to be young (60% were under the age of 30), unmarried (only 18% were married), and were mothers (68% reported having children under the age of 18 and 60% reported that at least one of their children had lived with them at the time of their arrest). Also, these women tended to have low levels of formal education, with close to 75 % reporting not having completed high school. Forty-seven percent of the women were White, 45 % were African-American, and 7 % were Hispanic. The background characteristic findings tended to agree with other similar studies regarding incarcerated women, which typically showed female inmates to be young, uneducated, single mothers, belonging disproportionately to minority racial groups (Baunach, 1985, p. 121).

The one thing that incarcerated mothers tend to remain attached to from the outside is the good memories of the relationships that they had with their children. Whether the relationship was in reality healthy or not, imprisoned mothers cherish the times she spent with her children and she carries a burden of guilt knowing she caused the separation between herself and her children (Baunach, 1985, pp. 1-2). Most mothers in prison want to maintain contact with their children and their caretakers by way of telephone calls, letters, or visits (Baunach, 1985, p. 6).

Baunach (1985, p. 54) found that incarcerated mothers who corresponded with their children or called them frequently felt more favorable about their relationship with their family. However, the ability to maintain contact with their children is largely dependent on prison policies which may limit the number of written and telephone contacts that inmates have with their children (Beckerman, 1989). Zalba (1964) conducted interviews with 124 inmate mothers and their families and found that only 53 percent of the children had seen their mother since her incarceration. One reason given for this was that the children's caretakers disapproved of their mother's criminal behavior. Other studies suggest that infrequent visits were also due to travel distance, cost, or the inconvenience involved in bringing the children to the prison for visits (Beckerman, 1991). Still other factors were unsatisfactory visiting conditions, lack of transportation, someone believed that the visits were too emotionally upsetting, or because someone thought that the children were too young (Hairston, 1991).

Hairston's study revealed that the longer a women is in jail the more likely it was that she would receive at least one visit from at least one of her children. None of the 56

women she studied who had been confined in a county jail for less than a month had received any visits from their children. However, 20 percent of the women who had been in jail from one to three months, 57 percent who had been in jail from four to five months, and 75 percent who had been in jail for six months or longer had received at least one such visit. Whether or not the children lived with their mother prior to her incarceration also related to whether or not she received visits from her children. Forty-four percent of the mothers whose children lived with them prior to incarceration received visits from their children, compared to 12 percent of the mothers whose children had resided elsewhere (Hairston, 1991). Visitations are vital in that they have been shown to be positively associated with sustained parental commitment and commitment to reunification (Beckerman, 1989).

Zalba's (1964) study suggested that the role of mother may be crucial to the incarcerated mother and that the separation from her children, along with the major changes in her role, directly affect her personal identity and her self-image as a woman. However, Ruth Glick and Virginia Neto (1977) found that an inmate's age may also partially determine how crucial the role of mother is to an inmate. They found that older female inmates (aged 35 and older) tended to agree more often than did younger female inmates (aged 18-21) to the statement, "It is important to have children, and women who do not want children are selfish."

Dorothy Lundberg, Ann Sheckley, and Therese Voelkar (1975) found that the maternal role is closely tied to self-esteem and that most incarcerated mothers perceive their role as mothers as "primary to their sense of identity." These authors conclude that

maintaining the mother-child relationship during incarceration plays a significant role in minimizing the impact of separation. Another study, involving 20 incarcerated women who had completed parent educational classes, concluded that incarcerated mothers may be more at-risk for future parental difficulties due, in part, to their low self-esteem (Howze-Browne, 1989). Bonfanti, Felder, Vincent, and Vincent (1974) recommended that programs be designed that would prepare incarcerated mothers on how to cope realistically with their roles as mothers once they are released from prison, because these types of programs could lead to enhanced self-esteem.

Most incarcerated mothers want to reunite with their children once they are released from prison (Baunach, 1985, p. 48). One study found that 83 percent of women whose children lived with them before their arrest and 47 percent of women whose children did not live with them before their arrest thought it was likely that their children would live with them after their release (Hairston, 1991). This study coincides with Koban's (1983) findings, which indicated about 83% of the incarcerated mothers planned to eventually reunite with their children after their release. Some relevant factors that predicted if an incarcerated mother planned to reunite with her children after release included: Whether or not the mother was employed at the time of her arrest; the length of time she had been incarcerated; the frequency of visits; the number of children (the fewer the children, the more likely to reunite); and whether or not the mother had lived with her children prior to incarceration.

Incarcerated mothers often experience feelings of inadequacy, despondency, and express fear of losing their children (Baunach, 1985, p. 48). The role strain they feel was

quite evident by the statement Hairston (1991) noted several incarcerated mothers made, "You can't be a mother and be in prison." Other concerns expressed by incarcerated mothers included: Children's schoolwork; the hurt they've caused their family; children thinking they don't love them; children's living situations; and how they are going to get their family back together again.

Baunach (1985, p. 56) found that very few incarcerated mothers felt hostility towards their children or thought of them as an inconvenience. The few incarcerated mothers who did express rejection of their children also tended to have less confidence in themselves and in their relationships with their family and friends. In another study, when asked, "What is the most difficult thing about being in jail?" seventy percent of the women with children mentioned that separation from their children was the most difficult thing, along with not seeing their children, not being involved in their daily lives, and not being there when their children needed them (Hairston, 1991).

Baunach (1985, p. 48) found that Black incarcerated mothers were more likely to report being satisfied with their children's living arrangements than did White incarcerated mothers. Baunach concluded that the reason for this was that children of White incarcerated mothers were more likely to be living with strangers, whereas, children of Black incarcerated mothers were more likely to be living with extended family members. Koban (1983) studied seventy incarcerated mothers and found that roughly one third of the children lived with their father, one third lived with grandparents, and one third lived with other relatives, friends, or were in foster care. Even though 62 percent of the women

claimed responsibility for their children's placements, only 38 percent felt positive about the placement.

However, in a pilot study conducted by James Gaudin and Richard Sutphen (1993), they found that children of incarcerated mothers who were placed in the care of extended family members, rather than in foster care, were more at-risk for developmental delays as they grew older, due to lack of attention and cognitive stimulation. They concluded that foster care tended to provide a higher quality of care. This study recommended that child welfare workers conduct on-going assessments to ensure that children, especially those over the age of three, receive the emotional nurturing, cognitive stimulation, and attention that they need. Baunach (1985, p. 125) suggested that foster mothers could act as role models to help incarcerated mothers understand how to handle their children, so they would be able to resume their maternal responsibilities with minimal difficulty, once released from prison.

Summary

This chapter presented the theoretical framework for this study, as well as a relevant literature review. First, Stryker's identity salience theory was introduced. This theory explained how people can have several identities depending upon the number of distinct sets of structured relationships to which an individual belongs, and it is through these identities that make up the public aspect of "self." This theory showed how commitment affects identity salience which in turn affects role-related behavioral choices. Thus, the greater the commitment, the higher the identity salience, the greater impact the

quality of role performance has on self-esteem. This study examined if commitment affected self-esteem. The identity salience theory explained that external events that cut into existing commitments increased the probability that novel identities will be adopted. Identity theory is derived from symbolic interactionist theory which suggests that as society shapes self, this in turn, shapes social behavior.

The variables of age, length of incarceration, commitment, type of crime committed, drug/alcohol use, race, and educational level, role strain, and self-esteem were reviewed in the literature. The literature suggested that most female offenders tend to be young, under the age of 30. Also discovered, length of incarceration and race (being Black) were significant factors in predicting prisonization among women. Long periods of incarceration can lead to a form of adaptation that Goffman referred to as conversion. During conversion, the inmate becomes transformed into the perfect inmate and completely accepts the role the institution has defined for him/her. It was suggested that this can lead to serious psychological problems for the inmate.

Visitations were found to be positively associated with sustained parental commitment and commitment to reunification. The literature also revealed that most women in prison were serving sentences for non-violent offenses. The majority of women appeared to have some type of drug and/or alcohol problem at the time of their arrest. Additionally found in the literature, minorities tend to be over represented in correctional institutions and incarcerated females tend to have low levels of formal education.

The literature supported the idea that mothers in prison experience role strain, because it was noted in one study that several incarcerated mothers had stated, "You can't

be a mother and be in prison." The maternal role appeared to be closely tied to self-esteem and most incarcerated mothers perceived their role as mothers as "primary to their sense of identity."

The current study attempted to expound upon the observations found in the literature. The details of the research design are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Overview

This chapter describes the methods that were used to study the effects of the seven predictor variables (e.g., commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use) on the two dependent variables (e.g., role strain and self-esteem). Also described, are the methods that were used to discover how incarcerated mothers defined the concept mother and if they adopted novel identities along with unique behaviors in order to fulfill their maternal role obligations. The statistics that were used to describe the sample of incarcerated mothers were also discussed.

Research Questions

In order to attain the research objectives the following research questions were addressed:

a. How do incarcerated mothers define the word mother?

b. Do incarcerated mothers adopt novel identities along with unique behaviors that allow them to fulfill their maternal role while incarcerated?

c. Do commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use have any significant effects on role strain?

d. Do commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use have any significant effects on self-esteem?

Population and Sample

This study was designed to focus on incarcerated mothers who had at least one child under the age of 18. A purposive sample of 109 incarcerated women who were currently serving sentences in an Oklahoma minimum security prison and who had at least one child under the age of 18 were the target population.

Around 636 inmates were housed at the prison. Thirty-one percent of the total inmate population were age 30 or under. Forty-five percent were between the ages of 31 to 40. Twenty percent ranged in ages from 41 to 50 and a little over 4% were aged 51 or older. The average age was 34.9 years. About 54% of the inmates were White, 37% were African- American, almost 7% were Native American, and a little more than 2% were Hispanic. About 89% of the women were serving sentences for non-violent offenses and over 45% of the women were currently serving sentences due to drug offenses.

The prison offered various educational programs, such as Literacy Training, Adult Basic Education, General Equivalency Diploma (G.E.D.), and even some telecourses and independent studies were offered by a state college. Another program offered was a five-month course called The New Directions Program. This program taught the inmates positive parenting skills and after participating in the program, incarcerated mothers were allowed to have their children visit for Play Days. For Play Days, volunteers would transport the inmate's children to the facility for an afternoon of mother/child bonding.

This program began over 7 years ago and since its beginning over 2,500 children have been transported by volunteers. Family and friends were also allowed to visit the inmates on weekends and holidays.

Some other self-help programs that were available to the inmates included Narcotics Anonymous, Women in Safe Homes, and Daily Living Skills, and Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT). MRT includes intensive group therapy and addresses such issues as addictions, anti-social behavior, self-esteem and self-defeating behaviors. The women enter into these programs either through voluntarily or by recommended placements.

Ethics

When a researcher conducts research involving the use of human subjects care must be exercised to protect the subjects from any unnecessary harm (Hagan, 1989, p. 358). This is especially true when working with vulnerable subjects such as mothers in prison. To ensure no harm would come to the subjects, all participants were guaranteed anonymity. Participation was voluntary and care was taken to ensure that the mothers understood the voluntary nature of the research. The mothers were instructed that they were free to discontinue answering questions at any time during the study without consequence and that they could skip any questions they felt uncomfortable in answering. The intentions of the study were fully disclosed to the subjects (see appendix A: Interviewer's Introduction to Mothers). At every stage of the research care was taken to ensure that the rights, dignity, and worth of all individuals involved were protected.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a survey questionnaire (see appendix B: Survey Questionnaire and Frequency Distributions). The survey questionnaire was designed after doing a systematic literature review. The questionnaire was organized in a booklet fashion using pink paper. The cover of the booklet featured the title of the study, along with the identifying code number, date, and time. Each of the questions used capital and lowercase letters and only uppercase letters were used for the answers.

Both open-ended and closed-ended questions were used to collect the data. Closed-ended questions were used as often as possible because they were quicker and easier for the respondents to answer and because they were easier to compare and analyze statistically. However, because close-ended questions only permit a limited number of possible answers, open-ended questions were also used so respondents could answer certain questions with more detail and clarity. Open-ended questions were also used for the purpose of uncovering unanticipated findings (Neuman, 1997, p. 241).

Research Design

Both quantitative and qualitative research designs were used for this study. A quantitative correlational research design was used to examine the relationship between the seven predictor variables (e.g., commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, drug/alcohol use) and the two dependent variables (e.g., role strain and self-esteem). A qualitative descriptive research design was used to discover how incarcerated mothers defined the word mother, and to determine if

incarcerated mothers adopted novel identities along with novel behaviors that allowed them to fulfill their maternal role obligations while incarcerated. Quantitative descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample.

The survey questionnaires were administered using the captive group method of data collection. This method produces relatively accurate data and is traditionally accepted as a way to collect survey data (Balian, 1988, p. 179). The investigator administered the survey questionnaires to groups of incarcerated mothers. This allowed the investigator to clarify the respondent's questions.

The women were summoned 10 at a time to report to the prison auditorium. After arriving, the investigator then asked the women if they were mothers. If they were, they were asked if they would like to volunteer to participate in a survey about mothers in prison. If they agreed to volunteer, they were given the survey along with a pencil and the interviewer then read the introduction script to the mothers (see Appendix A: Interviewer's Introduction to Mothers). Additional instructions were given to the mothers on how to fill out the surveys and questions were answered as they arose. The surveys took about 30 minutes for the mothers to complete. Out of the 125 women who participated in the study, 109 (87%) completed the data, fulfilled the eligibility criteria, and ultimately comprised the study's sample.

Questionnaire Content

To measure the concepts of role strain, self-esteem, and commitment, three modified scales were used. The following three items were used to make up the scale that

measured parental role strain. This modified scale was taken from the research of Robin W. Simon, who studied parental role strain and reported an internal consistency of .77 (Simon ,1992).

   1. Do you ever feel that you miss out on some of the pleasures of being a parent?

   2. Do you ever feel that your children do not get the attention from you that they need?

   3. Do you worry that incarceration affects your role as parent?

The following response categories were provided: NEVER, SELDOM, SOMETIMES, and FREQUENTLY. Items were coded 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively and summated. High scores were equated with high levels of parental role strain. To check for reliability, each item in the role strain subscale was correlated with the subscale's total. Items with item-total correlations above .30 were considered functional (Long, Convey, & Chwalek, 1985, pp. 95-96). All three items correlated well above .30 with the subscale's total (see appendix C: Role Strain Item-Total Correlations). Factor analysis was conducted to determine that the three items making up the role strain scale were related (Neuman, 1997, p. 170). An acceptable eigen value of 1.79 was obtained (Item 1, alpha .53; Item 2, alpha .66; Item 3, alpha .41). Factor analysis was also used to ensure that the three scales (role strain, self-esteem, and commitment) were actually three different constructs or factors. To determine internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha was conducted. Indices with alphas of .70 or higher are considered acceptable (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1994, p. 268). An acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .78 was obtained.

To measure self-esteem, a modified version of the Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem

Scale was used. The literature contains precedent for this usage by Howze-Browne

(1989), who used a modified Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to study the self-esteem of 29

incarcerated females. This scale has been shown to have a test-retest correlation of .85,

along with convergent validity correlated scores ranging from .56 to .83 (Silber & Tippett,

1965, pp. 323-329). The three items used to measure self-esteem were:

1. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

2. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

3. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

For each of these items the response categories offered were: STRONGLY

AGREE, AGREE, DISAGREE, and STRONGLY DISAGREE. Items were reversed

coded as 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively and summated. High scores were equated with high

levels of self-esteem. To check for reliability, each item in the self-esteem subscale was

correlated with the subscale's total. All three items correlated well above .30 with the

subscale's total (see appendix D: Self-Esteem Item-Total Correlations). Factor analysis

was conducted to determine that the three items making up the self-esteem scale were

related (Neuman, 1997, p. 170). An acceptable eigen value of 2.69 was obtained (Item 1,

alpha .41; Item 2, alpha .46; Item 3, alpha .49). To determine internal reliability,

Cronbach's alpha was conducted. An acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .71 was obtained.

To measure commitment, the following three items were used to construct a

Likert-type scale. This scale was a modified version of the scale used by Sheldon Stryker

and Richard T. Serpe (1994), who measured the commitment of college freshmen to their

various roles. Stryker and Serpe treated the reflected appraisals of the college students as observed indicators for commitment.

1. How important is it to you that significant others view you as being an involved parent? Responses provided for this question were: NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT (scored 1), IMPORTANT (scored 2), and VERY IMPORTANT (scored 3).

2. How good of a mother do significant others think you are? Responses included: BELOW AVERAGE (scored 1), AVERAGE (scored 2), ABOVE AVERAGE (scored 3), and EXCELLENT (scored 4).

3. Compared to other mothers in your circumstances how good of a mother do you think you are? BELOW AVERAGE (scored 1), AVERAGE (scored 2), ABOVE AVERAGE (scored 3), EXCELLENT (scored 4). Items were coded as noted and summated. High scores were equated with high levels of commitment. To check for reliability, each item in the commitment subscale was correlated with the subscale's total. All three items correlated well above .30 with the subscale's total (see appendix E: Commitment Item-Total Correlations). Factor analysis was conducted to determine that the three items making up the commitment scale were related (Neuman, 1997, p. 170). An acceptable eigen value of 1.32 was obtained (Item 1, alpha .66; Item 2, alpha .40; Item 3, alpha .45). To determine internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha was conducted. An acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .75 was obtained.

The respondent's age was determined by simply asking: How old are you? To determine race, the respondent was asked: What race are you? The following categories were provided: WHITE, AFRICAN AMERICAN, NATIVE AMERICAN, HISPANIC,

and OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____. These responses were then recoded into a dichotomous variable as either Non-White or White.

To determine the length of incarceration the following question was asked: How long have you been incarcerated for your present conviction? The following response categories were provided: LESS THAN ONE YEAR (scored 1), MORE THAN ONE YEAR BUT LESS THAN TWO YEARS (scored 2), MORE THAN TWO YEARS BUT LESS THAN THREE YEARS (scored 3), MORE THAN THREE YEARS BUT LESS THAN FOUR YEARS (scored 4), MORE THAN FOUR YEARS BUT LESS THAN FIVE YEARS (scored 5), or FIVE YEARS OR MORE (scored 6).

Type of crime was determined by asking the following: Please circle the type of offense you are presently serving time for. The following responses were provided: VICTIMLESS CRIME SUCH AS DRUG OFFENSE OR PROSTITUTION), PROPERTY CRIME (SUCH AS LARCENY THEFT OR FRAUD), or VIOLENT CRIME (SUCH AS ASSAULT OR ROBBERY). A dichotomous dummy variable was then created as being either Person/Violent Crime or Other Type Crime.

Level of education was determined by asking: What is the highest level of education you have completed? 8TH GRADE OR BELOW, 9TH GRADE THROUGH 11TH GRADE, HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (G.E.D.), HIGH SCHOOL (H.S.) GRADUATE, TECHNICAL SCHOOL OR SOME COLLEGE BEYOND G.E.D. OR H.S., or COLLEGE GRADUATE (PLEASE SPECIFY TYPE OF COLLEGE DEGREE) _____. Again, a dichotomous dummy variable was created with those having less

than a general equivalency diploma (G.E.D.) constituting one category, and those having a G.E.D. or higher forming the second category.

To determine drug/alcohol use, the following question was asked: At the time of your arrest for your present conviction, were you under the influence of any of the below named substances? The following response categories were provided: YES (PLEASE MARK ALL THAT APPLY.): ALCOHOL, COCAINE, HEROIN, METHADONE, LSD, PCP, MARIJUANA, OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____, or NO. Yes responses constituted a positive indicator of drug/alcohol use for this study.

For the purposes of discovering how incarcerated mothers defined the word mother and of discovering if they adopted any novel identities along with novel role behaviors, the following open-ended questions were asked: How do you define the word mother? A mother is: _____. What are some of the things you do to fulfill your role of mother while incarcerated?

Also, several questions were given the categorical choice of OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____. One example of this type of question was: Who has custody of your children/child? (Please mark all that apply.). The following response categories were provided: CHILDREN'S/CHILD'S FATHER, MY MOTHER, OTHER FAMILY MEMBER, FRIEND, THE STATE (FOSTER CARE), DON'T KNOW, or OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____.

To gain a better understanding of this population, some categorical questions were given extra space so that the respondents could elaborate on their answers. An example of this type of question was: Do you approve of your child/children's present custody

arrangements? Answers provided were: YES or NO. OTHER COMMENTS:

_____.

Finally, demographic information was collected, such as, the inmate's marital

status and the number of biological or adopted children she had under the age of 18.

Data Collection Plan and Recording

The study was conducted at a women's minimum security prison in Oklahoma. An

introductory letter of solicitation (see appendix F: Letter to Correctional Center) was sent

to the prison requesting permission to do the study. After verbal permission was obtained

from the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, permission was granted for the

investigator to personally conduct the research (see appendix G: Letter of Permission).

Approval was also obtained from the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review

Board (see appendix H: IRB Form). The survey packets were hand-delivered and

administered at the prison site. The investigator was present during the administration of

the surveys to answer and clarify any questions of the respondents. Each questionnaire

took approximately 30 minutes to complete. After the inmates completed the

questionnaires, they were collected by the investigator and the data were reviewed prior to

analysis to assure completeness.

Analysis of Data

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis were performed. Quantitative

descriptive statistics, such as percentages and distribution frequencies, were used to report

the demographic profile of the sample. After a complete and thorough preparation of the data, two multiple regression analysis were performed to determine the effects of the predictor variables (e.g., commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, drug/alcohol use) on the dependent variables (e.g., role strain and self-esteem). Multiple regression analysis was used as the statistical technique to test the two null hypotheses because it can estimate the relationship between a continuous dependent variable and two or more continuous predictor variables (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1994, p. 263).

Qualitative analysis was used to answer the two qualitative research questions. The qualitative data analysis included examining, sorting, categorizing, evaluating, comparing, synthesizing, and contemplating the raw data to search for general ideas, themes, and concepts in order to make generalizations about how incarcerated mothers defined the word mother and to determine if they adopted novel identities and behaviors that allowed them to fulfill their maternal role while incarcerated. These systematic procedures were used to ensure that the qualitative data were analyzed in a scientific manner (Neuman, 1997, pp. 418-424).

Summary

Chapter three included the chapter overview, discussed the research questions, explained how the subjects were selected and discussed the ethical concerns regarding the research. It also provided discussion on the research instrument, the research designs,

questionnaire content, data collection plan, and explained how the data were recorded and analyzed. This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research designs.

A purposive sample of 109 women who were serving time in a minimum security prison in Oklahoma and had at least one child under the age of 18 was the target population. A survey questionnaire containing both open-ended and close-ended questions was used to gather the data. The women were summoned, 10 at a time, to come to the prison auditorium and were asked if they would like to volunteer to participate in a survey about mothers in prison.

Multiple regression analysis techniques were performed to determine if the dependent variables of role strain and self-esteem were affected by the predictor variables of commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use. Also studied were qualitative issues, such as how incarcerated mothers defined the word mother and if they adopted novel identities along with novel behaviors in their attempt to fulfill their maternal role. Demographic data were also collected and analyzed. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Demographic Data of Sample

The sample population consisted of 109 incarcerated mothers who had at least one biological or adopted child under the age of 18 (see Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire and Frequency Distributions for frequency distributions of all variables). Thirty-two percent of the women had one child under the age of 18. Thirty-seven percent had two children, 12% had three children, 14% had four children, and 6% of the women reported that they had five or more biological or adopted children under the age of 18. Overall, 69% reported having more than one child.

Fifty-five percent of the sample was White, 35% African American, 8% Native American, 1% Hispanic, and 1% Other. Overall, 45% of the sample was Non-White. Thirty-two percent of the sample were in their twenties, 52% were in their thirties, 13% were in their forties, and 3% were aged 50 to 55. Overall, 84% were under the age of 40.

Analysis of the marital status showed that 38% were single, 20% were legally married, 15% were in common law marriages, 6% were separated, 17% were divorced, 4% were widowed, and 1% were in other types of relationships, such as engagements. Overall, only 35% were either legally married or were in common law marriages.

The level of education was examined and 3% of the women were found to have completed no more than an 8th grade level of education. Twenty-six percent of the women had completed 9th grade to 11th grade. Also, 26% had completed the high school

equivalency test (G.E.D.). Eight percent reported graduating from high school; whereas, 31% reported that they had some technical school or some college beyond the G.E.D. or high school diploma. Six percent reported that they were college graduates. Overall, about 29% had less than a high school diploma or G.E.D.

Hypothesized Findings

This study addressed the following null hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis 1: Role strain scores are not significantly effected by commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores.

Null Hypothesis 2: Self-esteem scores are not significantly effected by commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores.

Group means and standard deviations were computed for length of incarceration, age, self-esteem, role strain, and commitment (see table 1). Group means and standard deviations were also computed for race, type of crime committed, education, and used drugs/alcohol (see table 2: Dichotomous Variables). To ensure no high correlations were present among the independent variables, a correlation matrix was constructed (see table 3: Correlation Matrix for Key Variables). High correlations (e.g., .80 or higher) among the independent variables run the risk of multicollinearity, a condition which can produce large standard errors and result in the inability to estimate the requested equation (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1994, p. 300). No high correlations were found among the

Table 1

Group Means and Standard Deviations on Length of Incarceration, Age, Self-Esteem, Role Strain, and Commitment

Variable	Means	Std. Dev.
Length of Incarceration	2.40	1.61
Age	33.17	7.35
Self-Esteem	10.30	1.88
Role Strain	10.41	1.92
Commitment	8.67	1.76

Table 2

Dichotomous Variables

			Self-Esteem		Role Strain	
		%	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Race	Non-White	45%	10.55	1.76	9.82	2.22
	White	55%	10.10	1.96	10.90	1.48
Type of Crime	Violent	16%	10.53	1.37	11.00	1.06
	Other	84%	10.24	1.99	10.34	2.03
Education	<HS/GED	28%	10.00	2.18	10.10	1.90
	>HS/GED	72%	10.42	1.75	10.54	1.93
Used Drugs/Alcohol	Yes	59%	10.08	2.22	10.37	2.10
	No	41%	10.70	1.23	10.54	1.56

Table 3

Correlation Matrix for Key Variables

Variable	V19	V25	V40	V46	V60	V64	V65	V66	V67
V19	1.0000	-0.0734	0.1498	0.0699	0.1843	-0.0073	-0.0753	-0.3170	0.2307
V25	-0.0734	1.0000	-0.1517	0.1546	0.0343	0.1910	-0.0757	-0.0773	-0.0398
V40	0.1498	-0.1517	1.0000	0.0365	-0.0756	0.0922	0.0673	0.0487	0.3052
V46	0.0699	0.1546	0.0365	1.0000	-0.1145	0.3089	-0.1368	-0.0703	0.0986
V60	0.1843	0.0343	-0.0756	-0.1145	1.0000	-0.1060	0.2605	-0.1073	0.1149
V64	-0.0073	0.1910	0.0922	0.3089	-0.1060	1.0000	0.0037	0.0710	0.1003
V65	-0.0753	-0.0757	0.0673	-0.1368	0.2605	0.0037	1.0000	0.0053	0.1056
V66	-0.3170	-0.0773	0.0487	-0.0703	-0.1073	0.0710	0.0053	1.0000	-0.2588
V67	0.2307	-0.0398	0.3052	0.0986	0.1149	0.1003	0.1056	-0.2588	1.0000

V19 How long in prison
V25 Used Drugs/Alcohol
V40 Age
V46 Self-Esteem Score
V60 Role Strain Score
V64 Commitment Score
V65 Race
V66 Type of Crime
V67 Educational Level

independent variables (e.g., length of incarceration (V19), used drugs or alcohol (V25), age (V40), commitment (V64), race (V65), crime (V66), and educational level (V67)).

However, to demonstrate causality, an association must exist between the independent and dependent variables, although the correlations do not have to be perfect (i.e. $\pm$ 1.00) (Neuman, 1997, pp. 50-51). Weak positive correlations were found to exist between the variables of length of incarceration (V19) and role strain (V60) (r = .18) and between race (V65) and role strain (V60) (r = .26). A moderate positive correlation was found to exist among commitment (V64) and self-esteem (V 46) (r = .31). A plus or negative one is considered a perfect correlation, .60 is considered strong, .30 moderate, .10 weak, and .00 indicates no correlation (Levin & Fox, 1994, p. 410).

To determine whether it was possible to predict role strain scores based on the total scores of the independent variables of commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use, multiple regression analysis was employed. The regression summary in Table 4 (see table 4: Regression Summary Table for Role Strain and Self-Esteem) showed that the variables significant in the prediction of role strain scores were length of incarceration, F = 4.09, p<.05 and race (White), F = 8.49, p<.01 (see table 2: Dichotomous Variables). Specifically, 14.75% of the variance in role strain can be explained by knowing the commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use of the entire sample.

Multiple regression analysis was also employed to determine whether it was possible to predict self-esteem scores based on the total scores of the independent

Table 4

Regression Summary Table for Role Strain and Self-Esteem

Independent Variables	Self-Esteem F-Ratio (V46)	p	Role Strain F-Ratio (V60	p
Time in Prison (V19)	0.1107	0.7401	4.0881*	0.0460
Used (a) (V25) Drugs/Alcohol	0.8348	0.3632	0.6047	0.4388
Age (V40)	0.0128	0.9100	1.6332	0.2044
Commitment (V64)	8.4463**	0.0046	1.4211	0.2362
Race (b) (V65)	1.9302	0.1680	8.4935**	0.0045
Type of Crime (c) (V66)	0.2872	0.5933	0.0005	0.9827
Education (d) (V67)	0.3275	0.5685	0.7584	0.3860
N	102	102	102	102
RSquare	0.134784	---	0.147446	---
RSquare Adj (e)	0.070353	---	0.083958	---
Root Mean Square Error	1.85032	---	1.805482	---
Mean of Response	10.31373	---	10.47059	---

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$

a: A dichotomous variable: used drugs/alcohol; yes versus no. b: A dichotomous variable: race; non-white versus white. c: A dichotomous variable: type of crime committed; person crime versus other. d: A dichotomous variable: education; less than high school/GED versus more than high school/GED.
e: Please note that the adjusted RSquare is less than the original RSquare. This is because the adjusted coefficient of determination takes into account the number of independent variables relative to the number of observations (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1994, p. 293).

variables of commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use. The regression summary in Table 4 (see table 4: Regression Summary Table for Role Strain and Self-Esteem) showed that the variable significant in the prediction of self-esteem scores was commitment, $F = 8.45$, $p < .01$. Specifically, 13.48% of the variance in self-esteem can be explained by knowing the commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use of the entire sample.

Unhypothesized Findings

Forty-five percent of the women were serving time for victimless crimes, such as drug offenses. At the time of their arrest, 25% of the women were under the influence of cocaine, 23% were under the influence of alcohol, 21% were under the influence of other drugs, and 15% reported that they were under the influence of marijuana. Overall, 59% of the women reported that they had been under the influence of some type of drug and/or alcohol when they were arrested for their present conviction. Fifty-nine percent of the mothers reported that they had witnessed their parents or guardians abuse drugs and/or alcohol while they were growing up. Thirty-nine percent of the women reported that they were in prison for committing property crimes, and 16% reported that they were in prison for committing violent crimes.

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that their children now lived with their father, 28% reported that their children lived with the inmate's mother, and 24% reported that their children lived with another family member. Three percent reported that

friends had custody of their children and 10% reported that their children lived in foster care. Nine percent reported other types of custody arrangements. Seventy-eight percent stated that they approved of their children's present custody arrangements. Fifty-seven percent of the mothers reported that their children received no financial support from their fathers.

Thirty-four percent of the mothers reported that they spoke to their children about once a week or more on the telephone. Twenty-five percent indicated that they received mail from their children or their caretakers about once a week or more. Fifty-four percent indicated that they wrote to their children or their caretakers about once a week or more and 9% reported that their children visited them about once a week or more. On the other hand, 20% reported that they talked to their children on the telephone once a year or less. Sixteen percent reported that they received mail from their children or their caretaker once a year or less. Three percent indicated that they wrote to their children or their caretaker once a year or less and 33% reported that their children visited them once a year or less. Seventy-three percent of the women stated that it had been more than a month since they had last seen their children. This study also revealed a positive, but weak, association between commitment and frequency of visits.

Seventy-eight percent of the mothers reported that their children had lived with them before their arrest for their present conviction. Out of 108 mothers, 84 reported that their children had lived with them before their arrest and of these 84 mothers 40% reported that it had been more than one month, but less than 6 months since they had last

seen their children. Twenty-five percent of the 84 mothers reported that it had been more than six months, but less than one year since they had last seen their children.

Forty-one percent reported that they had been incarcerated for their present conviction for less than one year; whereas, 8% reported that they had been incarcerated for five years or more for their present conviction. Forty-two percent reported that they had less than one year left to serve on their present sentences; however, 55% reported that they still had more than one year left to serve. Four percent reported they didn't know how long they had left to serve on their present convictions. Sixty percent of the women reported that they had other family members who were presently serving time in prison or jail. Sixty-nine percent reported that they had been physically and/or sexually abused at some time during their life.

Seventy-three percent responded that it was very important to them that significant others viewed them as being a committed parent, but only 28% believed that their significant others would actually rate them as being an excellent mother. Forty-eight percent reported that they would like additional drug/alcohol counseling, 46% reported that they would like family counseling, and 44% reported that they would like additional vocational training.

Non-Statistical Findings

This research was also designed to answer the following two research questions:

Research Question 1: How do incarcerated mothers define the concept mother?

Research Question 2: Do incarcerated mothers, in their attempts to fulfill their maternal role obligations, adopt novel identities along with unique behaviors?

The following procedures were used to analyze the open-ended questions. Responses to each question were grouped together and each response was read through several times and reflected upon. Then a three step coding procedure was utilized. First, open coding was performed. During open coding, the data were read to search for general, recurrent themes that were present in the raw data. Next, the general themes were organized and analyzed to determine if some of the themes could be further subdivided or if certain themes could be combined. Lastly, the data were read again to look for specific examples to illustrate and elaborate the identified themes (Neuman, 1997, pp. 422-424).

To analyze the first research question, the data were searched looking for general themes of how the word mother was defined (see table 5: Definitions of Mother). There were 104 responses to this question. The general themes noted were traditional definitions of the word mother and non-traditional definitions. Next, the general themes were further subdivided. Traditional definitions of the word mother were subdivided into the following themes: friend/confidant; loves their child/children; someone who cares for children; teaches them/disciplines them; is there for child/raises them; gives birth; provides for them/protects them; gives spiritual/emotional/moral support; and sacrifices for their child. There were so few non-traditional definitions that they were not sub-divided.

The first theme was, "friend/confidant." Some specific examples that illustrate this theme were as follows: A mother is...

- A friend and confidant who loves unconditionally.

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Table 5

<u>Definitions of Mother (n=104)</u>

Categories	Percent
Friend/Confidant	13%
Loves Their Child/Children	74%
Someone Who Cares for Children	52%
Teaches Them/Disciplines Them	22%
Is There for Child/Raises Them	32%
Gives Birth	03%
Provides for Them/Protects Them	14%
Gives Spiritual/Emotional/Moral Support	16%
Sacrifices for Their Child	06%
Non-Traditional	06%

- A loving, caring, nurturing person. A provider and protector. A friend to her children.

- A mother is your best friend.

- Protection, security, love, understanding, communication, trust, friendship.

- Love, guidance, support, friend.

These women described the mother's role as being one in which the mother and child can share secrets and confide in one another. Friendship implies knowing each other well and being close. About 13% of the responses fell into this category.

The next theme was, "loves their child/children." This was the most common theme among the mothers. Examples from this theme category were: A mother is...

- Someone who has time, love, tears and laughter. Can hug, be firm, dance, be active and take naps with you too. Someone who will kiss a boo-boo.

- Someone who loves her children.

- Someone who loves their child for who they are.

- One who loves no matter what. One that will stand by their child and pray daily for him/her.

- Someone who loves her children unconditionally and who is doing everything now in her power to do the right things to get home.

- Someone who loves their children unconditionally and is there for them through good and bad.

- Someone who loves their kids and tries to show them the best way of life.

- One who sees that her child is well fed and is there for them at all time with a lot of love.

As the literature pointed out and as these answers confirmed, incarcerated mothers love their children. Just because she is physically absent from her children, does not mean

she doesn't have a strong sense of attachment or devotion to her children. About 74% of

the responses fell into this theme category.

The next identified theme was defined as, "someone who cares for children."

Examples from this theme were: A mother is...

- A person who cares for children. Teaches them the differences in right and wrong.

- A mother is a woman who gives birth to her child and takes care of him or her to the best of her ability.

- One who can care for their children money-wise and emotional-wise. Can care for them when they are hurt or sad.

- Someone you can depend on, a good provider, caretaker, loving, caring, nurse, referee.

To care for someone implies being concerned about and looking after that person's

well-being. It also implies being in charge of, having custody of, or worrying about the

one who is entrusted to your care. Again, although these mothers did not have physical

custody of their children, it did not prevent them from believing that a mother was

someone who had concerns about and worried about her children. About 52% of the

responses fell into this category. This was the second largest theme category.

Another theme identified was, "teaches them/disciplines them." The following

were examples of this theme: A mother is...

- A person that teaches their children to respect themselves and others, and how to survive.

- Understanding, loving, committed, dedicated, preserving, enduring, gentle, listening, disciplining individual.

- A person who cares for children. Teaches them the differences in right and wrong.

- Someone to care for their children, love their child. Teach them morals and respect for others. Teach them that they can do anything they put their minds to do.

- Someone who cares, loves, respects, teaches, understands, and disciplines.

- Someone who keeps their kids, loves them, shows them love and affection and teaches them the things they need to know.

A teacher's role includes giving instructions or showing someone how to do something. This theme implies providing one's child with knowledge or insights from one's own experiences. Ordinarily, a mother is her children's first teacher and primary agent of socialization. Discipline involves training that leads to correction, self-control, or develops character. About 22% of the responses fell into this category.

Another theme regarding the definition of a mother included, "is there for child/raises them." Examples regarding this theme were: A mother is...

- The person who is always there for the child.

- A woman who gives birth to a child and is there for them throughout their life.

- A caring and loving mother that understands what different changes children go through growing up and being there for them always.

Being there or raising a child implies being present to help a child grow up and become self-sufficient. Imprisoned mothers miss watching their children grow up and most want and resume custody of their children once they are released from prison. About 32% of the responses fell into this category. This was the third largest theme category.

Some incarcerated mothers saw the role of mother as someone who "gives birth" to a child. Examples of this theme included: A mother is...

- A woman who gives birth to a child and is there for them throughout their life.

- A mother is a woman who gives birth to her child and takes care of him or her to the best of her ability.

Giving birth is the biological beginning of motherhood, but it is just the beginning. It is evident by these women's responses that they were aware that giving birth is just the beginning of a mother's role and that the role is not temporary. About 3% of the responses fell into this category.

Another theme that was identified was a mother is someone who "provides for them/protects them." Examples were: A mother is...

- A loving, caring, nurturing person. A provider and protector. A friend to her children.

- Protection, security, love, understanding, communication, trust, friendship.

- Someone who rears their children. Someone that is there for them all of the time, to love, protect, and guide them according to society's norms.

Provide means to furnish or make something available, while protect means to shield, guard or defend someone or something from injury or danger. Being a mother includes providing one's child with protection and guarding one's child against danger. Many mothers in prison have been victims themselves and are therefore aware of some of the dangers their children could encounter. About 14% of the responses fell into this category.

"Gives spiritual/emotional/moral support" was another theme that was identified from the responses. Examples from this theme included: A mother is...

- One who can care for their children money-wise and emotional-wise. Can care for them when they are hurt or sad.

- One who expresses love to their children, who listens to a child's needs, wants, concerns, or problems. Gives positive guidance. Supports them emotionally.

- Someone who loves you unconditionally and who will be there for spiritual and emotional support.

- Someone who raises a child to the best the child can be. Takes care, keeps fed, roof over head. Lends moral support.

These mothers implied that it is a mother's role to uphold or to lift up. Support can come in the forms of emotional, spiritual, or moral support. Support also implies giving courage, faith, or confidence in order to help, strengthen, or comfort. About 16% of the responses fell into this category.

The next identified theme was, "sacrifices for their child." Examples of this theme were as follows: A mother is...

- Someone who puts their children before everything she does.

- A woman that will do or die for her children.

These mothers see the mother role as one where the mother gives up or foregoes something of value for the sake of something of greater value. Mothers routinely give up things they cherish for the sake of their children, whom they cherish even more. About 6% of the responses fell into this category.

Finally, there were the "non-traditional" definitions of mother. Examples of this theme were as follows: A mother is...

- A hand of God.

- A woman who doesn't do drugs and go to prison.

- Someone who keeps their kids, loves them, shows them love and affection and teaches them the things they need to know.

- A person that teaches their children to respect themselves and others and how to survive.

These non-traditional definitions come from the first hand experiences of being a mother in prison. Since drug involvement played a major role in some of these women's lives and it should be no surprise that it would manifest itself in the definitions of the word mother. Also, survival is another skill that some of these women have had to learn and they would naturally feel that it is an important skill for their children to know as well. Also, perhaps because the incarcerated mother is not physically able to be with her children, she may find comfort in believing that a mother is a hand of God. After all, God is everywhere and knows all. Being a hand of God may help that mother feel that she still has some control over her children's lives. Finally, being in prison, the incarcerated mother must worry that her children could be taken away from her. Hence, it is no surprise that one incarcerated mother defined the word mother as someone who keeps her kids. About 6% of the responses fell into this non-traditional theme category.

Overall, incarcerated mothers tended to define the word mother in very traditional terms. The most notable exceptions were that a mother is someone who teaches her children how to survive, doesn't do drugs and go to prison, is a hand of God, and is someone who keeps her kids. To the incarcerated mother, the word mother conjures up meanings of someone who cares, loves, is a friend and is there for her children. To these mothers, a mother is someone who is concerned about her children's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The word mother also has a biological meaning for some of the women. To them a mother is a woman who gives birth.

None of these definitions or themes were necessarily mutually exclusive. In fact, several definitions tended to overlap into other general themes. However, when analyzing

qualitative data, it is not necessary for the data to be mutually exclusive, because sometimes the same segment of data will fit under more than just one general theme (Boulton & Hammersley, 1996, p. 292). Overlapping definitions were counted in each applicable theme.

To determine if the incarcerated mothers adopted novel identities along with unique behaviors in their attempt to fulfill their maternal role obligations, the following question was asked: What are some of the things you do to fulfill your role of mother while incarcerated? There were 104 responses to this question (see table 6: Novel Identities). To analyze this question, answers were pooled together, and each response was read through several times and reflected upon. Four new novel identities along with their unique behaviors were identified. They were Self-Improving Incarcerated Mother, Optimistic Incarcerated Mother, Spiritual Incarcerated Mother, and Traditional Incarcerated Mother. All the data were not assigned to one of the above theme categories, because some of the data did not fit into any of the unique novel identity categories. When analyzing qualitative data, it is possible that categorization of the data will not be exhaustive (Boulton & Hammersley, 1996, p. 292). Also, some of the categories were not mutually exclusive because some of the data could be categorized under more than just one identity and were counted under all applicable identities.

The first novel identity identified was Self-Improving Incarcerated Mother. About 11% of the responses were classified under this identity. These mothers used their time in

Table 6

Novel Identities (n=104)

Categories	Percent
Self-Improving Incarcerated Mother	11%
Optimistic Incarcerated Mother	06%
Spiritual Incarcerated Mother	09%
Traditional Incarcerated Mother	32%

prison to better themselves. Specific examples of this novel identity were included in these responses:

- I read self help books.

- Better myself.

- I write my children positive letters. I take parenting classes to be a better mother and I stay drug free.

- Write often. Inquire about how my son is doing. Take classes to better myself.

- I write. I call. I keep things open and honest. I attend any/all self help groups.

The next novel identity that was recognized was Optimistic Incarcerated Mother. About 6% of the responses were categorized under this theme. These mothers tried to be positive during their incarceration. Examples of this identity included these responses:

- I draw cheerful pictures. I write positive letters. I make beautiful cards. I keep my sadness away from my family.

- Talk to my children about staying positive, staying drug free and out of trouble.

- Tell how I feel about a situation, whether I like it or dislike it. Write positive things so they don't think prison is an acceptable environment, because it's not.

- I write them and call them and give positive affirmations and continually tell them how much I love them.

Spiritual Incarcerated Mother was the third identified novel identity. About 9% of the responses were categorized under this theme. These mothers talked about praying for their children or about their faith in God. Examples of this identity included the following responses:

- Write them constantly. Still give them advice. Have friends pray for them.

- Teach them the Word and to trust God for everything.

- I talk to my son about school, God, love, values, and I listen to his problems.

- Keep my children in my prayers. Let them know that I am still their mother even though I am absent.

- I write my girls every other day. I buy them stationary with our pictures on it. I get to talk to them once a week. I send them scriptures, but most of all, I pray for them.

The last novel identity identified was Traditional Incarcerated Mother. This was the largest category, with about 32% of the responses falling into this category. These mothers counseled with, listened to, disciplined, and expressed love for their children.

Examples of this theme included:

- Be involved in their lives through visiting, letters, and phone calls. When my oldest is acting out she comes to talk to me about why.

- Write and try to explain to my children that they need to get their education.

- I tell my kids no matter, get your education no matter what, and don't sell drugs.

- I write and sing on the phone. I talk about their school. When they visit I take time to play with them. I hug them and kiss them and let them know I love them very much.

- Write my girls and discipline them over the phone. Being here helps build on our communication skills.

- Write to guide. Tell them about things that lead you (get) into places like this.

- Talk problems over (boyfriends, choices they have in life) and let them know they are somebody who has feelings of their own.

- Send them money. Talk to them on the phone.

- Talk to them. Tell them I love them and no matter what my circumstances are, I'll be there soon and I love them very much.

- Write letters and offer advice.

- Encourage them to do good at school. Tell them how much they're loved and wanted by me.

Four (about 4%) of the responses to the question, "What are some of the things you do to fulfill your role of mother while incarcerated?" were placed under the category of Other because they were so rare or unusual. These responses were:

- Keep in touch with case worker and all 5 children.

- At the moment nothing. I'm too far away from home.

- Nothing yet.

- By getting back out and making up the lost time with them.

About 72% of the responses indicated that the incarcerated mothers wrote, called, or visited their children. Because these were expected behaviors for an incarcerated mother, they were not classified as being novel behaviors. Examples of these expected behaviors included:

- Write and call often.

- I can only write my children.

- Write letters.

- Send my 2 year old letters and call.

- Write and talk to my children on the phone. Play with them when they come to visit. All my time goes to them.

Other Non-Statistical Findings

The mothers were also asked, "What do you miss most about being away from your children/child?" There were 106 responses to this question. These responses were not systematically categorized or scanned for general themes. However, below are some

examples of the overall responses that broadly reflect the general nature of the responses that were given:

- Spending time with them. Doing things with them. Watching them grow up.

- Playing with him. Putting him to bed. Him telling me his stories he made up.

- Birthdays, holidays, etc.

- Just being there to cook, do laundry, go places together, and family communication.

- Everything.

- Waking them up in the morning to start their day. Laughing and holding them.

- Loving them. Watching their growth.

- Tucking them in at night. Loving them. Singing gospel songs. Cooking.

- Teaching them about God's words.

- I miss taking them to the park and having cookouts with them and playing around with them.

- The smiles, faces, hugs, voices. Being a mother!

- Watching them grow up. Being there for them through peer pressure. Taking them to places. Teaching them about sex and diseases.

- Taking them shopping, holding them, and telling them I love them. I miss being around them, and sharing my heart with them.

- Their smiles. The way I feel complete with them. Let me put it like this, the light is gone from my life without them.

- Oh god, I love and miss them. I want to hold them, brush their hair, help at homework and see them everyday.

- Going to basketball games, hugging them, going to church.

- Being there for them. Seeing them laugh and smile. I miss them being around me!

- I miss cooking for them!

- I don't really know them anymore.

- Normal things. Hugging and kissing them, telling them I love them. Getting them off to school, feeding them.

- Watching them grow up. Watching them play. Putting them to bed.

- Them calling, "Mama, I'm sick. Mama, will you come to the school and talk to my teacher?" Them period.

- Touching them, kissing them, being there when they are sick. Talking about problems, helping with homework and school.

- Seeing her grow, potty training, hearing her cry in the middle of the night.

- Cuddling, playing, going to the park.

- Having her around. Cooking and shopping together. Taking the baby for outside fun. Kissing her goodnight.

- Eating out, watching movies. Just watching them do everything.

- Being there to protect them.

- Being there for them.

- Cooking, eating together.

- Not holding them when they're hurt or scared.

It appeared that these mothers not only missed the physical presence of their children (seeing them, hearing them, touching them), but they also missed the behaviors associated with the domestic and the civic role of being a mother. In other words, they missed doing things with and for their children.

The last question on the questionnaire was, "Is there anything else you would like to tell me?" There were 65 responses to this question. Although the data were not

systematically scanned for general themes, it appeared that several women offered policy

suggestions. Some of the suggestions were:

- Try to get mother to spend weekend with their children on a retreat that are non-violent and not security risk. Have a camp area where they can stay for a weekend once very 3 or 4 months.

- Wish there could be another way to pay for crimes other than being away from kids.

- Courts should consider the impact on children when sentencing mothers to long periods of time for non-violent crimes. My daughter stole a pair of shoes from school thinking she would come here so she could be with me.

- Drugs and alcohol destroy so much. This is a system which is made up of over 75% addicts. In-depth family counseling works. We just need so much more of it. Drug recovery programs are a must and yet they are being weeded out. Unless people are taught a better way they have no choice but to come back. They must learn to love their selves before they can love their children in the way they deserve.

- I wish they had more programs for mothers and children.

- I feel we need more programs with our children and family.

- I would like to say thank you and hopefully this survey will help mothers in prison keep in contact with children more, through visitation, etc.

- I think that there should be more programs and ways for our family to get here to visit us. Children need the time with us no matter if we are incarcerated and we need them to help us hold on and not let us give up. I see so many just give up till they lost all. We should be able to have ways to phone our children, even if they do have blocks on phones and whenever we get money, it be taken out at least once a month. Also, a picture once a year, even if person doesn't have money to do it their self. Some people only get state pay each month. All people don't have money coming in each month, there needs to be things for them. Also, state needs to, DHS needs to, hold our children longer instead of adoption, unless inmate crime is on the children. We love our children and grandchildren. They are my world. My crime wasn't for drugs. It was to do for my family everyday life.

- I made a mistake I'm paying for, but my children are paying for it far more and it's leaving scars that I'm not sure will ever heal.

- Yes, when are they going to stop putting people in jail for petty crimes.

Also, some of the responses to the last question, "Is there anything else you would like to tell me?" were heart wrenching. Examples were:

- Being away from my children is hard because they are doing time with me, because I'm away from them.

- I would like to have another child, when I get out of here soon.

- I really miss my children a lot. Never will I let a man mess up my life or my children again. It's been rough on all of us. Five years I've been away.

- As a mother the worst thing I did was drugs. But as a drug addict, I couldn't see any harm!

- There is nothing in life worth being away from your children. I despise drugs now and I hope to one day be a counselor to prevent drug addiction in young children.

- I miss my son and hope to retain custody upon discharge.

- If I had taken my role as a mother seriously and had gotten the counseling I needed, I wouldn't be here! I have a second chance at my life and at being a good positive role model for my children. This in turn will help them have a better start in life. Change is good as long as it's positive.

- My child is 16 years old and I have missed very important developmental years in her life. Years that a mother's influence is essential.

- I really love my daughter and miss her immensely. I thank God for my brother and family. If it weren't for them, I probably wouldn't know anything about her. Thanks for listening. This has helped!

- Thank you for your concern. We need all the outside help we can get.

- I just really miss my children and want to be a better mother than I was before and to spend time with them.

- My kids are my world next to God.

- God will get me home to my family. God bless you.

- I hope all of this can help someone in the near future.

- I regret what I've done to them. I've stripped them from having a mother, and I just hope when I do get out we can put this behind us and I can go on being a good mother to them.

- I was young when I had my children and deeply regret my past mistakes. When I go home to them I will try my very best to be the mother that they need.

- I hope to never come here again. This survey really wakes up the emotions of why do I do the things I do when it breaks my girls' hearts. I'm really a good mom, I just need to be better.

- I miss him very much and pray my mother will open up her heart and let him write and visit.

- It's real hard on mothers being away from their children, but it is especially hard on the children. The children are the ones that suffer and get hurt the most.

- I know now what my bad choices have done to my children and I vow to never get caught up in the wrong situations ever in life. This has been a very painful lesson to myself and my children. I hope some day I can make it up to them.

- I had my 5 year old while I was incarcerated last time. I spent 2 years in and never had a chance to bond with her. She mostly lives with my sister and her husband. She calls her mama and him daddy but she (my daughter) knows I'm her real mother. She's attached to them and they're attached to her. So they only let me have her or let her stay with me every so often. But my daughter loves me and I hope to have her to myself someday. I have custody of her. My oldest daughter always lives with me though, when I'm out there.

- When I get out, I'll never drink again, because there is nothing more important to one than "family." I realize now, being sober, how much I had missed out on! Thank God! I love my kids!

- I am here taking care of my bad. I will straighten up, and this is my first step to reality. My days are through. My husband is serving a 35 year sentence, that brought me to my reality.

- It is hard to have a baby in prison and leave it. It is hard to know that you have a child out there that you just gave birth to while incarcerated and not being able to bond with the baby. It really does hurt and it bothers me that I don't have the parents that I needed as a role part in my life, that keeps my children from me. Things like this messes with me mentally and physically.

- To me, I was a good mama to my kids until I came to prison. But I am still a good mama, because I feel like me and my kids have a good understanding now.

- There's a lot of mothers that don't like to talk about their children while they are in here cause it makes them sad.

- I miss my children and family more than life itself. It's very hard being away from them for so many years.

Two responses to the last question that summed up this study well were:

- Even though I'm locked up, I have not stopped loving my children or myself.

- We are not bad people. We just did bad things.

Summary

The sample consisted of 109 incarcerated mothers who had at least one child under the age of 18. Overall, 69% of the mothers reported that they had more than one child under the age of 18. Forty-five percent were Non-White and 84% were under the age of 40. Only 35% were either legally married or were in common law marriages. About 29% of the women had less than a high school education.

Statistical procedures were used to examine the relationship among the independent variables (e.g., length of incarceration, under the influence of drugs or alcohol at time of arrest, age, commitment, race, type of crime committed, and educational level) and the dependent variables (e.g., role strain and self-esteem). It was found that being White and length of incarceration significantly affected role strain. Commitment was also found to significantly affect self-esteem.

Seventy-eight percent of the mothers reported that their children had lived with them before their arrests. Twenty-seven percent indicated that their children now lived with their father. Seventy-eight percent also reported that they approved of their children's present custody arrangements. Seventy-three percent of the women stated that it had been more than a month since they had last seen their children. Fifty-eight percent reported that they had more than one year left to serve on their present sentence.

Only 16% of the women were serving time for committing a violent crime. All the others were serving time for victimless crimes or for property crimes. Overall, 59% had been under the influence of either drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their arrest.

Overall, incarcerated mothers tended to define the word mother in traditional terms, such as a mother is someone who cares for their children and teaches them the differences in right and wrong. Notable exceptions included definitions of a mother as being someone who teaches her children how to survive, doesn't do drugs and go to prison, and keeps her kids.

Four new novel identities along with their unique behaviors were recognized and discussed. They included Self-Improving Incarcerated Mother, Optimistic Incarcerated Mother, Spiritual Incarcerated Mother, and Traditional Incarcerated Mother. The Self-Improving mother read self help books and/or took classes in order to make herself a better person. The Optimistic mother tried to keep a positive attitude. The Spiritual mother relied upon prayer and her faith in God, and the Traditional mother loved her children and tried to discipline and/or teach her children while incarcerated.

When asked what they missed most about being away from their children, the women responded that they missed not only the physical presence of their children, but they also missed doing things with and for their children. When responding to the question, "Is there anything else you would like to tell me?" two respondents summed this study up best by answering, "Even though I'm locked up, I have not stopped loving my children or myself." "We are not bad people. We just did bad things." Several women offered policy suggestions, such as having retreats for mother and children, and having more family counseling and drug programs.

The next chapter discusses the implications of these findings. Limitations of this study, along with suggested recommendations for future research and program recommendations, are also offered.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Even though mothers in prison hold the status of being a mother, they are not able to fulfill their role obligations in traditional ways. Due to the War on Drugs and other aggressive crime prevention strategies, the number of women (and consequently mothers) who are sent to prison continues to rise each year. The main objectives of this study were to discover how incarcerated mothers defined the word mother and to identify any novel identities along with novel behaviors that they may have adopted in their attempts to fulfill their role of mother while incarcerated. This study also investigated the relationship among the predictor variables of commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use among the dependent variables of role strain and self-esteem.

The theoretical framework used for this study was Sheldon Stryker's identity salience theory. This theory explained how commitment affects identity salience, which in turn, affects role-related behavioral choices. This leads to the conclusion that the greater the commitment to an identity, the greater the impact the quality of role performance will have on self-esteem. This theory goes on to explain that external events that cut into existing commitments will increase the probability that novel identities will be adopted.

The literature suggested that most female offenders tend to be young, under the age of 30. It was also found that long periods of incarceration can lead to a stage of

adaptation called conversion. During this stage, an inmate becomes transformed into the perfect inmate and completely accepts the role the institution has defined for him/her. While this may be good for the management of the institution, it can lead to serious psychological problems for the inmate.

The literature suggested that visitations are positively associated with sustained parental commitment and commitment to reunification. The literature review also revealed that most women were serving sentences for non-violent offenses and that the majority of females, when arrested, appeared to have some type of drug and/or alcohol problem. The literature disclosed that minorities tend to be over represented in correctional institutions and incarcerated females tend to have low levels of formal education.

One study reported that several mothers expressed role strain by their comment, "You can't be a mother and be in prison." Also found in the literature review, the maternal role appears to be closely tied to self-esteem and most incarcerated mothers perceive their role as mothers as "primary to their sense of identity." The literature suggested that incarcerated mothers may be at-risk for future parental difficulties due, in part, to their low levels of self-esteem. This study was designed to expound upon the observations found in the literature.

This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research designs. The sample consisted of 109 women who were serving time in a minimum security prison in Oklahoma and had at least one child under the age of 18. To gather the data, a survey questionnaire containing both open-ended and close-ended questions was used.

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Being White and length of incarceration were found to significantly affect the role strain scores of the incarcerated mothers. Commitment was shown to significantly affect their self-esteem scores. The mothers tended to define the word mother in traditional terms, such as a mother is someone who cares for her children and teaches them the differences in right and wrong. Notable exceptions included definitions of a mother as being someone who teaches her children how to survive, doesn't do drugs and go to prison, and keeps her kids. Four novel identities were recognized and discussed. They included the Self-Improving Incarcerated Mother, the Optimistic Incarcerated Mother, the Spiritual Incarcerated Mother, and the Traditional Incarcerated Mother.

When asked what they missed most about being away from their children, the women responded that they not only missed the physical presence of their children, but they also missed doing things with and for their children. Two responses to the last question, "Is there anything else you would like to tell me?" summed up this study best. These responses were, "Even though I'm locked up, I have not stopped loving my children or myself" and "We are not bad people. We just did bad things."

Out of the 109 women, 69% reported that they had more than one child who was under the age of 18. Forty-five percent of the sample was Non-White. Eighty-four percent were under the age of 40, and only 35% were married. About 29% of the women had less than a high school diploma or G.E.D. Overall, 59% of the respondents were under the influence of either drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their arrest and only 16% were serving sentences for violent offenses.

Conclusions from Hypothesized Findings

The first research hypothesis tested by multiple regression analysis was: There will be a significant relationship in role strain scores in regards to commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores. Altogether, these factors explained about 14.74% of the variance found in role strain. The variables that significantly effected role strain were length of incarceration, $F = 4.09$, $p < .05$ and race (white), $F = 8.49$, $p < .01$.

Because the maternal role is so closely tied to a woman's primary sense of identity (Simon, 1992) and because incarceration makes it difficult for mothers to fulfill their role obligations of mother in the traditional sense (LeFlore & Holston, 1989), it is no surprise that length of incarceration had a significant effect on role strain. Previous studies had found length of incarceration to be a significant factor in determining whether or not an incarcerated women became prisonized (Alpert et al., 1977). If an incarcerated mother resists becoming prisonized then she will likely experience role strain due to not being able to fulfill her maternal role obligations.

Previous research also showed that Black women were more likely to become prisonized than White women (Alpert et al., 1977). This may explain why in this study race (being White) significantly affected role strain scores. Perhaps White inmate mothers resist becoming prisonized and thus experienced more role strain than Non-White inmate mothers. Also, part of this variance may have to do with cultural differences that may exist between the two groups of inmate mothers, such as: Dependence network differences available to each group of women outside the prison. Previous research had

shown that whether or not an incarcerated woman developed close relationships within the prison (and thus become more institutionalized) depended on the amount of affective support she received from outside the prison (Heffernan, 1972).

Previous studies also revealed that Black incarcerated mothers were more likely to report being satisfied with their children's living arrangements than did White incarcerated mothers primarily because children of White mothers were more likely to be living with strangers, whereas, children of Black mothers were more likely to be living with extended family members (Baunach, 1985, p. 48). However, this did not appear to be the case in this study because almost as many White mothers (77%) reported being satisfied with their children's present custody arrangements as did Non-White mothers (80%).

The second research hypothesis that was tested by multiple regression analysis was: There will be a significant relationship in self-esteem scores in regards to commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use scores. Altogether, these factors explained about 13.48% of the total variance found in self-esteem. The only significant predictor of self-esteem was commitment, $F = 8.45$, $p < .01$.

This finding tends to support hypothesis number 9 of Sheldon Stryker's identity salience theory which states, "The greater the commitment, the higher the identity salience, the greater impact the quality of role performance will have on self-esteem." Commitment to the maternal role positively and significantly affected the self-esteem of the incarcerated mothers. This finding tends to confirm earlier research which suggested

that the few incarcerated mothers who did express rejection of their children also tended to have less confidence in themselves (Baunach, 1985, p. 56).

The literature also pointed out that visitations were shown to be positively associated with sustained parental commitment and commitment to reunification (Beckerman, 1989). This study showed a positive, although weak (.21), association between commitment and frequency of visits, meaning commitment decreased as the frequency of children's visits decreased. Therefore, since visits increase commitment, and commitment leads to enhanced self-esteem, frequent visits should be encouraged.

Conclusions from Unhypothesized Findings

Like previous studies, this study revealed that these incarcerated mothers were young, single, and more likely to be a racial or ethnic minority (Hairston, 1991; Baunach, 1985). About 58% were age 35 or under, only 35% were either legally married or were in common-law marriages, and 45% were Non-White.

Around 59% of the sample had been under the influence of either drugs and/or alcohol when they were arrested for their present offense. Previous research had reported that 46% of the incarcerated, female respondents had used drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their offense (Wellisch, Prendergast, & Anglin, 1994). This study found that 84% of the respondents were serving time for non-violent offenses. Sixty-six percent of the women had prior felony convictions. More than 42% had been on either probation or parole at the time of their arrest. This compares to findings of other similar studies

(Baunach, 1985; Hairston, 1991). Sixty percent reported that they had other family members who were presently serving time in jail or prison.

Most of these women are a minimal threat to public safety. Incarcerating women whose basic problems seem to stem from alcohol and/or drug problems may be causing more harm than good. The War on Drugs has taken not only women as captives, but has taken their children as well. It is apparent, however, that these women and their families are no strangers to the criminal justice system. Clearly, intervention strategies are called for to break the cycle of incarceration.

Conclusions from Non-Statistical Findings

As previously stated, incarcerated mothers are as concerned about their children as are non-criminal mothers, but due to societal constraints they are prevented from expressing their love in socially approved ways (LeFlore & Holston, 1989). This study showed that incarcerated mothers tend to define the word mother in traditional ways (i.e., a mother is a person who cares for children, teaches them the differences in right and wrong, and is a friend and confidant who loves unconditionally). Exceptions to these traditional definitions included: a mother doesn't do drugs and go to prison, and a mother is someone who keeps their kids. It was interesting to note that many of the mothers defined a mother as someone who is always there for the child. The fact that the incarcerated mother is not there for her child must be a constant reminder to her that she is not fulfilling her role as mother.

Four novel identities were described. They included Self-Improving Incarcerated Mother, Optimistic Incarcerated Mother, Spiritual Incarcerated Mother, and Traditional Incarcerated Mother. Although each identity had its own set of unique qualities, they were not mutually exclusive. In other words, one mother could possess all four identities and parts of these identities could overlap at various times. This tends to support identity salience theory which suggests that people can have several identities depending upon the number of distinct sets of structured relationships to which the individual belongs (Ickes & Knowles, 1982, p. 206). Clearly, mothers in prison do not have a lot of available choices presented to them to act out their maternal roles. By adopting these novel identities they have in reality adapted to the external events that have cut into their existing commitments (Stryker, 1980, p. 84).

Comparisons between Statistical and Non-Statistical Conclusions

From the non-statistical conclusions it is evident that these mothers miss being able to act out their maternal role in traditional ways. They miss being with their children and doing things for them. Seventy-three percent of the women responded that it was very important to them that significant others viewed them as being a committed parent, but only 28% of them believed that their significant others would actually rate them as being an excellent mother. The way an incarcerated mother sees herself and how she interacts with others is determined, in part, by how others see and interact with her. This large discrepancy cannot be beneficial to the incarcerated mother's maternal identity.

Limitations of the Study

The generalizability of this study is limited by the fact that all data were collected from volunteer, incarcerated mothers at one institution in Oklahoma. As a result of this limitation, conclusions and generalizations that were found during this study may only be applicable to this specific study sample. However, the findings from this research, for the most part, did tend to agree with findings from other research. Although the sample was made up of volunteers, they tended to be somewhat representative of the prison population for that facility (i.e., 31% of the prison population was age 30 or under; whereas, 32% of the sample population was age 30 or under; 54% of the prison population was White; whereas, 55% of the sample was White) and similar to other studies previously cited in this study.

Program Recommendations

This research uncovered how incarcerated mothers defined the role of mother and discovered if incarcerated mothers, in their attempt to fulfill their maternal role, adopted novel identities and behaviors. Factors, such as commitment, length of incarceration, age, race, type of crime committed, educational level, and drug/alcohol use were examined to determine their effects on self-esteem and role strain.

Commitment was found to significantly effect self-esteem and previous research showed that incarcerated mother may be more at-risk for future parental difficulties due, in part, to their low self-esteem (Howze-Browne, 1989). Based on these findings, it is recommended that policies be developed that will encourage commitment to the parental

role. Seventy-three percent of the women reported that it had been more than one month since they last seen their children and 37% reported that it had been more than 6 months since they had last seen their children. Because frequency of visits leads to commitment, it is recommended that visitations from children should be encouraged and facilitated. Only 16% of these women were serving sentences for violent crimes. It is recommended that the other 84% be supervised by community-based programs.

Fifty-nine percent of the women admitted that they had been under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their arrest for their present conviction. When asked what programs they would like to receive additional training in, 48% of the women reported they wanted additional drug and alcohol counseling. Based on these findings, it is recommended that more substance abuse treatment programs be made available to incarcerated mothers with known substance abuse problems. Since the literature revealed that some mothers had admitted that their drug involvement had previously interfered with their relationships with their children, providing additional drug/alcohol treatment programs may help strengthen the mother-child bond (Baunach, 1985, pp. 60-74).

Length of incarceration was found to significantly effect role strain. Fifty-nine percent of the women reported that they'd been incarcerated for more than one year. While 42% reported that they had less than a year to serve on their convictions, 54% reported that they had more than one year left to serve on their present sentences. These appeared to be excessively long periods of time to be incarcerated, considering the types of offenses these women had committed. As the literature pointed out, excessively long periods of incarceration can lead to a form of adaptation called conversion, which can lead

to serious psychological problems for the inmate, rendering the inmate incapable of managing daily life on the outside (Goffman, 1961, pp. 61-63). This seems to be another justification for more community-based supervision programs for non-violent offenders.

Another area where the women reported they would like to receive additional training was in family counseling (46%). Sixty-nine percent of these women reported that they had been either sexually or physically abused at some point in their lives. Sixty percent reported that they had other family members who were presently serving time in a jail or prison. Clearly, these women not only want but need family counseling to overcome some of the abuses and dysfunctions they have experienced in their lives. Again, this type of counseling could be provided in community-based programs.

Forty-four percent of the women reported that they would like to receive additional vocational training. Also, only 39% reported that their children were receiving financial support from their fathers and only 20% of the women were legally married and only 15% were in common law marriages. It is clear from these findings that it is more than likely that a large majority of these women will be responsible for being the heads of their households once they are released from prison. For them to make it in the community, they will have to have some way to support themselves and their children. While the Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education does offer some classes in building maintenance, construction, and electronics, additional training in classes such as computer literacy may prove more beneficial. Therefore, computer literacy training and other types of vocational training are recommended.

Based upon this research, it is obvious that these mothers cherish their children and want to maintain their maternal roles. More policies are needed to strengthened the mother/child bond. Perhaps limited resources could be better utilized if non-violent offenders were kept in the community where they could be supervised and yet still obtain the services they need, while at the same time, maintain their ties with their children.

Future Research Recommendations

Future research could be directed to answer such questions as: Why do White incarcerated mothers experience more role strain than do Non-White incarcerated mothers? Probing deeper into cultural differences could yield new insights into this finding. This could be accomplished by employing cross-sectional designs. Cross-sectional designs are beneficial when comparing groups at one point in time, such as White to Non-White incarcerated mothers. In-depth interviews could be utilized to gather this type of data.

Because so many of the women had reported that they had been either physically or sexually abused (69%), effects of abuse warrant further investigation. Perhaps future studies could investigate associations between sexual/physical abuse and drug/alcohol abuse, since substance abuse plays such a large role in female criminality.

Longitudinal studies which study the same group over a period of time to detect changes would also be useful for studying groups of mothers that have been released from prison to see how well they and their children were doing. These studies could provide

invaluable information in regards to policy recommendations and in aiding decisions about what types of programs are best at preventing recidivism.

Finally, because the generalizability of this study was limited by the fact that all the data were collected from only one institution, generalizability could be broadened if replication studies were done in different institutions at various places to see if the findings would converge. Because the number of women, and consequently the number of mothers, who are being sent to prison continues to grow each year, this problem warrants further investigation.

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APPENDIX A

<u>Interviewer's Introduction to Mothers</u>

Interviewer's Introduction to Mothers

Hello. My name is Phyllis Berry and I am doing research on Mothers in Prison. I do not work for the department of corrections or the courts. I am a college student. I am trying to find out how mothers in prison fulfill their role of mother while incarcerated. I also want to determine how they cope with the role strain of being an incarcerated mother and determine if their self-esteem is affected. Other studies have suggested that incarceration policies should take into consideration the importance of the mother-child relationship. My hope is that this study will help benefit mothers in prison by leading to policy changes that encourage and strengthen the mother-child relationship. In order to do that, I would like to ask you some questions.

First, let me say a couple of things. Your answers are strictly anonymous. This means that your privacy is protected because your name is never disclosed to anyone and your name is not on the survey instrument. To protect your anonymity you are referred to by the use of a code number (which is located on the front of your survey instrument). The information you give me will never be given to anyone with your name on it.

I am going to ask you to fill out a survey with a lot of questions. If you do not understand a question, I will explain it. If you do not want to answer a question, feel free to skip that question. If you want to discontinue answering the questions, just tell me and you can stop at any time. Do you have any questions?

Again, the information you provide will be kept strictly anonymous. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey.

APPENDIX B

Survey Questionnaire & Frequency Distributions

HOW INCARCERATED MOTHERS DEFINE AND FULFILL THEIR MOTHER ROLE

ID# _____

DATE _____

TIME _____

MOTHERS IN PRISON QUESTIONNAIRE

ID #: _ _ _ (001-109) (V1)

Please circle the best response to each of the following questions.

1. How many biological or adopted children do you have under the age of 18? (n=109) (V2)
00% A. NONE. IF NONE, PLEASE DO NOT CONTINUE THE SURVEY (1)
32% B. ONE (2)
37% C. TWO (3)
12% D. THREE (4)
14% E. FOUR (5)
06% F. FIVE OR MORE (6)

2. At the time of your arrest for your present conviction did your biological or adopted children/child live with you? (n=108) (V3)

78% A. YES (1)
22% B. NO (2)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

3. How old is your oldest (or only) child? (n=109) (V4)

00% A. UNDER ONE YEAR OLD (1)
11% B. ONE TO FIVE YEARS OLD (2)
36% C. SIX TO TWELVE YEARS OLD (3)
27% D. THIRTEEN TO SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD (4)
27% E. EIGHTEEN OR OLDER (5)

4. How old is your youngest child? (n=108) (V5)

07% A. UNDER ONE YEAR OLD (1)
30% B. ONE TO FIVE YEARS OLD (2)
38% C. SIX TO TWELVE YEARS OLD (3)
14% D. THIRTEEN TO SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD (4)
02% E. EIGHTEEN OR OLDER (5)
09% F. NOT APPLICABLE--I ONLY HAVE ONE CHILD (6)

5. How often do you talk to others about your children/child? (n=109) (V6)

00% A. NEVER (1)
05% B. SELDOM (2)
14% C. SOMETIMES (3)
82% D. FREQUENTLY (4)

6. How often do you show pictures of your children/child to others? (n=109) (V7)

02% A. NEVER (1)
05% B. SELDOM (2)
21% C. SOMETIMES (3)
72% D. FREQUENTLY (4)

7. Do you have a recent (less than one year old) photograph of your children/child?
(n=108) (V8)

80% A. YES (1)
20% B. NO (2)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

8. Who has custody of your children/child? (Please mark all that apply.) (n=109) (V9)

27% A. CHILDREN'S/CHILD'S FATHER (1)
28% B. MY MOTHER (2)
24% C. OTHER FAMILY MEMBER (3)
03% D. FRIEND (4)
10% E. THE STATE (FOSTER CARE) (5)
00% F. DON'T KNOW (6)
09% G. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____ (7)

9. Do you approve of your children's/child's present custody arrangements? (n=109)
(V10)

78% A. YES (1)
22% B. NO (2)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

10. Do your children/child receive any financial support from their father? (n=109) (V11)

39% A. YES (1)
57% B. NO (2)
04% C. DON'T KNOW (3)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

11. How often do you speak to your children/child on the telephone? (n=109) (V12)

34% A. ABOUT ONCE A WEEK OR MORE (1)
17% B. ABOUT EVERY OTHER WEEK (2)
17% C. ABOUT ONCE A MONTH (3)
04% D. ABOUT EVERY OTHER MONTH (4)
08% E. ABOUT 3 OR 4 TIMES A YEAR (5)
20% F. ONCE A YEAR OR LESS (6)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

12. How often do you receive mail from your children/child or their caretaker? (n=108) (V13)

25% A. ABOUT ONCE A WEEK OR MORE (1)
19% B. ABOUT EVERY OTHER WEEK (2)
22% C. ABOUT ONCE A MONTH (3)
10% D. ABOUT EVERY OTHER MONTH (4)
08% E. ABOUT 3 OR 4 TIMES A YEAR (5)
16% F. ONCE A YEAR OR LESS (6)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

13. How often do you write to your children/child or their caretaker? (n=109) (V14)

54% A. ABOUT ONCE A WEEK OR MORE (1)
31% B. ABOUT EVERY OTHER WEEK (2)
08% C. ABOUT ONCE A MONTH (3)
02% D. ABOUT EVERY OTHER MONTH (4)
02% E. ABOUT 3 OR 4 TIMES A YEAR (5)
03% F. ONCE A YEAR OR LESS (6)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

14. How often do your children/child visit you? (n=105) (V15)

09% A. ABOUT ONCE A WEEK OR MORE (1)
13% B. ABOUT EVERY OTHER WEEK (2)
18% C. ABOUT ONCE A MONTH (3)
09% D. ABOUT EVERY OTHER MONTH (4)
18% E. ABOUT 3 OR 4 TIMES A YEAR (5)
33% F. ONCE A YEAR OR LESS (6)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

15. How long has it been since you last saw your children/child? (n=109) (V16)

16% A. LESS THAN 2 WEEKS (1)
12% B. MORE THAN 2 WEEKS BUT LESS THAN ONE MONTH (2)
36% C. MORE THAN ONE MONTH BUT LESS THAN SIX MONTHS (3)
22% D. MORE THAN SIX MONTHS BUT LESS THAN ONE YEAR (4)
15% E. MORE THAN ONE YEAR (5)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

16. How are your children/child doing in school? (n=108) (V17)

35% A. EXCELLENT (MOSTLY A'S) (1)
29% B. ABOVE AVERAGE (MOSTLY B'S) (2)
18% C. AVERAGE (MOSTLY C'S) (3)
03% D. BELOW AVERAGE (MOSTLY D'S) (4)
01% E. FAILING (MOSTLY F'S) (5)
06% F. DON'T KNOW (6)
09% G. MY CHILDREN DON'T GO TO SCHOOL (7)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

17. Do your children/child like going to school? (n=109) (V18)

43% A. ALWAYS (1)
35% B. MOST OF THE TIME (2)
08% C. SOME OF THE TIME (3)
00% D. RARELY (4)
01% E. NEVER (5)
04% F. I DON'T KNOW (6)
09% G. MY CHILDREN DON'T GO TO SCHOOL (7)
OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

18. How long have you been incarcerated for your present conviction? (n=109) (V19)

41% A. LESS THAN ONE YEAR (1)
22% B. MORE THAN ONE YEAR BUT LESS THAN TWO YEARS (2)
13% C. MORE THAN TWO YEARS BUT LESS THAN THREE YEARS (3)
11% D. MORE THAN THREE YEARS BUT LESS THAN FOUR YEARS (4)
05% E. MORE THAN FOUR YEARS BUT LESS THAN FIVE YEARS (5)
08% F. FIVE YEARS OR MORE (6)

19. How much time do you have left to serve on your present conviction? (n=108) (V20)

42% A. LESS THAN ONE YEAR (1)
25% B. MORE THAN ONE YEAR BUT LESS THAN TWO YEARS (2)
15% C. MORE THAN TWO YEARS BUT LESS THAN THREE YEARS (3)
06% D. MORE THAN THREE YEARS BUT LESS THAN FOUR YEARS (4)
03% E. MORE THAN FOUR YEARS BUT LESS THAN FIVE YEARS (5)
06% F. FIVE YEARS OR MORE (6)
04% G. DON'T KNOW (7)

20. At the time of your present offense, were you on probation, parole, or pretrial release for any other offense? (n=106) (V21)

42% A. YES (1)
58% B. NO (2)

21. How many previous felony convictions do you have? (n=108) (V22)

34% A. NONE (1)
31% B. 1 (2)
21% C. 2 (3)
06% D. 3 (4)
07% E. 4 OR MORE (5)

22. Please circle the type of offense you are presently serving time for. (n=105) (V23)

45% A. VICTIMLESS CRIME (SUCH AS DRUG OFFENSE OR PROSTITUTION)(1)
39% B. PROPERTY CRIME (SUCH AS LARCENY THEFT OR FRAUD)(2)
16% C. VIOLENT CRIME (SUCH AS ASSAULT OR ROBBERY)(3)

23. Do you have other family members who are presently serving time or have served time in jail or prison? (n=109) (V24)

60% A. YES (PLEASE SPECIFY RELATIONSHIP) (1)

_____

40% B. NO (2)

24. At the time of your arrest for your present conviction, were you under the influence of any of the below named substances? (n=106)

59% A. YES (PLEASE MARK ALL THAT APPLY.) (1) (V25)
___ 23% ALCOHOL (3Y/4N) (V26)
___ 25% COCAINE (3Y/4N) (V27)
___ 04% HEROIN (3Y/4N) (V28)
___ 03% METHADONE (3Y/4N) (V29)
___ 00% LSD (3Y/4N) (V30)
___ 00% PCP (3Y/4N) (V31)
___ 15% MARIJUANA (3Y/4N) (V32)
___ 21% OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) (3Y/4N)_____ (V33)
41% B. NO (2) (V25)

25. Did you ever witness your parents or guardians abuse alcohol and/or drugs while you were growing up? (n=108) (V34)

59% A. YES (1)
41% B. NO (2)

26. Have you ever been physically or sexually abused? (n=108)

69% A. YES (1) (V35)
___ 11% SEXUALLY (3Y/4N) (V36)
___ 21% PHYSICALLY (3Y/4N) (V37)
___ 33% BOTH (3Y/4N) (V38)
31% B. NO (2) (V35)

27. What race are you? (n=109) (V39)

55% A. WHITE (1)
35% B. AFRICAN AMERICAN (2)
08% C. NATIVE AMERICAN (3)
01% D. HISPANIC (4)
01% E. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) (5) _____

28. How old are you? _____ (n=109) (V40)

16.51% 20-24
15.60% 25-29
25.69% 30-35
26.61% 36-39
12.84% 40-49
02.75% 50-55

29. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (n=109) (V41)

03% A. 8TH GRADE OR BELOW (1)
26% B. 9TH GRADE THROUGH 11TH GRADE (2)
26% C. HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (G.E.D.) (3)
08% D. HIGH SCHOOL (H.S.) GRADUATE (4)
31% E. TECHNICAL SCHOOL OR SOME COLLEGE BEYOND G.E.D. OR H.S. (5)
06% F. COLLEGE GRADUATE (PLEASE SPECIFY TYPE OF COLLEGE DEGREE)
(6) _____

30. What is your present marital status? (n=109) (V42)

38% A. SINGLE (1)
20% B. MARRIED (LEGAL) (2)
15% C. MARRIED (COMMON LAW) (3)
06% D. SEPARATED (4)
17% E. DIVORCED (5)
04% F. WIDOWED (6)
01% G. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) (7) _____

Please circle the best response to statements number 31 through 33:

31. I am able to do things as well as most other people. (n=109) (V43)

69% A. STRONGLY AGREE (4)
29% B. AGREE (3)
01% C. DISAGREE (2)
01% D. STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)

32. I take a positive attitude toward myself. (n=109) (V44)

61% A. STRONGLY AGREE (4)
33% B. AGREE (3)
04% C. DISAGREE (2)
02% D. STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)

33. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. (n=109) (V45)

37% A. STRONGLY AGREE (4)
47% B. AGREE (3)
15% C. DISAGREE (2)
02% D. STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)

Variable 46. Self-Esteem Score (n=109).

34. Would you like to receive training in any of the following areas? (n=109)

94% A. YES (PLEASE MARK ALL THAT APPLY.) (1) (V47)
___ 33% PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT (Y3/4N) (V48)
___ 44% VOCATIONAL TRAINING (Y3/4N) (V49)
___ 40% CHILD DEVELOPMENT (Y3/4N)(V50)
___ 39% STRESS MANAGEMENT (Y3/4N) (V51)
___ 37% MONEY MANAGEMENT (Y3/4N) (V52)
___ 31% MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING (Y3/4N) (V53)
___ 46% FAMILY COUNSELING (Y3/4N) (V54)
___ 48% DRUG/ALCOHOL TREATMENT (Y3/4N) (V55)
___ 05% OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) (Y3/4N) _____(V56)
06% B. NO (2) (V47)

35. Do you ever feel that you miss out on some of the pleasures of being a parent?
(n=109) (V57)

03% A. NEVER (1)
06% B. SELDOM (2)
23% C. SOMETIMES (3)
69% D. FREQUENTLY (4)

36. Do you ever feel that your children do not get the attention from you that they need?
(n=109) (V58)

10% A. NEVER (1)
04% B. SELDOM (2)
31% C. SOMETIMES (3)
55% D. FREQUENTLY (4)

37. Do you ever worry that incarceration affects your role as parent? (n=109) (V59)

06% A. NEVER (1)
01% B. SELDOM (2)
28% C. SOMETIMES (3)
64% D. FREQUENTLY (4)

Variable 60. Role Strain Score (n=109).

38. How important is it to you that significant others view you as being a committed parent? (n=109) (V61)

07% A. NOT IMPORTANT (1)
19% B. IMPORTANT (2)
73% C. VERY IMPORTANT (3)

39. How good of a mother do significant others think you are? (n=108) (V62)

04% A. BELOW AVERAGE (1)
32% B. AVERAGE (2)
36% C. ABOVE AVERAGE (3)
28% D. EXCELLENT (4)

40. Compared to other mothers in your circumstances how good of a mother do you think you are? (n=109) (V63)

04% A. BELOW AVERAGE (1)
20% B. AVERAGE (2)
33% C. ABOVE AVERAGE (3)
43% D. EXCELLENT (4)

OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

Variable 64. Commitment Score (n=109).

Variable 65. Race: 45% Non-White=1; 55% White=2. (n=109)

Variable 66. Type of Crime Committed: 16% Violent/Person Crime=1; 84% Other=2. (n=105)

Variable 67. Education Level: 28% Less Than HS/GED=1; 72% More than HS/GED=2. (n=109)

Variable 68. Low Commitment/High Commitment. Scores 9-11, High Commitment. 61 High Commitment, 48 Low Commitment.

Variable 69. Low Role Strain/High Role Strain. Scores 11-12, High Role Strain. 65 High Role Strain, 44 Low Role Strain.

Variable 70. Low Self-Esteem/High Self-Esteem. Scores 11-12, High Self-Esteem. 61 High Self-Esteem, 48 Low Self-Esteem.

41. How do you define the word mother? A mother is:

_____

_____

_____

42. What are some of the things you do to fulfill your role of mother while incarcerated?

_____

_____

_____

43. What do you miss most about being away from your children/child?

_____

_____

_____

44. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for participating in this survey. You have been very helpful.

APPENDIX C

<u>Role Strain Item-Total Correlations</u>

Role Strain Item-Total Correlations

Variable	V57	V58	V59	V60
V57	1.0000	0.5839	0.2081	0.7325
V58	0.5839	1.0000	0.4423	0.8780
V59	0.2081	0.4423	1.0000	0.7140
V60	**0.7325**	**0.8780**	**0.7140**	**1.0000**

APPENDIX D

Self-Esteem Item-Total Correlations

Self-Esteem Item-Total Correlations

Variable	V43	V44	V45	V46
V43	1.0000	0.6149	0.4699	0.6674
V44	0.6149	1.0000	0.6038	0.8075
V45	0.4699	0.6038	1.0000	0.7581
V46	**0.6674**	**0.8075**	**0.7581**	**1.0000**

APPENDIX E

Commitment Item-Total Correlations

Commitment Item-Total Correlations

Variable	V61	V62	V63	V64
V61	1.0000	0.1360	0.1581	0.5072
V62	0.1360	1.0000	0.4883	0.8019
V63	0.1581	0.4883	1.0000	0.8124
V64	**0.5072**	**0.8019**	**0.8124**	**1.0000**

APPENDIX F

Letter to Correctional Center

Sociology Department
Oklahoma State University
032 Classroom Building
Stillwater, OK 74078

January 7, 1999

Ms. Angela Reagan, Warden's Assistant
Dr. Eddie Warrior Correctional Center
PO Box 354
Taft, OK 74463-0485

Dear Ms. Reagan,

I am a doctoral student in the Sociology Department at Oklahoma State University (OSU) and am doing my dissertation on *Mothers in Prison: How they Define and Fulfill their Role of Parent While Incarcerated.* The purpose of this study is to investigate how incarcerated mothers cope with role strain and how their level of self-esteem is affected by the loss of their role of mother in the traditional sense. Also, this study will attempt to discover if some mothers, in an attempt to deal with role strain and to preserve their self-esteem, adopt novel identities with corresponding novel behaviors, that allow them to fulfill their role of mother while incarcerated. The rate of incarceration for women continues to rise each year, but most of these mothers, despite their concerns about their readjustment to the parenting role, do want and resume their parental responsibilities after incarceration. Previous studies have suggested that incarceration policies should reflect concern for the psycho-sociological importance of the mother-child relationship and the best interest of the child. I believe this research could help fulfill part of this need for policy-directed research.

Per our telephone conversation on January 7, 1999, I would like to come to your facility and administer a survey questionnaire on January 21, 1999. I would like to obtain an anonymous volunteer sample of around 100 women who are mothers. Ideally, I would like to administer the survey questionnaires to a room full of 30 to 50 mothers at a time. That would allow me to read each question out loud and would enable me to answer any questions that the women may have. After the study, if you would like, I will supply your facility with a copy of the report. Thank you very much for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Phyllis E. Berry

Enclosures: Proposal, Survey Questionnaire, Vita

APPENDIX G

<u>Letter of Permission</u>

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
DR. EDDIE WARRIOR CORRECTIONAL CENTER

January 12, 1999

Phyllis E. Berry
Sociology Department
Oklahoma State University
032 Classroom Building
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

Re: Request for Research/Survey on Women in Prison

Dear Ms. Berry:

I have received your request to conduct a survey on Mothers in Prison: *How they Define and Fulfill their Role of Parent While Incarcerated.* Our policy requires prior approval from the Director on all research proposals prior to their implementation. I understand you spoke with my assistant, Angela Reagan, and request to conduct the survey the first week of February. Your request has been forwarded for approval with a requested implementation date of February 4, 1999. You will be contacted as soon as approval is granted.

If you have questions or concerns, you may contact my office or Angela Reagan at 918-683-8365, ext. 223.

Sincerely,

Debbie G. Mahaffey, Warden
Dr. Eddie Warrior Correctional Center

/ar

cc: Renee Watkins, Deputy Warden
    Dan Lawrence, Research and Evaluation

APPENDIX H

IRB Form

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

DATE: 12-09-98   IRB #: AS-99-019

Proposal Title: MOTHERS IN PRISON: HOW THEY DEFINE AND FULFILL
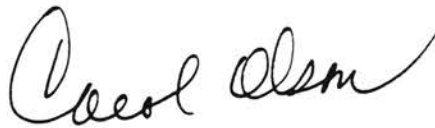THEIR ROLE OF PARENT WHILE INCARCERATED

Principal Investigator(s): J. David Knottnerus, Phyllis E. Berry

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Signature: *Carol Olson*   Date: January 15, 1999

Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance
cc: Phyllis E. Berry

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted.
Any modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval. Approved
projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full
Institutional Review Board.

VITA

Phyllis E. Berry

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: MOTHERS IN PRISON: HOW THEY DEFINE AND FULFILL THEIR ROLE OF PARENT WHILE INCARCERATED

Major Field: Sociology

Biographical:

   Education: Received bachelor degree from Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas in May 1991. In May 1993, received the Master of Administration of Justice from Wichita State University. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in Sociology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July 1999.

   Experience: Worked as a graduate research and teaching assistant for the Oklahoma State University, Department of Sociology, 1995 to present.

   Professional Memberships: Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.