

The purpose of this research will focus on the role family support and community factors play in the lives of young, incarcerated African American men prior to incarceration. The focus of this study will be to examine family and community factors that may contribute to African American males representing 13% of the population yet making up 37% of the prison population. Past research conducted by Kim, Basset, So & Viosin (2018) focused on family stress and youth mental health problems as it relates to self-efficacy and future orientation. Their findings suggested that family stress does not have a significant effect on future orientation. Family stress theory explores how and if family systems adapt when faced with situational stressors and transitional events (Kim, Basset, So & Viosin, 2018). Even with previous research failing to show a direct correlation between family stress and future orientation, researchers have implored future researchers to consider other influential factors and that further research is done to uncover these factors. This study will attempt to pinpoint these other influencing factors determine the correlation between risk behaviors that may exist to explain this discrepancy. Including the perspective of this targeted group may provide a unique look into what they consider influential factors, and if there are any common factors that can be researched. The research will be done via questionnaires and by conducting semi-structured interviews with this targeted group upon the approval of the South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC). It is the intention of this research to design targeted intervention programs to reduce the over-representation of young African American offenders. This could benefit the young men, their families and the communities affected. It may also serve to assist the agencies in their fight to reduce recidivism along with their goal to combat safety concerns within correctional institutions statewide.

Kim, D. H., Bassett, S. M., So, S., & Voisin, D. R. (2018). Family stress and youth mental health problems: Self-efficacy and future orientation mediation. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. Retrieved March 4, 2019.