

Presentation title:

The role of spirituality for imprisoned women in The Cayman Islands

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This paper aims to disseminate preliminary findings from an ongoing PhD thesis around the experiences of spirituality for imprisoned women in The Cayman Islands. This study aimed to explore what spirituality means to imprisoned women and men in The Cayman Islands. Caribbean culture is strongly linked to spirituality, making it a highly relevant topic within Caymanian prisons. As a small British Territory situated in the Caribbean; The Cayman Islands is a unique venue for any prison research due to its exceedingly small population and high diversity- the three islands are populated by 71,432 inhabitants as of 2021, from which just under half are not Caymanian. The equally small prison population (around 183 men and 15 women at the time of data collection) provides niche qualitative data across the country's prison population. So far, 14 male and four female participants are included in the overall data set, accounting for around 7% and 30% of the total prison populations, respectively. Other unique aspects of this study include the use of double interview methods and inviting participants to present items of personal spiritual significance. There is little research on spirituality within criminology, imprisoned Caribbean women, and imprisoned women in the Caribbean. This study offers unique insights which can be incorporated into understanding the experiences of imprisoned women, the experiences of imprisoned Caribbean women globally, and the experiences of women imprisoned in Cayman and the Caribbean. Key aspects explored around the role of spirituality for women in this presentation are motherhood, spirituality in upbringing, and coping with the pains of imprisonment.