

**A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF RECIDIVISM AMONG THE YOUTH
INCARCERATED AT POLOKWANE SECURE CARE CENTRE, LIMPOPO
PROVINCE**

BY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the apple of my eye

and light of my life,

my son Karabo Noko Tjikana.

Every single day I feel deeply blessed and humbled to have you in my life.

"It wasn't easy but it was worth it." Cece Winans

DECLARATION

I declare that **A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF RECIDIVISM AMONG THE YOUTH INCARCERATED AT POLOKWANE SECURE CARE CENTRE, LIMPOPO PROVINCE** is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.

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Full Names

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“Ka tlas’a paballo ya hao,

Le poloko ya hao,

Re tla dula hamonate,

Tshireletsong ya hao”. Methodist Hymn

ABSTRACT

The study explored recidivism as a lived experience among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre in Polokwane, Limpopo Province. The study focused on describing the subjective meanings that recidivist youth attach to their behaviour and established what the youth consider to be the causes of their recidivist behaviour. Furthermore, the study explored what the youth perceive as possible interventions to reduce recidivism. A total of six participants (all males; aged between 16 and 18) were selected using the purposive sampling method. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis method was used to analyse the data.

The six major themes that emerged during data analysis were; a) labelling; b) peer pressure; c) substance abuse; d) socialisation; e) conduct disorder; and f) self-discipline and constructive activities. The findings of the study suggest that various factors contribute to recidivism including the use of substances; parenting styles as well as peer pressure. Furthermore, the findings showed that behavioural problems including criminal behaviour in the youth, may be due to being labelled as a criminal or Conduct Disorder. The findings further suggest the influence the environment has on the youth, and how being socialised in an environment that emphasises a fancy lifestyle may contribute to the youth engaging in criminal activities to meet the standards of that particular environment. The findings further suggest that self-discipline and of constructive activities may help to reduce recidivism among the youth.

The study is concluded by, among others, recommending that psychological services be widely available to communities which will allow the youth to have easy access to such services. This may assist them in dealing with issues such as their experiences within the households (such as abuse) and how to better manage/ control their emotions as opposed to responding aggressively.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Recidivism is derived from the Latin word *recidere* which translates as “to fall back” and epitomises an accumulation of failures. According to Reichel (1994) recidivism can be seen as falling back to crime after methods of deterrence, retribution or correction have been applied. Maltz (2001) describes a recidivist as a person who has not been rehabilitated, yet previously convicted, but falls back or relapses into former behaviour patterns by habitually committing more crimes. Harries, Lockwood and Mengers (2009) indicate that recidivism is most commonly measured in terms of re-arrests, referral to court, reconvictions or re-confinement. According to Schoeman (2010) recidivism is similar to other terms such as habitual, chronic or career offender and refers to re-offending behaviour patterns and a pro-criminal lifestyle. The concept of recidivism is therefore synonymous with the reoccurrence, or repetition of a negative behaviour pattern.

MacDonald, Haviland, Ramchand, Morral, and Piquero (2014) note that there are two types of criminals. Firstly, those who engage in the criminal behaviour during adolescence, but discontinue the criminal behaviour in adulthood. Secondly there are those who are considered career criminals who tend to start criminal activities in their adolescence. As the years progress, so does the number of crimes and their severity. According to Gantana (2014) people re-offend for a wide range of reasons. These include their social environment and peers; family and community; lack of support systems and inadequacy of appropriate policies to assist in the re-integration of offenders into their families and communities. Bor, McGee and Fagan (2004) state that there are many risk factors for the involvement of youth in the juvenile justice system. These risks are related to an individual (early aggression, mental health problems and substance abuse), family (inconsistent parenting and trauma), school (academic problems, educational deficits and special education disabilities), and neighbourhood (high levels of unemployment, residential instability, and family disruptions).

The Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) states that a person who is accused of a crime has the right to be perceived as innocent until proven guilty. This implies that a person cannot be classified as a recidivist based on re-arrest only but needs to be found guilty of a further crime. Although widely accepted that crime is a complex and multi-nodal phenomenon, it is indubitably causally linked to South Africa's historical and current socio-political circumstances, poverty and unemployment, as well as the ineffective rehabilitation and treatment of offenders (Herbig & Hesselink, 2012).

1.2 Research problem

The crime rate in South Africa is at an extreme level (Strydom, 2009) and the prison population is increasing at an alarming rate due to the precipitous incarceration rate in the country when compared to international trends (Singh, 2008). According to Ghanotakis, Bruins, Peacock, Redpath and Swart (2007) during 1995, South African prisons held 111 090 prisoners. Within nine years that number increased to 186 468, giving South Africa a doubtful distinction of having the highest number of inmates than any African nation and the ninth largest prison population in the world.

The impact of juvenile offender recidivism has become a public burden that highlights system failures at all levels of government, community, and family (Trupin, Kerns, Walker, DeRobertis & Stewart, 2011). In the United States of America (USA), approximately two thirds of the justice system are made up of juvenile offenders (Conrad, Tolou-Shams, Rizzo, Placella & Brown, 2014). According to Mulder, Brand, Bullens and van Marle (2011) the age of the juvenile upon offence is a significant predictor of recidivism. Loeber and Stouthammer-Loeber (1998) found that the younger the juvenile upon entry into the justice system, the greater the likelihood of continual engagement in criminal activity. Additionally, when a juvenile begins delinquent behaviour at a younger age, the types of offences escalate and the frequency of offences increase (Mullis, Cornille, Mullis & Huber, 2004). Similarly, the younger men in a study by Huebner and Berg (2011) were more likely to return back into the system than older men. In their study, when an individual was older, his criminal activity or risk for criminal activity declined, but it didn't hold true for all offenders.

In a survey termed the Youth Lifestyles Survey (YLS), Graham and Bowling (1995) found that the peak age of offending for males was 14 for 'expressive property offences', 16 for violent offences, 17 for serious offences, and 20 for drug offences. Among females, the peak age of offending was found to be 15 for property, expressive and serious offences, 16 for violent offences and, 17 for drug offences. According to Schelle (as cited in Trembley, 2016) in 2009, 38.7% of juvenile offenders recidivated within a three-year period, with 95.5% of those who recidivated committing a new crime and the rest being returned on violations. Cochran, Mears, Bales, and Stewart (2014) found that there are an estimated 730,000 inmates released back to the community each year. Of those released, it is estimated that at least half will return back to jail or prison within three years.

Recidivism is also disproportionately represented by people from socially excluded backgrounds. According to the Offender Profile Development Manual (Department of Correctional Services, 2004) social exclusion is what happens to people as a result of the combination of linked problems such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low income, family background, and other social disadvantages. Even though no official statistics exist concerning the recidivism rate in South Africa, Schoeman (2010) estimates it to be between 55% and 97%. National and international studies hypothesise that recidivists are responsible for a majority of the crimes committed (Schoeman, 2010). In the present study, the researcher seeks to further explore the phenomenon of recidivism by understanding and describing the lived experiences of incarcerated young people who are repeat offenders.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to explore recidivism as a lived experience among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre in Polokwane, Limpopo Province.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- To describe the subjective meanings that recidivist youth attach to their behaviour;
- To establish what the youth consider to be the causes of their recidivist behaviour; and,
- To determine what the youth perceive as possible interventions to reduce recidivism.

1.5 Significance of the study

The proposed study could deepen our understanding of the factors associated with recidivism among the youth. It is hoped that the study will provide insight into the lived experiences of youth in conflict with the law. These insights could help the Limpopo Department of Social Development, Department of Correctional Services and South African Police Services in strengthening crime-prevention, rehabilitation and re-integration strategies.

1.6 Outline of the chapters

Chapter one provided the background to the study including an outline of the research problem. The aim and objectives of the study were also presented. In chapter 2 relevant literature pertaining to the subject under investigation is reviewed. The theoretical framework that guided the researcher is also discussed. In chapter three the methodology that was followed is outlined. In this regard, issues like the research design, sampling, data collection and analysis are addressed. The quality criteria that guided the investigation, including the ethical issues that were observed in conducting the study are highlighted. Chapter four presents the findings of the study. In chapter five the findings of the study are discussed in the context of existing literature. Chapter six provides conclusion, limitations and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The following chapter aims to look at the already existing literature on recidivism. The literature will focus on the following topics: nature and extent of recidivism; factors associated with recidivism; and management of recidivism. Theories of recidivism will also be discussed including the theoretical framework that guided the researcher in the present study.

2.2 Nature and extent of recidivism

Although the operational definition of recidivism varies by tracking period (for example, 6 months, 12 months, and 24 months), or by type of processing by the criminal justice system (for example, re-arrest, reconviction, and re-incarceration), Snyder and Sickmund (2006) estimated the adolescents' reoffending rate in the USA within 1 year of release to be 55%. According to Forgays (2008) this rate can reach 80% when the tracking period is extended to 3 years. These estimates are limited to the cases reported to the authorities such that the actual volume of re-offending may be larger in quantity. Studies on self-reported delinquency observed a strong correlation between past and future delinquency, which suggests a higher rate of adolescent recidivism than official data indicate (for example, Lee, Jang & Bouffard, 2013; van der Geest, Blokland & Bijleveld, 2009). A study conducted in the USA by Durose, Copper and Snyder (2014) found that overall, 67.8% of the 404,638 state prisoners released in 2005 in 30 states were re-arrested within 3 years of release, and 76.6% were arrested within 5 years of release. Within the first 5 years of release from state prison in 2005, an estimated 28.6% of inmates were arrested for a violent offence. Among all released inmates, an estimated 1.7% was arrested for rape or sexual assault, and 23.0% were arrested for assault. During the 5-year follow-up period, the majority (58.0%) of released prisoners were arrested for a public order offence.

Cusick, Goerge, and Bell (2009) found that of the 13,511 juveniles released from correctional facilities between 1996 and 2003, 49% were re-arrested within 18 months of release. In this sample, the likelihood of recidivism was higher for older offenders with more extensive criminal backgrounds and a current drug or property offence. Soyombo (2009) reported that the prevalence rate of criminal recidivism in Nigeria in 2005 was 37.3%. In 2010, Abrifor, Atere and Muoghalu (2012) estimated the prevalence of recidivism in Nigerian prisons at 52.4%. Since then, there has not been any indication that the trend has declined. According to Vacca (2004) the most plausible reasons to explain the relatively high recidivism rate among released offenders were centred on the offenders' educational illiteracy, lack of vocational job skills, lack of interpersonal skills, or criminal history.

The rate of incarceration in South Africa is ever increasing, without a commensurate improvement in public safety. Criminals are either so emotionally desperate or psychologically distressed that they do not care about the consequences of their actions-or they believe that they are not going to get caught. The threat of punishment, regardless of the severity, is rarely a factor in determining their behaviour (Notshulwana, 2012). According to Singh (2008) crime continues inside the prison walls and gangs are rife behind bars. The available data on recidivism is an indication that the ex-offenders that are released by the DCS are not rehabilitated. In 2008 during a meeting with the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services, the then Commissioner of Correctional Services announced that the statistics of recidivism was estimated by an unnamed independent body to be around 94% (Ramagaga & Gould, 2009). Most of these ex-offenders re-offend within a period of three years after they had been released up until they are in their mid-forties where the rate of re-arrest falls noticeably (Freeman, 2003).

2.3 Factors associated with recidivism

2.3.1 Gender

A study by Oruta (2016) found that gender was statistically significant as a determinant influencing recidivism among inmates in prisons. The reasons for the larger proportions of male recidivists in prisons can be linked to the fact that male convicts have higher tendency to recidivate into crime than female convicts. This can be attributed to the fact that male criminals are likely to be more adventurous and involved in a variety of antisocial activities than females. This finding can equally be linked to the masculine nature of male criminal recidivists compared to their female counterparts. This finding corroborates Benda's (2005) findings that there are noteworthy gender differences in predictors of criminal recidivism, and that men are more likely to return to prison because of criminal peer associations, carrying weapons, alcohol abuse, and aggressive feelings.

2.3.2 Socialisation

According to Sanei and Mir-Khalili (2015) from the child's point of view, parents are the most important and most valuable models of the universe. Violent behaviour of the family members with each other and with the child causes this wrong belief in the child's mind that violence and controversy are the solutions to their problem in the community. Sanei and Mir-Khalili (2015) found that parental attitudes, a hostile environment, and aggressive conduct are risk factors for youth violence. In a study on dynamic predictors of sexual recidivism by Hanson and Harris (2000), the recidivists were generally considered to have poor social supports, attitudes tolerant of sexual assault, antisocial lifestyles, poor self-management strategies and difficulties cooperating with supervision. In this study the findings concluded that participants grew up in environments where they were exposed to substance abuse, violence of family members, unacceptable sexual behaviours, unstable relationships and low socio economic experiences. By observing the behaviour of their families and parents, the participants modelled their own behaviour accordingly. Urombo and Kasimba (2018) had similar results when researching factors behind recidivism at Chikurubi farm prison in Zimbabwe. They found that most of the recidivists grew up in dysfunctional families, experienced specific challenges including substance abuse, violence, low socioeconomic status, stigmatisation and unemployment.

According to Londt (2008) the common characteristics in South African offenders are that they come from communities that lack adequate resources, have general profiles of a highly compromised quality of life which includes unsatisfactory parental supervision. In a study by Ryan, Williams and Courtney (2013), child neglect surfaced as the strongest predictor of delinquency and a propensity towards re-offending behaviour. Kandala (2018) discovered that many young people in South Africa face problems arising from family conflicts; one of the most common family conflicts being parents' separation or divorce, which lead to the breakdown of the family. This results in many families being headed by single women, whom for most of them had limited formal education.

Socially, school and academics play a role in juvenile delinquency. Low attachment to school is an indicator for risk (Loeber, Farrington, Stouthammer-Loeber & Raskin-White, 2008). According to Stevens (2001), there is a positive link between low levels of education and recidivism. Barnert et al., (2015) discovered that youth felt unsafe in schools because of gang activity and bullying; leading many in their communities to protect themselves by joining gangs, carrying weapons, or avoiding school. Several participants in this study stated that poor school performance sets youths on a "bad pathway" because they feel frustrated, resulting in poor attendance or dropping out. Participants recognised the importance of academic achievement, and expressed the idea that feeling unsafe at school was the primary barrier to school attendance and a main contributor to juvenile offending. Xoliswa Sibeko (2009) the then Correctional Services National Commissioner, cited illiteracy as one of the key contributing factors to criminal behaviour (including re-offending).

Youngblade et al. (2007) identified various risk factors for recidivism in juveniles including: abuse and neglect; domestic violence; conflicts with parents; and questionable parental lifestyles. Similarly, in their study on the relationship between parenting and delinquency, Hoeve et al. (2009) found that serious delinquency and offences are found to be influenced by factors such as: insecure attachment; poor parenting practices; parental neglect; family stress; and a low socio-economic status.

In a study by Urombo and Kasimba (2018), recidivists highlighted that growing up with absent parents is associated with lack of proper guidance and support compared to those who grow up under the guidance of both parents; in that the participants believe that biological parents are more caring than non-biological parents. Some participants highlighted the important role of fathers. They indicated that boys who grow up without their fathers tend to suffer from identity crisis as they search for their origins. As a result, they joined a group of criminals in order to fulfil this need. In this study, it was found that parental support is vital during the upbringing of children to avoid future delinquency and recidivism. Furthermore, they indicated that knowing one's parents was important. Participants indicated that adolescents who are unaware of who their parents are may end up committing crime as a result of identity crisis and lack of role models. Urombo and Kasimba (2018) also found that having absent parents affected the participant's ability to learn the morals, norms and values of a society; hence they became ignorant of the difference between right and wrong because they were never taught about it at all.

According to Kandala (2018) the size of the family may also be a predictor of juvenile recidivism; particularly given that most of black South African families have a traditional understanding of families. The researcher notes that family does not only mean both parents and children but may include cousins, uncles, aunts, and grandparents; and in many of these families only very few people may have an income, on which the entire family depends on. Furthermore, the majority of juveniles rely on government grants due to the lack of or death of parents; dependency on grandparents; unemployment of parents with no other source of income than the child support grants. Kandala (2018) highlights that although government grants are distributed monthly, they are not sufficient for most families to cover all the household necessities and that access to savings or credit to cover or supplement the grants may help to sustain these families. However, since poor people are unlikely to have access to this service, many, especially juveniles turn to life of crime (Kandala, 2018).

2.3.3 Peer pressure

Sussman, Pokhrel, Ashmore and Brown (2007) indicate that peers and peer relations are developmentally significant in the lives of youth and young adults and that one's delinquent peer association is a key influence on one's own delinquency. Crosnoe (2000) suggests that peer groups can offer youth friendship and emotional and social support, as well as an escape from other aspects of their lives. These factors can have both prosocial and antisocial influences on youth, depending on the circumstances; some youths may seek out prosocial peers as a way to avoid negative influences in their homes, while others may associate with antisocial peers despite a positive home environment. Other youths may be manipulated into joining groups. Warr (1996) found that there are group leaders (called instigators) who recruit weaker individuals, initiate delinquent behaviour, and motivate others to join the group.

The motivations for joining a gang to Baccaglini (as cited in Lachman, Roman & Cahill, 2013) suggests that youths perceive many personal benefits to being part of a gang. These benefits include: prestige and status, protection, excitement, avoidance of conflict with parents and family, and making money through illegal activities such as selling drugs. Similarly, 100% of the participants in a study by Samuels (2010) belonged to a gang either on the outside or to a prison gang. The reasons provided for joining a gang were feelings of loneliness, the need for protection, peer pressure, and safety considerations. Furthermore, 75% of the participants affirmed that being part of a gang had influenced their return to prison. Adolescents who are affiliated with delinquent peers are at increased risk of becoming involved in serious delinquency, violence, and crime (Ferguson & Meehan, 2010). Peer influences that include pressure to engage in fighting and weapon carrying also increase prospects of involvement in violence (Salzinger, Feldman, Rosario, & Ng-Mak, 2011). Additionally, interaction with criminally involved peers is a common characteristic of recidivists (Mulder et al., 2011).

According to Barnert et al. (2015) boys felt pressured to exhibit a “macho” persona, which promoted fighting, theft, gangbanging, drug and gun possession and use. Conversely, the researchers indicate that girls, driven by a desire for popularity or to please a boyfriend, were more likely to be detained for fighting, prostitution, or carrying drugs or weapons for a boy. Youth may also join gangs when their friends and family (specifically siblings and cousins) are already members of the gang (Hill, Howell, Hawkins, & Battin-Pearson, 1999). Mulder et al. (2011) further found that peer influences such as those received from gang membership can be indicative of violence and criminal activity. Gang affiliation was found to be a negative social influence that was indicative of future criminal activity.

2.3.4 Economic factors/poverty

According to Bartol and Bartol (2005) poverty refers to a situation in which basic resources to maintain an average standard of living within a specific geographical region are lacking. This typically includes the absence of sufficient income to meet the basic necessities of life. Lewis (2006) hypothesised that crimes are more prevalent within areas of lower socio- economic status than upper socio-economic status and that many engage in crime because they have insufficient economic means. Rates of violence are particularly high in poorer communities in the country, and many children already made vulnerable by poverty are also at risk from increased exposure to violence (Coovadia, 2009).

In a study on the re-integration of offenders, Mpuang (2001) found that most offenders in South Africa are unemployed, impoverished, uneducated and by reason of these social and economic circumstances often find themselves driven to a life of crime. Kandala (2018) notes that the lack of income and access to employment have been attributed to poor or lack of education and that individuals with poor or low levels of education have little prospects of employment and no prospect on how to change their lives. According to Dixon (2008), the exclusion of almost two-thirds of South Africans from the labour market (62% unemployed), has resulted in chronic poverty and life frustration.

Similarly, in his study on challenges that contribute to recidivism, that offenders face upon release, Samuels (2010) discovered that 50% of the recidivists had been unemployed or earned a meagre salary at the time the crime was committed. Therefore, the recidivists indicated that they had to steal in order to survive financially. This, according to Samuels (2010) highlights a direct link between unemployment and criminal behaviour. Furthermore, the educational pattern of the participants show that they had a very low level of education. This posed as a challenge for offenders that have to compete in the job market with those that have a better education.

Muntingh (2005) found that crime thrives in poverty-stricken areas where crime ceases to be associated with criminogenic needs but with need for survival. If offenders are returning to neighbourhoods that do not provide access to the sort of services that are important for re-integrating them into the broader community, they will be less likely to succeed in their post-release transition and more likely to recidivate (Travis, McBride, & Solomon, 2005). Mpuang (2001) states that in order to reduce the crime rate, efforts should be made to enable offenders to escape these constraints.

2.3.5 Conduct disorder

According to the American Psychiatric Association (APA)'s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (DSM V), the diagnostic criteria for Conduct Disorder is as follows:

A. A repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated, as manifested by the presence of at least three of the following 15 criteria in the past 12 months from any of the categories below, with at least one criterion present in the past 6 months:

- Aggression to people and animals;
- Destruction of property;
- Deceitfulness or theft; and
- Serious violations of rules.

B. The disturbance in behaviour causes clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning.

C. If the individual is age 18 years or older, criteria are not met for antisocial personality disorder.

Conduct Disorder can have an onset in childhood (prior age 10) or in adolescence (after age 10).

According to Butcher, Hooley and Mineka (2014) children with conduct disorders show a deficit in social behaviour. They manifest such characteristics as overt or covert hostility, disobedience, physical and verbal aggressiveness, quarrelsomeness, vengefulness, and destructiveness. Lying, solitary stealing, and temper tantrums are common. Such children tend to be sexually uninhibited and inclined toward sexual aggressiveness. Some may engage in cruelty to animals, bullying, fire-setting, vandalism, robbery, and even homicidal acts. Goldstein, Grant, Ruan, Smith, and Saha (2006) report that early onset conduct disorder is highly associated with later development of antisocial personality disorder and also frequently with other disorders such as substance-abuse disorder or depressive symptoms. In a study by Mallet (2013) conduct disorder was the strongest predictor of recidivism into detention placement, which is also consistent with findings by McReynolds, Schwalbe and Wasserman (2010). According to DeLisi and Conis (2012) serious, violent and persistent offending patterns that originated in childhood and escalate and persist in to adulthood are derived from multi-problem youths who come from dysfunctional families, display violent and aggressive behaviour, exhibit pro-criminal and pro-violent attitudes and thinking patterns, show substance abuse histories, and sustained criminal involvement.

Research by Beaver, Ratchford and Ferguson (2009) demonstrates that criminal familial socialisation, risk-seeking behaviour, criminal associations, substance abuse, a low self-esteem, impulsivity, and low self-control are predictors for further involvement in aggression and violent behaviour. Low self-esteem has been associated with juvenile delinquency as it can lead young people to associate with other young people with antisocial behaviours. According to Lyam (as cited in Pechorro et al., 2014) minors diagnosed with comorbid combinations of disruptive behaviour disorders and attention deficit exhibit a particularly severe and aggressive type of antisocial behaviour, similar to that of adults with psychopathy. Ang and Huan (2008) found that childhood behavioural problems (such as aggression) are some of the best predictors of adult criminality and this further seems to be true for the phenomenon of re-offending. Loza (2004) considers problematic childhood behaviour as one of the best predictors of recidivism.

2.3.6 Personality disorders

The psychiatric disorder most often associated with both criminal activity and recidivism is known by different terms: psychopathy, antisocial personality disorder (ASPD), dissocial personality disorder (DPD) and sociopathy (Smal & Louw, 2011). Vaughn and Howard (2005) suggest that psychopathy provides an ideal conceptual framework for studying serious, violent, and chronic delinquency. Psychopathy is an important risk factor for recidivism and, more specifically, for violence.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (2013), the diagnostic criteria for Antisocial Personality Disorder is as follows:

A. A pervasive pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others, occurring since age 15 years, as indicated by three (or more) of the following:

1. Failure to conform to social norms with respect to lawful behaviours, as indicated by repeatedly performing acts that are grounds for arrest.
2. Deceitfulness, as indicated by repeated lying, use of aliases, or conning others for personal profit or pleasure.
3. Impulsivity or failure to plan ahead.
4. Irritability and aggressiveness, as indicated by repeated physical fights or assaults.

5. Reckless disregard for safety of self or others.
 6. Consistent irresponsibility, as indicated by repeated failure to sustain consistent work behaviour or honour financial obligations.
 7. Lack of remorse, as indicated by being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt, mistreated, or stolen from another.
- B. The individual is at least age 18 years.
- C. There is evidence of conduct disorder with onset before age 15 years.
- D. The occurrence of antisocial behaviour is not exclusively during the course of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Psychopathic personality is characterised by affective, cognitive, and behavioural features where there are deficits in shame, guilt, and remorse, and in the case of primary psychopathy, an absence of these emotions. Psychopathic personality is characterised by a constellation of interpersonal, affective, lifestyle, and behavioural characteristics that manifest in wide-ranging antisocial behaviours (Tuvblad, Bezdjian, Raine, & Baker, 2013). Behaviourally, psychopaths have poor behavioural control, evidence early behaviour problems, engage in juvenile delinquency, are criminally versatile, and have records of noncompliance/revocation of conditional release. When charged with their crimes, psychopathic individuals present as guiltless and are prone to externalise blame (DeLisi et al., 2014). According to Andershed, Gustafson, Kerr, and Stattin (2002) psychopathic traits, refer to a manipulative, deceitful, callous, and remorseless pattern that is associated with a more serious, persistent, and violent early-onset type of antisocial behaviour in adult men, with a preference for exciting and dangerous activities.

According to Babiak and Hare (2006), offenders who meet psychopathic or ASPD criteria have greater criminogenic needs, commit more violent crimes, and tend to recidivate more than non-psychopathic offenders. The researchers further found a correlation between thinking styles and antisocial personalities as well as with criminal behaviour. Zhang (2002) states that thinking styles, are intrinsically related to personality characteristics, which leads to the assumption that the presence of antisocial personality characteristics enhances certain criminal thinking styles supportive of a criminal lifestyle.

Loots and Louw (2012) suggest a general tendency for individuals meeting the diagnostic criteria for ASPD and DPD respectively to engage in higher levels of criminal thinking than those without traits associated with the disorders. This implies that individuals with ASPD and DPD are more likely to maintain a criminal lifestyle and possibly recidivate if adequate intervention fails. Morgan and Del Fabbro (2018) also found a positive correlation between a diagnosis of ASPD or antisocial traits and recidivism demonstrating that this diagnosis may be a risk for re-offence.

Youths with psychopathic personalities characterised by greater impulsivity, narcissism, callousness, guiltlessness, and emotional coldness are not only more antisocial but also more likely to engage in more serious forms of interpersonal violence (Vaughn & DeLisi, 2008). Psychopathic youth break rules earlier, are arrested sooner, and get processed by the juvenile court earlier than their peers (DeLisi et al., 2014).

2.3.7 Substance use/abuse

Substance use is often associated with recidivism. The more prior convictions an individual has, the more likely that individual is a drug abuser (Chenube, Dosumu, Omomoyesan, & Omumu, 2011). On their release from prison, the ex-addicts' sobriety is often challenged by many stressors that increase their risk of relapse (Tadi & Louw, 2013). Many ex-offenders are likely to use substances to relieve this stress and are not mindful of the negative effect this has on their judgment and emotions. Poor judgment, anger and conflicts experienced during this state are likely to lead to offenders' returning to crime (Simpson, 2007). According to Marais and Subramaney (2015) substance abuse increases the risk of violent and criminal behaviour, which may partly explain their finding of higher rates of substance abuse in the forensic psychiatric population. Furthermore, substance abuse may influence recidivism and relapse rates.

Following the onset of puberty, there are normative increases in risk-taking and social affiliation drives that enhance substance use and delinquency (Reyna & Farley, 2006). These changes are particularly problematic for youth who associate with deviant peers; such youth are themselves more likely to engage in substance use, aggression, and other problem behaviours (Sullivan, 2006). Hoeve, McReynolds and McMillan (2013) found juveniles with substance abuse problems to be more likely to recidivate as compared to juveniles without substance use problems. Substance abuse is associated with severe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) symptoms and conduct disorders in children. Higher levels of alcohol and marijuana use are correlated with antisocial behaviours, such as violence and conduct disorder (Molina & Pelham, 2003).

Gantana (2014) in her study on sexual recidivism, found that participants were exposed to family environments with serious alcohol abuse and, in some cases, dagga and mandrax. With substances being freely available and easily accessible, vulnerable participants started to experiment with substances at a very early stage in their lives. According to their response, almost all the sexual crimes were committed while participants were under the influence of substances such as alcohol, dagga and mandrax. Participants reported that the use of alcohol and drugs played a significant role in committing another sex offence after release from prison. Londt (2008) purports that children raised in risky families are likely to demonstrate health-threatening behaviours that include smoking, alcohol abuse and drug abuse. Research by Grunwald, Lockwood, Harris, and Mennis (2010) concluded that the neighbourhood a juvenile offender lived in impacted recidivism among drug-offences.

Shaffer, Hartman, and Listwan (2009) estimated that nearly 60% of incarcerated women had used drugs in the month prior to their offences and about half of incarcerated women were using drugs or alcohol at the time of their offence. Furthermore, Holtfreter and Morash's (2003) analysis of women offenders found that women with the highest risk of recidivism had a drug addiction, had mental health issues, childhood issues, employment difficulties, and educational deficits. According to Benda (2005) present use of illegal drugs and prior criminal history increase the risk of arrests more than twice as much for women as for men.

Drug and alcohol abuse is a problem among offenders with mental illness. Mentally ill offenders with substance abuse problems were more likely to recidivate than mentally ill offenders without chemical dependency issues (Hartwell, 2004). Substance abuse, in conjunction with medication non-adherence, may increase the likelihood of arrest (Farabee & Shen, 2004). In a study by Castillo and Alarid (2011) on the factors associated with recidivism among offenders with mental illness, it was found that many of the mentally impaired offenders suffered from a substance abuse problem. This was indicated by the offenders who were being supervised for a drug-related charge. The researchers discovered that of the offenders who reoffended after supervision ended, 48.9% of the new offences were drug related. This may indicate two possibilities: either that selling drugs provides income needed for survival or that some individuals return to self-medication with alcohol or illegal drugs to manage stress or control symptoms of their illness. Of the mentally impaired offenders who recidivated, most did so within the 1st year of release, and alcohol was found to be a contributing factor in the re-arrest.

Morgan and Del Fabbro (2018) studied the factors associated with recidivism at a South African forensic psychiatric hospital. They discovered that the odds of recidivism for those patients who used cannabis (only) was 2.8 times the odds of recidivism for those who did not use cannabis. The odds of recidivism for those patients with polysubstance use was 4.4 times the odds of recidivism for those without polysubstance use. They concluded that substance use disorders were significantly higher among recidivists confirming that substance use is a risk factor for recidivism.

2.3.8 Mental illness

Persons suffering from mental health disorders are more at risk to engage in offending behaviour and recidivism (Prinsloo & Hesselink, 2015). According to Forsythe and Gaffney (2012) poor mental health is internationally more prevalent amongst prisoners who, because of their mental health status are socially and mentally at risk, and are consequently experiencing an increased probability of re-offending and recidivism.

In a study by Magaletta, Diamond, Faust, Daggett and Camp (2009) it was found that in 2005, more than half of all offenders incarcerated in American prisons had a history of mental health problems; mostly with a history of mania, major depression, hallucinations and delusions. More than two thirds of the offenders had a prior criminal record and/or history of incarceration. According to Felson, Silver and Remster (2012) mentally ill inmates are more prone to recidivism and serve longer sentences than the non-mentally ill offender population. Providing treatment for criminals with a history of mental illness will decrease the risk of recidivism and improve their stability and public safety (Rotter & Carr, 2011).

2.3.9 Lack of social support post-release

According to Sanei and Mir-Khalili (2015) one of the main issues in the causes of recidivism can be noted as the lack of social and family acceptance among prisoners who have re-offended. After being released from prison, if family, friends, formal and informal institutions refuse to accept them, the risk of recidivism and returning to prison will become higher. Petersilia (2005) is of the opinion that finding stable housing is a pressing need for inmates returning to society. The researcher purports that most inmates who leave prison have very little money and as a result cannot afford housing on their own. Furthermore, even if they can afford housing, many landlords refuse to enter into a lease agreement after a background check reveals that the inmate is a felon. Haynie & South (2005) believe that individuals who fail to find stable housing are more likely to establish antisocial peer networks, and experience higher levels of strain.

Makarios, Steiner and Travis (2010) believe that when prisoners return to society, they oftentimes face severe deficits in areas that are vital to prosocial functioning. Problems in the areas of education, work, and housing plague many parolees who attempt to re-enter their communities, and often they fail because these deficits are associated with criminal behaviour. According to these researchers, these problems manifest themselves relatively quickly on release from prison, suggesting that interventions with parolees must happen early in the parole process.

Vacca (2004) found that released offenders were likely to be unemployed after release from prison due to their inadequate education and job skills. The criminal record of the ex-offender also makes it difficult to secure employment as employers are reluctant to employ such a person if it becomes known that he has spent time behind bars (Samuels, 2010). Similarly, Kandala (2018) notes that people with a bad criminal record are most likely to be discriminated against and disqualified when applying for employment. Fallahi, Poutaghs and Rodriguez (2012), state that unemployment promotes criminal activity in the persons who are unemployed and it tends to have a greater motivation to commit crime than when one is employed. The researchers found that the need to meet basic monetary and essential needs as well as the emotional desire to boost self-esteem causes the temptations to commit offences to increase. Spohn, Piper, Martin, and Frenzel (2001) found that recidivism rates are decreased when gainful, steady employment was available post-incarceration.

Andress, Wildes, Rehtine, and Moritsugu (2004) believe that it is in the best interest of communities to provide inmates with post-incarceration resources that empower them to successfully transition back into their communities, and become valuable, productive, and contributing members of society. Similarly, Taylor, Peplau, Sears and David (2003) found that the social support provided by former inmates' families and the community has a positive influence in terms of drawing individuals with deviant behaviour to a new crime-free life. Furthermore, stable family relationships and community ties promote the successful reintegration of inmates and often reduces instances of recidivism. Travis and Petersilia (2001) suggested that though the released inmate has an important role to play in successful reintegration, community is important in that it creates a linkage between in-prison programmes and community programmes to increase the chances of successful reintegration. Former inmates released to resource-poor communities face much greater challenges due to diminished access to essential services for successful re-entry. Once released, most former inmates need job placement, drug treatment, and other services, which are vital in curbing recidivism.

According to Cheliotis (2008), in South Africa, the change in name from the Department of Prisons to the Department of Correctional Services indicates that the intention was to move from mere incarceration to correction and rehabilitation of offenders. However, this correctional objective seems to be defeated if a corrected inmate goes back to join a family that is already dysfunctional, and hence involuntarily the corrected inmate reverts back to his/her offence.

2.4 Management of recidivism

According to Schoeman (2002) ineffective treatment of offenders can result in an increase in re-offending. Lemmer (2004) states that the most significant crime reduction efforts are those preventing a young offender's first arrest from leading to re-offending behaviour and further altercation with the criminal justice system. He posits that research has proven that the way law enforcement agencies handle first-time juvenile offenders, has a direct effect on the probability of them continuing to violate the law. However, when handled proactively, with the appropriate gravity, this first police encounter can prevent potentially chronic offending. Smit and Padayachee (2012) posit that the rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders is based on the assumption that individuals are not permanently criminal, and that it is possible to restore offenders to a useful life in which they can contribute to themselves and to society. They further state that rehabilitation and re-integration requires changing behaviour that is dysfunctional on various levels and harmful to the self, others and society to behaviour that is functional, harmless and contributory. The goal therefore of rehabilitation and re-integration is to prevent criminal recidivism.

According to Tillman (2015) identifying problematic behaviours and deficits in a child's social development is the first step in creating a prevention strategy that addresses the specific negative behaviours associated with delinquency, and the inclination towards future offending. Winokur, Smith, Bontrager, and Blankenship (2008) are of the opinion that the best form of preventing future re-offending is through boot camps, jails and prisons. Spohn et al. (2001) suggest that recidivism rates decreased when criminal offenders were offered education and rehabilitation opportunities while incarcerated or under direct supervision of the court.

Ryan and Yang (2005) state that residential treatment is one of the most effective interventions aimed at reducing recidivism. Residential placements include but are not limited to; treatment facilities, detention centres, jails, prisons, and boot camps. These researchers are of the notion that while offenders are locked away, they are less likely to re-offend which is why putting them in a detention centre setting is the best solution. In addition, Winokur, et. al. (2008) found that the length of stay within a residential treatment centre can have an impact on whether or not a juvenile offender recidivates post release. The longer the stay in residential facilities the less likely the juvenile males were to recidivate. The shorter the stay, twelve months or less, had higher recidivism rates among the offenders. Alternatively, Shapiro, Smith, Malone and Collaro (2010) looked at the differences in recidivism rates between 2,007 residential placed and community placed juveniles. Their findings indicate that those who were placed in a residential facility had a higher rate of recidivism than those who were placed within the community. They propose that grouping delinquent peers together in a secure setting could be a reason for the high recidivating among the residentially placed juveniles due to it acting as deviant training.

Research suggests that there are two critical vehicles to support youth offender reintegration: strengthening family (and peer) relationships, and developing sustainable financial stability away from a life of crime. Ryan and Yang (2005) followed 90 delinquents post-release from long-term residential facilities. They found that progress in treatment is unlikely unless the key members of the family participated throughout the process. Therefore, they concluded that to create lower recidivism rates among the offenders, families needed to be actively involved. Oruta (2016) states that there is a need to come up with working pre-release programmes meant to enable inmates to have smooth transitions from correctional institutions to their communities by working with the offenders to develop plans, including housing, employment and participation in post-release programmes. These programmes should involve both the community and correctional institutions. This will help inmates to successfully re-enter their communities since members of the community would have been involved in the process.

According to Papa (2015), remote parenting/ open days, is one of the programmes that has very big impact on inmates because it is meant to promote and improve family strength support systems by allowing parents to continue guiding their children despite the incarceration; it promotes inmates' acceptability by the nuclear family, friends and relatives; which is important for re-integration and further promotes reconciliation in families and community, thus reducing dysfunctioning of the family. Participants in a study by Samuels (2010) indicated that it should be compulsory for parolees/probationers to attend programmes after their release, and that this should form part of the parole conditions. They believe that compulsory programmes will assist parolees/probationers to become rehabilitated and reintegrated into society successfully and thus sustain the overall rehabilitation programme.

The responsibility of the Department of Correctional Services is to correct behaviour in a secure, safe and humane environment to facilitate the achievement of rehabilitation and the avoidance of recidivism (Singh, 2008). The White Paper on Corrections (2005) states that the purpose of correctional system in South Africa is not punishment, but protection of the public, promotion of social responsibility and enhancing of human development in order to prevent recidivism. It further states that young offenders fall into a category of people who, even after serving a lengthy sentence, still have the chance to make something of their lives. Provision of rehabilitation/correction service delivery focusing on human development and education and training for the youth is key to the prevention of recidivism. The new policy shift in South Africa has resulted in an "Integrated Support System" for offenders, which focuses on delivering learning programmes with non-government and community-based organisations. Given that spending time in prison does not necessarily result in a person turning away from his or her involvement in crime, these programmes have to be concerned with offender development and rehabilitation which can meet the individual needs of the offender in his or her community (Roper, 2005).

One such intervention is offered by Khulisa Crime Prevention Initiative which has been working with children and young people since 1997. Khulisa offers a holistic approach towards developing youth into active participants in South African society and away from crime and violence. Early intervention, rehabilitation, reintegration and prevention programmes and interventions are provided to youth in communities, or while incarcerated and after release from correctional centres. The foundational rehabilitation programme is “My Path” which provides and establishes networks that offer social, emotional and practical support to recently released offenders. The methodology includes weekly individual counselling sessions, mentoring, facilitated group discussions and the streaming of participants into learnerships, further studies, informal employment or community work (Roper, 2005). Cullen, Myer, and Latessa (2009) highlight factors such as: family influence; peer interactions; effective use of leisure time; conduct problem; non-severe pathology; and substance abuse as elements in a juvenile’s environment that can be targeted in risk reduction intervention planning. The researchers indicate that the inability to administer appropriate intervention exacerbates the juvenile delinquency problem.

Urombo and Kasimba (2018) discovered that inmates who underwent vocational training were less likely to engage in crime compared to those who did not as they were economically viable and useful to their society. The researcher also found that guidance and counselling enabled the prisoners to manage triggers of criminal behaviour such as anger, bad company, and drug abuse which earlier influenced majority of them to commit crimes they were convicted of. Kandala (2018) highlights that school plays a significant role in the context of reintegration of juveniles in that it shapes the relationship between juveniles’ unemployment, crimes and recidivism. It was found that juveniles who had left school at the age of 16 and most likely to be in grade 8, faced very limited full-time job prospects and were forced to settle with secured part-time poor employment. This, according to Kandala (2018) is because the effects of school leaving depend on the last grade obtained by the juvenile. Consequently, juveniles with far less education found themselves unemployed and are more likely to be re-convicted with the same offences.

According to McMasters (2015), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) has been shown to be one of the most effective strategies in reducing recidivism among juveniles, focusing on effectively changing the behaviour that drives delinquency. The researcher purports that CBT is based on the theory that irrational and antisocial thinking errors lead to irrational and antisocial behaviours. CBT can help a youth to restructure distorted thinking and misperceptions. In turn, this will help change negative behaviour for the better. In addition, CBT's driving force in helping youth is that the thinking process can be influenced, and that a youth can change how they behave by changing the way they think. In most cognitive behavioural therapy programmes, offenders improve their social skills, problem solving, critical reasoning, moral reasoning, cognitive style, self-control, impulse management and self-efficacy.

2.5 Some theories of recidivism

2.5.1. Learning theories

2.5.1.1 Tarde's Laws of Imitation

An early criminologist who presented a theory of crime as normal learned behaviour was Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904). Tarde rejected Lombroso's theory that crime was caused by a biological abnormality, arguing that criminals were primarily normal people who, by accident of birth, were brought up in an atmosphere in which they learned crime as a way of life. He phrased his theory in terms of "laws of imitation" which focus on associations among individuals. The first law was that people imitate one another in proportion to how much close contact they have with one another. Tarde's theory states that imitation is most frequent, and changes most rapidly, in cities. He described this as "fashion". In rural areas, imitation is less frequent and changes slowly. He defined that as "custom". In this law, Tarde argued that crime begins as a fashion and later becomes a custom. The second law of imitation was that the inferior usually imitates the superior. He argued that many crimes originated in the cities and were then imitated by those in rural areas. The third law of imitation was that the newer fashions displace the older ones (Vold, Bernard & Snipes, 2002).

2.5.1.2 Sutherland's Differential Association Theory

Sutherland's theory of differential association has two basic elements; content and process. The content of what is learned includes specific techniques for committing crimes; appropriate motives, drives, rationalisations and attitudes; all of which are cognitive elements. In addition, the process by which the learning takes place involves associations with other people in intimate personal groups. Both elements of Sutherland's theory are derived from "symbolic interactionism", a theory developed by George Herbert Mead (1863-1931). In Mead's theory, a cognitive factor- "meanings"- determines behaviour. Mead argued that people construct relatively permanent "definitions" of their situation out of the meanings they have derive from particular situations, and form a relatively set way of looking at things. It is because of these "definitions" that different people in similar situations may act in very different ways. Drawing on this theory, Sutherland argued that the key factor determining whether people violate the law is the meaning they give to social conditions they experience, rather than conditions themselves. Ultimately, whether persons obey or violate the law depends on how they define their situation (Vold, Bernard & Snipes, 2002).

2.5.2 Labelling Theory

The Labelling or Social Reaction Theory proposes that when a person commits a crime, they will receive the label of "criminal". When a person is labelled as such by society, they are likely to accept this label as a part of themselves. Because the person now thinks of him/herself as a criminal, he/she is now likely to continue in his/her criminal behaviour (Becker, 1963). The Labelling Theory by Becker and Lemert, hypothesises that those who receive formal punishment will be more likely to commit crime in the future because once labelled, they often face additional problems as a result of the negative stigma attached to them.

This theory explores the journey to social deviance in two stages; primary deviance and secondary deviance. Primary deviance begins with an initial criminal act, after which a person may be labelled as deviant or criminal but does not yet accept this label. By this it is meant that they do not think of themselves as being a criminal, it is this lack of viewing themselves as criminal that differentiates primary from secondary deviance.

This will remain a state of primary deviance as long as the offender is capable of rationalizing or dealing with this label by saying it is the result of a socially acceptable role (Lemert, 1951). When leading to secondary deviance, this criminal label is placed on an individual during what is known as a "degradation ceremony" in which the accused is officially labelled as a criminal. Secondary deviance, according to Lemert, occurs when a person finally accepts the deviant or criminal label into their self-image. He/ She then thinks of him/herself as a criminal or deviant. This becomes a means of defence, attack, or adaptation to the problems caused by societal reaction to primary deviation (Lemert, 1951).

2.5.3 Culture and social learning

According to Idang (2015), culture entails a totality of traits and characters that are peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other people or societies. This researcher further posits that culture embraces a wide range of human phenomena, material achievements and norms, beliefs, feelings, manners and morals. It is the patterned way of life shared by a particular group of people that claim to share a single origin or descent. Aziza (as cited in Idang 2015) asserts that culture is passed on from generation to generation. The acquisition of culture is a result of the socialisation process. This shows that every human being who grows up in a particular society is likely to become infused with the culture of that society, whether knowingly or unknowingly during the process of social interaction. Bergh and Theron (2003) also share the view that human behaviour is a function of interactions of personal characteristics and environmental factors. They indicate that the individual's behaviour is affected by societal agents such as cultural values, habits, myths, rituals, social roles, interpersonal relationships, communication patterns, family influences, economic conditions, political ideologies and social construction.

Nsamenang (1995) highlights that every cultural community structures its environment and organises development in ways that are culturally meaningful to its members and that every cultural group has its own concepts and perceptions of the new-born and the mechanisms of its socialisation. Whiting (as cited in Nsamenang, 1995), suggests that for child development, culture encourages the development of certain kinds of behavioural or personality dispositions in preference to others.

Furthermore, the pattern of socialisation is pragmatic, apprentice-like in nature, and is such that children are systematically moved from one role position to another until they assume adult roles. From the point of view of learning, this education has three stages: namely, observation, imitation, and creative action. After observing and then imitating what adults, elder siblings, and mentors do, with little or no instruction, the child is able to act, to create personally, and to exercise her/his trade or art (Nsamenang, 1995).

In light of the above, according to O'Connor and Perreyclear (2002), the Social Learning Theory asserts that criminal behaviours are learned behaviours in a given cultural and social context and therefore, offenders are capable of learning non-criminal behaviours should their circumstance change. Urombo and Kasimba (2018) cite that the criminal behaviour that recidivists exude is learned from the various interactions they get from prison and in the communities they hail from. Furthermore, O'Connor and Perreyclear (2002) state that the social learning theory affirms that the more attached a person is to the major social institutions of life such as family, politics and religion, the less likely they are to commit a crime. This means that if offenders have role models, family members who model good behaviour and/or positive advocates in their lives who they are attached to, they are less likely to have criminal behaviours (Urombo & Kasimba, 2018).

2.5.4 Theoretical framework: The General Strain Theory

Whilst there are many psychological theories to explain recidivism, the researcher opted to use the General Strain Theory as a theoretical framework to guide the present study. The General Strain Theory of Dr Robert Agnew, which evolved from Merton's Strain Theory posits that strain from the outside environment can cause many negative feelings in an individual including defeat, despair, and fear, but the feeling that is most applicable to crime is anger (Agnew, 1992). Agnew asserted that individuals become angry when they blame their negative circumstances and relationships on others. Anger was found to incite a person to action, lower inhibitions, and create a desire for revenge. Anger and frustration may also enable the individual to justify crime. Agnew especially stressed that individuals who are subject to repetitive strain may be more likely to commit crime or delinquent acts.

This is due to the fact that when other coping strategies for the strain are taxed, the threshold for negative relations is pushed to the limit. Consequently, the individual may become hostile and aggressive. The General Strain Theory proposed that an increase in strain would lead to an increase in anger, which may then lead to an increase in crime. There are three major types of strain according to General Strain Theory: failure to achieve positively valued goals; the loss of positive stimuli and the presentation of negative stimuli.

Strain as a failure to achieve positively valued stimuli

Agnew (1992) notes that there are three different types of goals for which members of the society strive: money, status and respect, and autonomy. He purports that money is a cause of strain when it is not available to the individual through legitimate means. Research indicates that monetary strain was related to crime in a limited fashion but does seem to confirm that delinquents desire to gain large amounts of money. Another type of a positively valued goal is that of status and respect. This is an especially important factor with regard to masculine status. This type of status differs culturally, but in order for an individual to prove their masculinity, they may resort to crime to achieve that status. Traits that are associated with masculinity are often displayed through criminal behaviour (Agnew, 1992). Autonomy, the power over oneself, is the third type of goal that is valued in a society. Strain induced by autonomy mainly affects adolescents and the lower class because of their position in society. Agnew proposed that the need for autonomy can result in delinquency and crime, as the individual tried to assert autonomy, achieve autonomy, and relieve frustration against those who have denied the individual autonomy.

Strain as the removal or loss of positively valued stimuli

Agnew discovered that the removal of positive stimuli can also cause strain. This loss could manifest itself in the form of a death or a broken relationship with a friend or romantic partner, or it could be a result of the theft of a valued object. The strain that is felt by the individual due to the loss could lead the individual to delinquency as the individual attempts to prevent its loss, retrieve what was lost, or seek revenge on those who removed the positive stimuli.

Strain as the presentation of negative stimuli

This strain occurs in an individual due to the actual or anticipated presentation of negative or noxious stimuli. Some examples of negative stimuli that an adolescent might face are child abuse, neglect, adverse relations with parents and teachers, negative school experiences, adverse relations with peers, neighbourhood problems, and homelessness. The General Strain Theory states that noxious stimuli could promote aggression and other negative outcomes. Agnew (1992) explains that noxious stimuli could cause juveniles to engage in delinquent behaviour as a way to escape or avoid the negative stimuli, terminate the negative stimuli or seek revenge against the negative stimuli.

The General Strain Theory was considered a suitable theoretical framework as the aim of the study is to explore recidivism as a lived experience among the youth. The theory will assist the researcher to understand and explain the different factors and circumstances that lead to recidivist behaviour among the youth in a correctional facility.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology that was used in the present study is outlined in detail in this chapter. The phenomenological research design utilised is discussed as well as how sampling was conducted. The data collection process is also discussed in this chapter including the data collection instrument as well as how the data was collected. The data analysis method is also described in detail whilst the issues relating to trustworthiness of the study are highlighted. Lastly, this chapter focuses on the ethical considerations for the present study.

3.2 Research design

The present study utilised a phenomenological research design. Phenomenological research is the study of lived or experiential meaning and attempts to describe and interpret these meanings in the ways that they emerge and are shaped by consciousness, language, our cognitive and non-cognitive sensibilities, and by our pre-understandings and presuppositions. Phenomenology may explore the unique meanings of any human experience or phenomenon (Given, 2008). According to Welman and Kruger (1999 p. 189), “the phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of the people involved”. The phenomenological research design was deemed suitable for the current study as the researcher hoped to understand recidivism from the perspective of the recidivist.

3.3 Sampling

Participants for the present study were selected through purposive sampling. According to Babbie (2010) purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher’s judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative. The sample consisted of recidivist youth at Polokwane Secure Care Centre - in Polokwane (Limpopo Province) which holds youth up to 21 years.

The researcher approached the management of the facility and requested a list of all recidivist youth detained in the facility and identified which were most suitable for the intended study. Though a sample of 10 participants was envisaged for the present study, sampling however continued until data saturation occurred, with only six participants having been interviewed. Saturation is the point in data collection when no new or relevant information emerges (Given, 2008).

3.4 Data collection

In the present study, data were collected through in-depth semi-structured one-on-one interviews (see Appendix 1a on page 83 - Interview schedule: English version and Appendix 1b on page 84 - Interview schedule: Sepedi version). According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011) by making use of semi-structured interviews, researchers are able to obtain a detailed picture of the viewpoints and explanations that participants have about a specific topic. Qualitative data usually include transcribed interview or focus group transcripts, field-notes, and observations, and they may also include audio-recordings and video-recordings or photos (Given, 2008). All interviews were audio recorded and participants were interviewed separately to ensure the principles of anonymity and confidentiality. The interviews were conducted in English or Sepedi depending on the preference of the participant.

3.5 Data analysis

Data were analysed through the use of thematic analysis. According to Boyatzis (1998) thematic analysis is a process of encoding qualitative information. The researcher developed codes, words or phrases that serve as labels for sections of data. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe thematic analysis as a qualitative method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes data set in (rich) detail. The following three steps of thematic data analysis as elucidated by Bernard and Ryan (1998) were followed in the present study:

- **Read verbatim transcripts:** This refers to reading a small sample of text line by line. Similarly, in the present study the researcher read the transcripts repeatedly in order to identify themes in the data. This involved total immersion in the data.
- **Identify possible themes:** This refers to identifying how themes are linked to each other in a theoretical model. In the present study, the researcher divided the data into segments and scrutinised them for commonalities that reflected categories or themes. A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.
- **Compare and contrast themes, identifying structure among them:** This refers to pulling all the data from categories together and compare them, considering not only what text belongs in each emerging category but also how the categories are linked together. In line with the recommendation by Braun and Clarke (2006), the researcher examined for properties that characterised each category and further reduced data to a small set of themes that appear to describe the phenomenon under investigation.

3.6 Quality criteria

The following quality criteria pertaining to qualitative research were observed in the present study:

3.6.1 Credibility

This refers to the idea of internal consistency, where the core issue is “how we ensure rigor in the research process and how we communicate to others that we have done so” (Gasson, 2004, p. 95). In line with this quality criteria, the researcher ensured credibility of the results of the study by having prolonged engagement with participants, persistent observation and making detailed, rich descriptions of participants’ experiences of phenomena and the contexts in which those experiences occur.

3.6.2 Transferability

Also known as generalisability, this refers to showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts. Generalisability can be described as the manner in which the conclusions of the research can be transferred to other contexts and settings (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). To ensure transferability of the results of the present study, the researcher provided sufficient information about the research context, processes and participants of the study.

3.6.3 Dependability

This refers to techniques that show, if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results will be obtained. In order to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results (Shenton, 2004). Similarly, the researcher in the present study kept a detailed chronology of research activities and processes through field-notes and audio-recordings.

3.6.4 Confirmability, truthfulness and trustworthiness

This refers to a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest. The concept of confirmability is the qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity. Steps were taken to ensure as far as possible that the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). To ensure confirmability, the researcher in the present study "bracketed out" the world and any presuppositions that he or she may have and confronted the data in as pure form as possible.

The following are some of the steps that the researcher took to ensure trustworthiness:

- The researcher clarified uncertainties with participants and asked for explanations. The researcher also referred to previous statements made in order to get clarification.

- The researcher listened more than once to the tape recordings of all the participants in order to get a clear understanding of the data.
- While listening to the tapes the researcher made notes of the findings.
- The researcher categorised the findings and the data corroborated with selected theories.

3.7 Ethical considerations

3.7.1 Permission to conduct the study

Prior to the commencement of the study, the researcher requested ethical clearance from The University of Limpopo's Research Ethics Committee. Permission to interview youth in conflict with the law at Polokwane Secure Care Centre was requested from the Department of Social Development as well as the Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 2 on page 85- Letter of permission: Department of Social Development and Appendix 5 on page 91- Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee).

3.7.2 Informed consent

Participants were informed of the nature and purpose of the study prior to its commencement. They were requested to sign a consent form before participating in the study (see Appendix 3a on page 87 – Informed consent letter and form English version and Appendix 3b on page 88– Informed consent letter and form Sepedi version). Participants under the age of 18 were assisted by a caregiver before participation in the research project. This is in line with Section 31 of the Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005) which states that before a person holding parental responsibilities and rights in respect of a child takes any major decision that will affect the child's circumstances and wellbeing, that person must give due consideration to any views and wishes expressed by the child, bearing in mind the child's age, maturity and stage of development.

As the particular study was conducted at a secure centre, participants under the age of 18 were assisted by the caregiver. According to the Children's Act 38 of 2005, a caregiver is defined as "any person other than a parent or guardian, who factually cares for a child and includes:

- A foster parent;
- A person who cares for a child with the implied or express consent of a parent or guardian;
- A person who cares for a child whilst the child is in temporary safe care;
- A person at the head of a child and youth care centre where the child was placed;
- The person at the head of a shelter;
- A child and youth care worker who cares for a child who is without proper family care; and,
- The child at the head of a child-headed household

In the present study, the social worker as well as the senior social worker at the centre assisted the participants.

3.7.3 Confidentiality

In the present study, the researcher maintained confidentiality by ensuring that the participants' identities were not revealed in the research report. Furthermore, pseudo names were used instead of participant's real names.

3.7.4 Benefit of the current study

The recidivists at Polokwane Secure Care Centre will benefit from the current research as it will provide them with an in-depth understanding of the various factors that contributed to their recidivist behaviour. Various individualistic, family and societal factors were identified as contributing to recidivist behaviour. Family members of the recidivists may benefit from this study as the sample comprised of young offenders who were all under parental/guardian supervision at the time of incarceration. Knowledge and understanding of these contributory factors may assist families in reviewing for example their parenting styles. Furthermore, insight into these factors may assist family members on how to provide support to the young offenders post-release to reduce the likelihood of re-incarceration. The current study may also assist the staff at Polokwane Secure Care Centre in terms of developing or revising crime prevention, rehabilitation and re-integration strategies.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented, starting with the demographic details of the participants, and followed by a presentation of themes and the subthemes that emerged. The following key themes emerged from the study: a) labelling; b) peer pressure; c) substance abuse; d) socialisation; e) conduct disorder; and f) self-discipline and constructive activities. The chapter will be concluded by giving a brief summary of the findings.

4.2 Demographic details of participants

Six individuals participated in this study. The demographic details of the participants are presented in the table below (Table 1). Pseudo names were used to protect the identity of each research participant.

Name	Age	Gender	Types of crimes committed	Age at first arrest	Number of times incarcerated
Participant 1	17 years	Male	Housebreaking Theft	10 years	3 times
Participant 2	17 years	Male	Housebreaking Theft	14 years	3 times
Participant 3	17 years	Male	Theft; Murder	10 years	3 times
Participant 4	18 years	Male	Attempted murder Housebreaking Robbery	15 years	3 times
Participant 5	16 years	Male	Murder Housebreaking Shoplifting Assault	13 years	4 times
Participant 6	17 years	Male	Malicious Injury to Property Assault	16 years	2 times

Table 1: Demographic details of the participants

The above table illustrates demographic information of the participants that were interviewed. All participants were drawn from Bosasa/ Polokwane Secure Care Centre located at the Polokwane Welfare Complex. The participants were young males from age sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) who had re-offended. All the participants in the study were Sepedi speaking however one participant was able to converse in English.

4.3 Emerging themes

The emerging themes and subthemes are presented in a tabular form as reflected in Table 2 below. A detailed narrative presentation of each theme and subtheme will also be given.

Table 2: Themes and subthemes

Theme number	Main Theme	Subtheme
1.	Labelling (4.3.1)	
2.	Peer Pressure (4.3.2)	
3.	Substance abuse (4.3.3)	
4.	Socialisation (4.3.4)	Poverty (4.3.4.1)
		Parenting styles (4.3.4.2)
		Secondary Socialisation (4.3.4.3)
5.	Conduct Disorder (4.3.5)	Aggression to People and Animals (4.3.5.1)
		Destruction of Property (4.3.5.2)
		Deceitfulness or Theft (4.3.5.3)
		Serious Violations of Rules (4.3.5.4)
6.	Self-discipline and constructive activities (4.3.6)	

4.3.1 Labelling

One of the participants indicated the reason for his recidivist behaviour was due to being labelled as a criminal. Below is the relevant extract from the narrative of the participant:

“My home is a tavern. At home money is regularly missing and they always accuse me. Then because of those accusations I then decided to do the same thing that they accused me of even when I didn’t do it. Then I started to steal money at home. Then when busy stealing money at home they started hiding it from me. Then thereafter I did not find the money as I used to and I started stealing from next door” (Participant 1, male, 17 years).

From the above extract, it does appear that labelling one as a criminal can impact and influence the commencement as well as the continuation of criminal behaviour. The labelled individual internalises the said label and thus behaves as such.

4.3.2 Peer pressure

The findings of this study suggest that some participants’ recidivist behaviour was influenced by peers and those around them. The following extracts are from the interviews regarding the above-mentioned theme:

“I hung around with friends then hanging around with friends they started influencing me then I started stealing again, doing these things of stealing from shops again... I ended up hanging around with older people, going around with guns and then they eventually led me to this position I am in right now” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“It was friends who influenced me and said we must go and steal and do such things so because I was easily influenced I ended up hanging around with them...it was because of friends they influenced me saying I must bring something to the table so then I saw that hanging out with them I must bring something to the table I can’t go empty handed. Then that’s when I started stealing from the tenants and then I was brought here” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“At home they told me to stop the things I was doing. I just agreed because I had just returned. But as time went on, I started having that gangster spirit. I started having that spirit. I start wanting money, I start smoking. Here I don’t smoke right? When I get home and see those guys I associated with, I go back to smoking and we do all these things. We start that gang; we start living that life that we used to live” (Participant 5, male, 16 years).

Based on the above extracts, peer pressure appears to be a contributory factor to recidivist behaviour among the youth. Interaction with criminally involved peers appears to increase the likelihood of being involved in criminal activities repeatedly.

4.3.3 Substance abuse

Some of the participants highlighted the use of substances as a factor to their recidivist behaviour. Relevant extracts are presented below:

“Then in 2016 I committed again because of the reason that I was involved in drugs. I was smoking dagga and cigarette and at home they did not give me enough money. Then I started stealing at my next door and I was caught” (Participant 1, male, 17 years).

“Uh weed uh, I started 2014 but I wasn’t serious, I was still a beginner as they say. But after I got released from 2016 June/July, when I got to school, I was moved...my mom moved me to another school. That’s where I actually got influenced. I got new friends that were all smoking, so I felt like out you know. I wanted to be like them so I started smoking like really really smoking, yah”
(Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“Well...my friends...they usually bought it or I’d steal from my mom. Sometimes...before she knew that I was really smoking, she would give me money... I would steal it, if, if she’s bathing I would go into her room, to her purse. I would only take coin because I know that she won’t notice coin, she won’t notice that it’s missing”
(Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“You see after that time when I first moved after the first time I was arrested and then I started doing things like being naughty and started smoking cannabis, then that’s when I started doing all these naughty things”
(Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“I am someone who loved alcohol, smoking cannabis, hanging around with people that are not good... I had started smoking nyaope. Nyaope was driving me”
(Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“I think the problem is substances, I don’t know how you can stop them... they make you sleep a lot and when you sleep a lot you start thinking useless things... even if they said let’s go and assault people I would go. We could just...let’s taste this glue and see how it is...then we would. Where there are no substances you can think... straight. Things that are in order”
(Participant 6, male, 18 years).

From the above extracts, it appears that substances play a role in terms of recidivism. The maintenance of the substance use, as well as poor judgement following the substance use appear to contribute to recidivist behaviour.

4.3.4 Socialisation

The participants were able to relate various societal factors as influencing the involvement as well as continuation in criminal activities. The following subthemes emerged from the narratives of the participants: a) poverty; b) parenting styles; and c) secondary socialisation. Each subtheme is presented in terms of the relevant extracts from the narratives by the participants. A brief summary of the associated psychological meanings is presented at the end of each subtheme.

4.3.4.1 Poverty

Poverty was highlighted by one of the participants regarding recidivist behaviour. The relevant extract is presented below:

“When there are clothes at home and enough food and everything, I can’t go out and commit crimes” (Participant 1, male, 17 years).

The extract presented above indicates that the lack of basic needs can influence one to source the needs through criminal behaviour.

4.3.4.2 Parenting styles

Some of the participants indicated parenting style/ conflict with parents as having played a role in their recidivist behaviour. How parents interact with one another as well as with children can influence the child's behaviour. The findings are illustrated in the extracts below:

"Then I remained staying with my mother at stepfather's tavern. When I stayed there sometimes when my stepfather was angry he fought with my mother" **(Participant 1, male, 17 years).**

"But I was saying if there can be peace at home and tolerance and absence of different treatments to other children, there will not be crime my sister. If parents can stay with children and encourage them in good living, and to persevere on things like school going and focus on books and desist from roaming around at night thinking of alcohol as it will not benefit them in any way" **(Participant 1, male, 17 years).**

"Cause like, Mom she kicked me out literally she didn't want me, she didn't even want to see me at home, you understand" **(Participant 2, male, 17 years)**

"I did these crimes called housebreaking and theft, you understand. Uhm I did that because I ran away from home, on Friday, it was Friday 2014. I don't remember the month. That day my mother beat me you know. She beat me with a pan, a cooking pan. So I ran away from home to school. So from Friday I slept at school, Saturday, Sunday. I slept in the dining hall of the school, you understand. So like, Saturday I got hungry. So then I broke into the offices of the school, then that's where I found food, I found laptops so I decided to take one laptop" **(Participant 2, male, 17 years)**

“I come from a family where I’m privileged, you know, my mom does everything for me. But the thing is she beats me a lot you understand? First thing uh I didn’t like as a kid, she didn’t want me to play with other kids, you understand. She would like literally beat me for going out and playing in the street. That’s what actually made me want to go out, you understand... Ever since I was in pre-school, so I grew up as... as a kid whose mother does everything for him but he’s being beaten for certain things, and I grew up as a naughty kid to be honest” (Participant 2, male, 17 years)

“So like she keeps track of everything like I do, you understand. And when...when I do this major thing then she blows up with all those things I did in the past then when she gets furious then she kicks me out, you understand” (Participant 2, male, 17 years)

“At home they already had a protection order against me, there was this other shop with no one living there, I was living there... then I was forced because I didn’t have food... then we ended up stealing and I also saw that I’m going to die of hunger because I no longer have the protection of parents, I’m living at this shop so I ended up stealing with him” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“And at my mother’s house they kicked me out because there at my mother’s house they are getting social grants and they did not want to buy us clothes so then they moved me from there to my father’s home. When they took me there to my father then my father requested my grant money and they told him if he takes the grant money then we are no longer going to want this child and we will report to the police that he must never come back to our house. Then I had nowhere to live and lived on the streets” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“I failed once or twice somewhere there. And then I was moving around a lot going to my grandmother’s then to my father’s, going up and down you see... you find that they would take me out of a school then take me to another one and they were fighting over me, and my grandmother was busy fighting with my father over the social grant you see. I was going to school but I ended up dropping out because they were busy moving me around. When I was being moved around I wouldn’t be in the grade that I was in. For example, if I was in grade 3 they wouldn’t put me in grade 3, I would be taken back to grade 2. Then I would start grade 2 again then grade 3 after that. Then eventually I noticed that I would have completed school now I’m almost 18 which means I would be doing grade 12. Then I dropped out” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“Our parents must understand us. I understand that they may not have good jobs but they must try because the youth of today is controlled by their peers... At home, even if they don’t give you more than R100.00, but at least...you are a boy child, they must at least try to satisfy you because outside there you have your peers, and those peers, for example if they drink alcohol, you will want to copy them. But if at home they give you money, to buy alcohol, you will make sure you go home early; because at home they gave you money. But if you have to get it from elsewhere, at home they won’t know that you have money so they won’t know that you drink alcohol... But if you drink at...if they give you money and you drink with that money you will ensure that you go back home early because you were drinking with money they gave you at home. But if they don’t give you money you won’t think about them... And you will end up committing crime. At least if they can sacrifice and consider you and ask you what you like, what you don’t like. Most of the time we do crime because of our parents” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

The above extracts highlight the role of parenting in terms of recidivism. The extracts highlight various factors such as: a) how parents relate to each other can influence how the child relates to the world; b) how the lack of stability within the home environment can influence seeking stability elsewhere, namely with peers; c) the role of discipline/ punishment. It appears that the above-mentioned factors contribute to recidivist behaviour.

4.3.4.3 Secondary socialisation

Two of the participants emphasised how the society they come from influenced their recidivist behaviour. The findings are highlighted in the extracts below:

“In my neighbourhood, if you don’t wear Nike or nice things like that then you are considered a nobody. Then I started looking down on things and thought that crime is the way to go” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“I stole their gun and did wrong things with it only because I was influenced by the environment that I was living in because my peers were wearing certain clothes that I also wanted. When they were doing certain things I also did them” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“It’s not like I chose to be a thief but the things that I wanted, I wanted them because my peers had them... I wanted them because when they were wearing them I liked them. Because I am a boy, I want nicer things” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“My friend whom I grew up with, his brother has a scrapyard so my friend started driving cars when he was 16 years in 2015. He was driving cars and had guns, he always had stuff. When I witnessed those things I thought that’s the life, then the anger started to grow. Then when I turned 17 years I thought that everything was easy. When I wanted things I thought I could get them easily” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“When I joined that gang called Two Minutes, I started drinking and smoking, things like that. We met at school, we went to the same school together. Like I would see these boys forming a group of 5 or 4, they would be 5 or 4 wearing Dry Fit, wearing designer labels. Like as a boy I would envy them and wanted to be like them. I joined them and started dressing the way they did. Even at home I started telling them to buy me certain things, and they would buy for me. Like they wouldn’t do...they would buy for me but...I don’t get satisfied. The things they bought for me, they wouldn’t satisfy me that much then I ended up stealing, hurting people, robbing people of their money, caps, things like that.” (Participant 5, male, 16 years).

The above extracts indicate the role of the environment on recidivist behaviour. It appears that the participants felt the need to fit in with peers and to uphold a certain lifestyle and image. Due to limited resources, it appears they resorted to criminal activities in order to maintain that lifestyle.

4.3.5 Conduct disorder

In the present study, the participants indicated behavioural problems in line with Conduct Disorder. The following subthemes emerged from the narratives of the participants: a) aggression to people and animals; b) destruction of property; c) deceitfulness or theft; and d) serious violations of rules. Each subtheme is presented in terms of the relevant extracts from the narratives by the participants. A brief summary of the associated psychological meanings is presented at the end of each subtheme.

4.3.5.1 Aggression to people and animals

The participants indicated anger or having responded aggressively in situations. They further indicated incidents of deliberately hurting people as well as the use of weapons. The relevant extracts are presented below:

“Before I was sentenced I had some anger. I was easily provoked. When someone asked me something I was becoming very angry when they answered me I used to beat them. I did not have respect. I could not stay with an elderly person and talk to them. I would ultimately start swearing at them. (Participant 1, male, 17 years).

“Cause there, uh, when I go out of my house, there will always be a complain at my house; J beat this guy, J* beat this girl you understand” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).*

“You see, my grandmother didn’t want me to smoke cannabis anymore because when I had smoked they would tell me that I’m disrespectful in my responses and I didn’t realise that and I would regret afterwards. So then they took out a protection order against me” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“I once stabbed someone then after stabbing him, after I left the scene then I heard that the person passed away you see” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“They found me with my friend we were having guns... I just saw myself committing crime with it, going around at night robbing people of their money, being able to buy stuff to smoke and food” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“They used to commit crime, like if we saw you we could just take your bag and phones and we would go and sell them. Every person we came across, we could just stab the person and take their phones and leave” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“I went to the campus to rob people of their phones and property... I would meet people in the streets wearing nice things I would tell them to take it off and I would take their property” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“Then I hit that person with the rear end of the gun, you understand. Then that person attempted to run away then I shot him in the leg. I wasn’t expecting to find anyone. Then I shot that person three times. I shot him in the leg and in the stomach then I went into the kitchen and found a laptop, a pair of sneakers and a purse which was inside a bag. I took it and fled” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“I am someone who loves fights... from an early age I just loved fights... most of the time I would love to start the fights... like taking things from people. If the person confronted me then I would hurt them” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“We would rob those who do not know us, of their money, laptops and other things, that’s where the money is. They would give us money and we would sell the laptops and buy clothes. We would buy the things that we want. I started thinking that life was easy” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“I would rob the school children of their money until the school called the police. Then they were told that so and so is harassing us. (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“I took out a knife and stabbed that one who my friend was initially fighting with. He got hurt. Then I stabbed a second one and the second one passed away. Then I stabbed a third one, the third one went to ICU” (Participant 5, male, 16 years).

“I started assaulting the kids at school, things like that. I would take their caps; money then they suspended me for the first time” (Participant 5, male, 16 years).

“If a person doesn’t know me I will go to him and search him, take his things and leave” (Participant 5, male, 16 years).

“I stood up, followed her and pushed her” (Participant 6, male, 17 years).

“As boys we would sometimes fight and not get arrested... as we were walking around we would assault people” (Participant 6, male, 17 years)

From the above extracts, it appears that the participants tended to: frequently act aggressively; initiate physical fights; bully and intimidate others; be physically cruel to others; use weapons; and to steal while confronting others. It appears that the aggression was a way to prove masculinity and to instil fear in their targets.

4.3.5.2 Destruction of property

“I was arrested because I broke...I broke a door... they would say that they don't want live with someone who smells of cigarettes and cannabis...I told her that I was not smoking anymore. After a few days...about two weeks, when I went she said that I was still smoking. I told her that I was not smoking anymore. Then I took a hoe and hit there close to the handle” (Participant 6, male, 17 years).

4.3.5.3 Deceitfulness or theft

The participants indicated incidents of committing theft as well as acting in a deceitful manner. These incidents are presented in the below extracts:

“I was arrested for house breaking it was at my aunt's house. I stole with my friends” (Participant 1, male, 17 years).

“Then I came again at 2015 December the 14th, it was the same crime: housebreaking and theft but this time it was different it was at my place, it was at my house. I broke in the house, I took everything like my clothes, my cell phone, some of her money you know, and toiletries. Then I got arrested again at 2016 December, uh it was the 10th of December, yes. It was the same crime, housebreaking and theft at my place again, cos she kicked me out again you understand. Eh there I took, I took food this time, I took a lot of food and there was visitors at my house you understand, cos they were attending a funeral you understand, it was my cousins funeral, so I came home... I went home the day before, Mom wouldn't let me in so that I could go to the funeral in decent clothes you understand, so I knew that tomorrow is the funeral there will be no one at home. So I decided to go there so I broke in, then I took food and I took clothes, I took cell phones then I got re-arrested” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“Now when I came back for the third time I came back for the crime of stealing at a shop you see” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“I committed other robberies at Indian shops, committing them with a firearm which I stole from my home. Then afterwards I committed a housebreaking and attempted murder. That was in October. Then on the 7th of November, I committed theft then they arrested me and brought me to Bosasa” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

The extracts above highlight that some of the participants engaged in theft and deceitfulness in order to either survive or to acquire the goods that they desired. The extracts further highlight that the participants targeted places that they were familiar with or had easy access to, which enabled them to commit the thefts repeatedly.

4.3.5.4 Serious violations of rules

The below extracts indicate that the participants violated rules in various ways. The relevant extracts are presented:

“I came home late, around seven, eight then she didn’t like that... she said if I wanna be a man then I must be a man but not under her roof. So that’s why she kicked me out” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“I was actually caught next door, uh... with the girl next door during...around midnight you understand. During like... it was late so I was caught by her aunt you understand, so like that...that made her really furious” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“One thing that we used fight about a lot. And going out as I told you, going out. These three things: smoking, drinking and going out, coming home late. These four things. These are the major things that...that made her kick me out. And disrespect you know I didn't respect her you know” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“Yah it did affect my school I failed last year...no, 2015 yeah 2015 I failed grade nine. I was supposed to be in grade 11 now you understand, so, some point it did cause due to my bunking of classes. I didn't write notes...I didn't write anything in class, I would go out” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“At school as well, I would bunk periods and go to the toilet and smoke. I would climb up the mountain, like it's a school that it's a mountain...climb up the mountain to roll a joint to smoke. I smoked for the high you understand. Say I smoke a joint now, maybe first period, or immediately when I get to school, as long as I still have the high then I wouldn't smoke but if I don't have the high or feel like the high is going down then I would go roll a joint. I actually wanted to be in the high the whole day” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“I started stealing from the tenants and then I was brought here... so they figured out...there was this other guy who was an instructor who saw that I was at home and I was with some people and the tenants had lost some of their monies... when they had left their rooms for example having gone to shower, when they had left to go to shops etc, then I would enter their rooms” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“In 2016 on 25th April then I committed a robbery at an Indian shop. When that Indian man went to church, I saw him as he left then I tore the roof off and went in. I took money, airtime and other things and left” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“When I entered through the window I heard footsteps in the passage, I was in the bedroom. I was standing close to the passage but in the room. Like there’s a wall, and the door was open so I leaned against the wall then as he approached I pushed him to the ground” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“They took me to boarding school, I think from grade one, grade two, grade three...until grade five. Yes, until grade 5 then the transport used to leave me and I didn’t want to go to school. Then they took me and brought me back home. Then as I was living with them they would give me pocket money but I would choose to walk. The I started joining...these useless things while I was still in primary school... Then I started failing, failing a lot. As I was failing then I started smoking in grade seven... I would go to school but I would not attend classes... I would sell cigarettes in the toilets” (Participant 4, male, 18 years).

“I ended up quitting then she would take me back, I quit, she took me back, I quit, she took me back. Then eventually she saw that she couldn’t do anything else. She gave up... I would go to school drunk; smelling of cannabis” (Participant 5, male, 16 years).

The participants highlighted incidents of violating rules as set in various settings including home and school. Violation of rules indicates a disregard for authority. This disregard contributes to recidivist behaviour as it appears that the participants give limited or no thought regarding the consequences of actions.

4.3.6 Self-discipline and constructive activities

The participants indicated that self-discipline is key when pertaining to stopping criminal behaviour. They further highlighted that the implementation of various activities can assist in this regard. This is highlighted in the extracts below:

“I don’t think it’s really possible for one to stop crime, unless you tell yourself. Or if you find something to keep you busy” (Participant 2, male, 17 years).

“I don’t know what they can give me that I can always occupy myself with... things like sewing and...what do you call this...like welding...those are the things that I can keep myself busy with” (Participant 3, male, 17 years).

“It’s just that...a person must...you guys can’t help a person if a person doesn’t tell themselves that he wants to change. He won’t change. A person...you can tell him...ears are meant to listen we know that...but the heart. If I tell myself that I want to change I want to be different, I will change and be someone who is straight. But if I listen to someone who tells me that they want me to be in a certain, I will just say yes and agree with you right now. After that I will go back into the centre and fight with people” (Participant 5, male, 16 years).

The participants highlighted self-discipline when it comes to stopping criminal activities. They highlighted that intervention measures can be put in place in order to assist an individual however if the said individual does not have the desire or to stop, then they will not. The above extracts further highlight that various activities can minimise recidivism by creating more constructive ways of spending one’s time, as opposed to spending time with criminally involved peers.

4.4 Conclusion

In summary, the following themes emerged from the results of the present study: a) labelling; b) peer pressure; c) substance abuse; d) socialisation; e) conduct disorder; and f) self-discipline and constructive activities. The findings indicated that various factors contribute to recidivism including the use of substances; parenting styles as well as peer pressure. Furthermore, the findings showed that behavioural problems, including criminal behaviour in the youth may be due to being labelled as a criminal or Conduct Disorder. The findings further indicate the influence the environment has on the youth, and how being socialised in an environment that emphasises a fancy lifestyle may contribute to the youth engaging in criminal activities to meet the standards of that particular environment.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

The current chapter presents and discusses the findings of this study in relation to the existing body of knowledge in this subject matter. This chapter highlights the themes that emerged which are: a) labelling; b) peer pressure; c) substance abuse; d) socialisation; e) conduct disorder and; f) self-discipline and constructive activities.

5.2 Labelling

Labelling Theory holds that behaviour is deviant only when society labels it as deviant. The attitude of societies towards those who have been incarcerated often results in ex-inmates withdrawing from traditional values, social norms and their consequent rejection of the institutions that have rejected them. Accordingly, in this rejection process, they will seek and mix with deviant peers that approve of their behaviour. Fattah (as cited in Matshaba, 2015) further adds that ex-inmates end up feeling a total absence of moral sense, disregard for the law and lack of conformity. Such labelling often leads to the adoption of a deviant life style. Regardless of other good qualities, if a person is labelled as deviant it carries greater weight in the minds of others. This leads to a 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. In other words, being labelled as deviant, an individual so labelled will act out the label as expected (by society) of him/her (Reid, 2003). According to Akers (1994) individuals that are labelled or dramatically stigmatised as deviant are likely to take on a deviant self -identity and become more rather than less deviant than if they had not been so labelled.

The present study discovered that individuals may engage in criminal behaviour due to being labelled as criminals. Participant 1 relayed the following: "*My home is a tavern. At home money is regularly missing and they always accuse me. Then because of those accusations I then decided to do the same thing that they accused me of even when I didn't do it. Then I started to steal money at home.*" It appears that the individual adopts the label and thus conforms to the said label which in turn results in continued criminal activities.

5.3 Peer pressure

In the present study, peer pressure was found to be a contributory factor to recidivist behaviour. The findings of the present study are consistent with previous research. According to Lachman, Roman, and Cahill (2012) youth may be motivated to join a peer group because they are coerced to or feel pressured to join. With regards to group formation and gang involvement, youth may be specifically selecting the peers who would offer the most benefits-participation in exciting and illegal activities. Youths in groups were found to more delinquent than youth who are not in groups, and that youth in groups are at greater risk for exhibiting delinquent activity (Lachman, Roman, & Cahill, 2012). Feldmann (2014) also found that juveniles who are affiliated with a gang have a greater likelihood of reoffending than those who are not affiliated with a gang. Consistent with previous research, participant 3 in the present study indicated the following: *“I hung around with friends then hanging around with friends they started influencing me then I started stealing again, doing these things of stealing from shops again”*. Crosnoe and McNeely (2008) suggest that an adolescent enters a peer group because she or he is attracted to the norms, values, behaviours, and activities of a particular group. Certain components of peer groups, such as the amount of time youth spend together, is relevant to understanding how youth form peer groups and the group’s relationship to individuals’ delinquent behaviour. Once in a group, whether via selection or influence, youth are likely to conform to the behaviours of peers of that group.

According to Farmer et al. (2003) research findings on peer influence are consistent across different types of negative or antisocial behaviours including: aggression; smoking; alcohol; and other drug abuse, and delinquency. The present study lent support to these findings as it revealed that interaction with criminally involved peers appears to increase the likelihood of being involved in criminal activities repeatedly. Participant 5 in the present study stated that: *“At home they told me to stop the things I was doing. I just agreed because I had just returned. But as time went on, I started having that gangster spirit. I started having that spirit. I start wanting money, I start smoking. Here I don’t smoke right? When I get home and see those guys I associated with, I go back to smoking and we do all these things. We start that gang; we start living that life that we used to live.”*

Furthermore, Van der Laan, Blom and Kleemans (2009) state that there is a clear link between association with deviant or criminal friends, frequent and serious delinquent and criminal behaviour, substance abuse, weak attachment to school, poor school performance, out-of-home placements, the motivation to commit crime, impulsivity, and pro-criminal and pro-violent attitudes and further involvement in criminality. According to Weis, Catalano and Hawkins's Social Development Model (Siegel, 2005) adolescents who perceive opportunities and rewards for anti-social behaviour will form deep attachments to deviant peers and will follow a criminal way of life. Without adequate bonding, adolescents can succumb to the influence of deviant others.

5.4 Substance abuse

According to the National Institute of Justice (as cited in Papa, 2015), roughly two-thirds of adults and more than half of juveniles arrested tested positive for at least one illicit drug, they committed the offences while under the influence of drugs. Most of them turned to crime for money to support expensive drug habits. Mulvey (2011) also highlighted the significance of substance use in the persistence of criminal careers. Visher, LaVigne and Travis (2004) found that substance abuse not only increases the chances of reoffending but might also hamper ex-inmates' opportunities for employment, as well as the reestablishment of relationships with their families and communities. The majority of participants in the above-mentioned study indicated that they committed the crimes that led to their incarceration either under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Boulger and Olson (2011) found that youth released after serving a sentence for a drug offence were more likely to be re-incarcerated than violent offenders. According to Abrantes, Hoffman, and Anton (2005), high recidivism and poor outcomes are characteristic of juvenile delinquents with co-occurring substance use and mental health problems. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (as cited in Abrantes et al., 2005) found that recidivism rates are higher among delinquents with substance use problems than among those without such problems. The present study supports previous research regarding the role of substance use in recidivism. The participants in the present study highlighted how they exhibited poor judgement while under the influence of substances, thus contributing to their recidivist behaviour.

The following quotation refers: *“I am someone who loved alcohol, smoking cannabis, hanging around with people that are not good... I had started smoking nyaope. Nyaope was driving me”* (Participant 4). They further highlighted how their recidivist behaviour was due to the need to maintain their substance use. Participant 2 alluded to this in the following statement: *“Well...my friends...they usually bought it or I’d steal from my mom. Sometimes...before she knew that I was really smoking, she would give me money... I would steal it, if, if she’s bathing I would go into her room, to her purse. I would only take coin cause I know that she won’t notice coin, she won’t notice that it’s missing.”*

5.5 Socialisation

5.5.1 Poverty

Consistent with previous studies, the findings of the present study highlighted poverty as a contributory factor to recidivist behaviour. It appears that the lack of basic needs can influence one to engage in, and continue to engage in criminal activities in order to meet these basic needs. In the present study, Participant 1 indicated the following: *“When there are clothes at home and enough food and everything, I can’t go out and commit crimes”*. Similarly, Barrett, Katsiyannis, Zhang, and Zhang (2014) identified a relationship between poverty (for example, family income) and both delinquency and juvenile recidivism. Barnert et al. (2015) also found that financial difficulties at home might have promoted the participant’s criminal behaviour, either because the youths wanted items that their families could not afford or because they wanted to help their parents with finances. Most expressed the idea that neighbourhood poverty was the more important determinant for predicting juvenile offending because in poor neighbourhoods, negative influences were more rampant. Upon release, the youth return to unstable homes and schools and to neighbourhoods that promote delinquency resulting in a cycle of re-arrest and incarceration. Furthermore, Holtfreter, Reisig and Morash (2004) investigated the effects of poverty and state-sponsored support on recidivism rates of female offenders and found that poverty increased the odds of re-arrest for females and increased the odds of violating the terms of their supervision.

5.5.2 Parenting styles

Crooks, Scott, Ellis, and Wolfe (2011) have linked child maltreatment to a range of negative psychological and physical health outcomes, poor academic achievement, and criminal acts and incarceration. According to Wolff and Baglivio (2017), The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the U.S.A has specified 10 maltreatment exposures occurring prior to 18 years of age as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The 10 exposures encompass three forms of abuse (emotional, physical, sexual), two types of neglect (emotional, physical), and five kinds of household dysfunction (domestic violence toward one's mother, household substance use, household mental illness, parental separation/divorce, and household member with a jail/prison history). Juvenile offenders with higher ACE scores have been found more likely to have early-onset, chronic offending prevalence trajectories, and to be classified as serious, violent, and chronic offenders by age 18 (Fox, Perez, Cass, Baglivio, & Epps, 2015). In addition, juvenile offenders with higher ACE scores have been found more likely to re-offend, and to re-offend in less time from completing community-based juvenile services (Wolff, Baglivio, & Piquero, 2015). Wolff and Baglivio (2017) hypothesised that those youths who have suffered a number of ACEs may be more likely to suffer from issues of frustration, hostility, and difficulty expressing/dealing with emotions, which in turn leads to higher levels of recidivism. The participants in the present study indicated parenting style/ conflict with parents as having played a role in their recidivist behaviour. The role of discipline/ harsh parenting was further highlighted. This was noted in the following quotation: *"I did these crimes called housebreaking and theft, you understand. Uhm I did that because I ran away from home, on Friday, it was Friday 2014. I don't remember the month. That day my mother beat me you know. She beat me with a pan, a cooking pan. So I ran away from home to school. So from Friday I slept at school, Saturday, Sunday. I slept in the dining hall of the school, you understand. So like, Saturday I got hungry. So then I broke into the offices of the school, then that's where I found food, I found laptops so I decided to take one laptop"* (Participant 2).

Participant 3 indicated the following: *“And at my mother’s house they kicked me out because there at my mother’s house they are getting social grants and they did not want to buy us clothes so then they moved me from there to my father’s home. When they took me there to my father then my father requested my grant money and they told him if he takes the grant money then we are no longer going to want this child and we will report to the police that he must never come back to our house. Then I had nowhere to live and lived on the streets.”*

5.5.3 Secondary socialisation

Sutherland’s Differential Association Theory focuses on the development and nature of criminality and suggests that a person who socialises in a disorganised neighbourhood is likely to associate with people who will encourage and approve of deviant behaviour, possibly leading to criminality (Matshaba, 2015). According to Brown, Esbensen and Geis (2001) this theory also suggests that environmental factors such as a disorganised neighbourhood, dysfunctional families, and peer groups are likely to be contributing factors towards the resulting deviant behaviour of individuals. Fagan, Van Horn, Antaramian and Hawkins (2011), note that family criminality and family criminal influences play an important role in children’s perceptions, attitudes (pro-criminal and pro-violent) involvement in criminality.

The Differential Association Theory further assumes that law-breaking values, norms and motives are acquired by means of interaction with others. According to Wooditch, Tang and Taxman (2014) Sutherland believed that crime was a function of a learning process that could affect any individual in any culture. Acquiring behaviour is a socialisation process. This theory is explained according to propositions of learning that involve:

- intense association with deviant parents, peers and friends (i.e. fellow gang members), and
- the learning of criminal techniques, motives, skills, drives, rationalisations, pro-crime values and definitions and attitudes (i.e. pro-criminal and pro-violent thinking patterns).

These behaviours are all learnt and acquired through frequent and intense exposure and constant contact (over a long period of time) with criminal others. Criminal association becomes a priority to the receiver's functioning because of a dominance of involvement in crime and criminality. Haynie and Osgood (2005) indicate that delinquent peer association may provide adolescents with norms and referents that would prompt an adolescent to further identify with a deviant role. This change in one's self-view would then promote further involvement in delinquency. However, the same adolescent may find increased opportunities for delinquent behaviour because delinquent peers provide materials, skills, and knowledge for crime. Participants in the present study emphasised how the environment they live in influenced their involvement in criminal activities. This is highlighted in the following statement by Participant 4: *"In my neighbourhood, if you don't wear Nike or nice things like that then you are considered a nobody. Then I started looking down on things and thought that crime is the way to go"*.

The findings suggest that participants were influenced to uphold a certain lifestyle and image such as the wearing of expensive clothes as well as emulating the behaviour of peers or those around them. Association with deviant peers resulted in participants maintaining the said lifestyle through criminal activities. Participant 5 highlighted this: *"When I joined that gang called Two Minutes, I started drinking and smoking, things like that. We met at school, we went to the same school together. Like I would see these boys forming a group of 5 or 4, they would be 5 or 4 wearing Dry Fit, wearing designer labels. Like as a boy I would envy them and wanted to be like them. I joined them and started dressing the way they did. Even at home I started telling them to buy me certain things, and they would buy for me. Like they wouldn't do...they would buy for me but...I don't get satisfied. The things they bought for me, they wouldn't satisfy me that much then I ended up stealing, hurting people, robbing people of their money, caps, things like that"*.

5.6 Conduct disorder

5.6.1 Aggression to people and animals

According to Dodge and Coie (as cited in Doran, Luczak, Bekman, Koutsenok, & Brown, 2012) aggression can be classified in terms of both function and form. Function can be classified as either proactive (i.e., calculated and goal-oriented, motivated by external reward) or reactive (i.e., defensive, impulsive responding to threat or frustration). Aggression form can be categorised as either direct or relational. Direct aggression is defined as behaviour directed at individuals with the intent to harm, while relational aggression refers to acts intended to manipulate or damage relationships. Proactive aggression is associated with delinquency and violence in youth, but reactive aggression has been a less consistent predictor (Card & Little, 2006). DeLisi and Conis (2012) are of the opinion that an early onset and persistent display of violent and aggressive behaviour is strongly connected to future involvement in same behaviour. Similarly, Gardner, Dishion, and Connell (2008) link adolescent antisocial behaviour with poor self-regulation and emotional control.

Barrett et al. (2014) discovered that the presence of a DSM-IV diagnosis bears a strong relationship to delinquency, particularly when the diagnosis is based on a pattern of aggression or impulsivity. In their study on the role of early adverse experiences, mental health problems, and disabilities, mental health problems played an important role, with the presence of a DSM-IV diagnosis for an aggressive disorder the strongest predictor of recidivism. Mental health problems, and in particular aggression, continued to be the strongest predictor of delinquency and recidivism. The researchers further found that youth who are prone to mental and emotional disorders are much more likely to become delinquent (and more likely to recidivate) than those who are not so disposed. In the present study, it was found that aggression increased the likelihood of engaging in criminal activities as participants tended to respond aggressively to situations, which then led to the committing of crimes.

Most of the participants indicated having: initiated physical fights (*“Before I was sentenced I had some anger. I was easily provoked. When someone asked me something I was becoming very angry when they answered me I used to beat them,* Participant 1); bullied and intimidated others (*“Cause there, uh, when I go out of my house, there will always be a complain at my house; J* beat this guy, J* beat this girl you understand,* Participant 2); been physically cruel to others (*As boys we would sometimes fight and not get arrested... as we were walking around we would assault people”* (Participant 6); used weapons (*“Then I hit that person with the rear end of the gun, you understand. Then that person attempted to run away then I shot him in the leg,* Participant 4); and stolen while confronting others (*“They used to commit crime, like if we saw you we could just take your bag and phones and we would go and sell them. Every person we came across, we could just stab the person and take their phones and leave”,* Participant 3).

5.6.2 Destruction of property

According to Cuervo, Villanueva, González, Carrión, and Busquets (2015) the number of offences increases as minors get older and this tendency occurs both in offences against persons and against property. Regarding crimes against property, the minors that were studied were characterised by presenting a greater degree of inconsistent parenting. Crimes against property were found to be the ones with slightly higher rates of recidivism. Similarly, Boulger and Olson (2011) discovered that youth released after serving a sentence for a property offence were more likely to be re-incarcerated than violent offenders. The DSM V (2013) cites that deliberate destruction of others' property may include deliberate fire setting with the intention of causing serious damage or deliberate destroying of other people's property in other ways (e.g., smashing car windows, vandalizing school property).

In the present study Participant 6 indicated having deliberately destructed property at his home. It appears that property was destructed in a fit of rage or anger as indicated in the following extract: *"I was arrested because I broke...I broke a door... they would say that they don't want live with someone who smells of cigarettes and cannabis...I told her that I was not smoking anymore. After a few days...about two weeks, when I went she said that I was still smoking. I told her that I was not smoking anymore. Then I took a hoe and hit there close to the handle"*. This is in line with responding to situations in an aggressive manner (as discussed earlier) which may lead to recidivist behaviour.

5.6.3 Deceitfulness or theft

According to the DSM V (2013) acts of deceitfulness or theft may include breaking into someone else's house, building, or car; frequently lying or breaking promises to obtain goods or favours or to avoid debts or obligations (for example, "conning" other individuals); or stealing items of non-trivial value without confronting the victim (for example, shoplifting, forgery, fraud). In the present study, it was discovered that acts of deceitfulness and/or theft may lead to recidivism as they were committed either in order to meet basic needs or to acquire goods that they desired (for example, laptops, cell phones and clothes). The following quotation refers: *"Then I came again at 2015 December the 14th, it was the same crime: housebreaking and theft but this time it was different it was at my place, it was at my house. I broke in the house, I took everything like my clothes, my cell phone, some of her money you know, and toiletries. Then I got arrested again at 2016 December, uh it was the 10th of December, yes. It was the same crime, housebreaking and theft at my place again, cos she kicked me out again you understand. Eh there I took, I took food this time, I took a lot of food and there was visitors at my house you understand, cos they were attending a funeral you understand, it was my cousins funeral, so I came home... I went home the day before, Mom wouldn't let me in so that I could go to the funeral in decent clothes you understand, so I knew that tomorrow is the funeral there will be no one at home. So I decided to go there so I broke in, then I took food and I took clothes, I took cell phones then I got re-arrested"*.

Some participants highlighted having broken into stranger's houses in order to steal and others indicated having stolen from known individuals Participant 4 indicated the following: *"I committed other robberies at Indian shops, committing them with a firearm which I stole from my home. Then afterwards I committed a housebreaking and attempted murder. That was in October. Then on the 7th of November, I committed theft then they arrested me and brought me to Bosasa"*. This cycle of deceitfulness and theft appears to continue as a result of the goal to acquire certain goods.

5.6.4 Serious violations of rules

According to the DSM V (2013), individuals with conduct disorder may frequently commit serious violations of rules. Children with conduct disorder often have a pattern, beginning before age 13 years, of staying out late at night despite parental prohibitions and may also show a pattern of running away from home overnight. Children with conduct disorder may often be truant from school, beginning prior to age 13 years. Frick (1998) highlights that these behaviours in youths are intrinsically related to the inability or unwillingness to conform to the norms of a particular society and respect authority or the rights of other individuals. Behaviours can take on a lighter form (for example, school absenteeism) or can have markedly serious aspects (for example, rape, homicide). Pechorro et al. (2014) cite that such acts are often associated and do not occur as isolated incidents. The participants in the present study highlighted having violated rules in various setting including home and at school and continued to do so despite being reprimanded by authority figures. This was highlighted by Participant 5 in the following extract: *"I ended up quitting then she would take me back, I quit, she took me back, I quit, she took me back. Then eventually she saw that she couldn't do anything else. She gave up... I would go to school drunk; smelling of cannabis"*.

Consistent with prior research, findings from the present study indicate that the violation of rules may lead to recidivist behaviour as it reflects disregard for authority and the feelings of others, as well as a disregard for the consequences of actions. The following extract from Participant 3 refers: *"I started stealing from the tenants and then I was brought here... so they figured out...there was this other guy who was an instructor who saw that I was at home and I was with some people and the tenants*

had lost some of their monies... when they had left their rooms for example having gone to shower, when they had left to go to shops etc, then I would enter their rooms”.

5.7 Self-discipline and constructive activities

Participants in the present study emphasised the need for self-discipline when pertaining to no longer engaging in criminal activities. The following quotation from Participant 5 alludes to this: *“It’s just that...a person must...you guys can’t help a person if a person doesn’t tell themselves that he wants to change. He won’t change. A person...you can tell him...ears are meant to listen we know that...but the heart. If I tell myself that I want to change I want to be different, I will change and be someone who is straight. But if I listen to someone who tells me that they want me to be in a certain, I will just say yes and agree with you right now. After that I will go back into the centre and fight with people”.* They further highlighted the need for constructive activities for the youth to engage in. They believed that engaging in more constructive activities will assist them in refraining from associating with criminally involved peers. This is highlighted by Participant 3: *“I don’t know what they can give me that I can always occupy myself with... things like sewing and...what do you call this...like welding...those are the things that I can keep myself busy with”.*

According to Felson and Boba (2010) routine activities for youth often include a large portion of unstructured and unsupervised time during which they are simply hanging out with other youth. During this time, they are learning and/or reinforcing different types of behaviour-whether prosocial, deviant, or criminal. Piquero et al. (2001) found that more time with unsupervised access to lawbreaking peers could lead to increased repeat lawbreaking. In a study by Barnert et al. (2015) several participants suggested afterschool programmes, including tutoring, vocational, and sports programmes, to keep adolescents occupied and out of the streets while building life skills and fostering a sense of belonging. They further suggested implementing gender-specific programmes. Many noted the importance of programmes that last until night-time to eliminate time spent on the neighbourhood streets.

Similarly, participants in a study by Samuels (2010) highlighted that rehabilitation programmes should address the real-life issues offenders face after their release. They voiced that skills development, short courses, business skills, entrepreneurial skills and trades such as plumbing, carpentry, and brick-laying should form part of the rehabilitation programmes. The participants in this study felt that the DCS should sustain rehabilitation programmes by implementing them within the community for parolees/probationers, and by giving regular talks within the community. They further highlighted that programmes can only assist ex-offenders not to return to prison if they apply what they learned from the programmes.

5.8 Conclusion

From the findings presented above, it is evident that recidivism among the youth is a growing phenomenon. The above results highlight that different individuals attach different meanings or reasons for their recidivist behaviour. The psychological significance of recidivism amongst the youth may be understood according to the themes that emerged from the study results. Themes such as labelling, peer pressure and substance abuse emerged. Conduct disorder appears to be a strong indicator of recidivism as all the participants presented with the disorder. It also appears that parenting styles (more specifically harsh parenting) played a significant role in how the participants viewed and related to the world. Adverse childhood experiences such as emotional or physical abuse, neglect as well as rejection seemed to have contributed to participants developing anger and thus responding aggressively to situations. Furthermore, these ACE appear to have contributed to deceitfulness and theft (for some it was in order to meet basic needs). Participants further highlighted how the implementation of constructive activities can help alleviate the involvement in criminal activities.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of findings

The aim of the study was to explore recidivism as a lived experience among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre in Polokwane, Limpopo Province. The objectives of the study were (a) to describe the subjective meanings that recidivist youth attach to their behaviour, (b) to establish what the youth consider to be the causes of their recidivist behaviour; and (c) to determine what the youth perceive as possible interventions to reduce recidivism. A qualitative research approach was used in the study. Using purposive sampling, a total of 6 youth (all male) were identified and selected to participate in the study.

The results of the study highlighted factors that influence or contribute to recidivist behaviour among the youth. The results further showed the subjective meanings that the recidivists attach to their behaviour as well as what possible interventions can be implemented to reduce recidivism. The emerging themes were: a) labelling; b) peer pressure; c) substance abuse; d) socialisation; e) conduct disorder; and f) self-discipline and constructive activities. The participants highlighted various factors as contributing to recidivism. These include how being labelled as criminal resulted in them conforming to the said label and how the environment and its expectations influenced their recidivist behaviour. The role of substances and the need to maintain the habit was also highlighted. Peer pressure emerged as a strong indicator as most of the participants alluded to having formed part of a gang and thus conforming to the rules and norms of the gang which included carrying weapons such as guns and knives. Recidivism among the youth seems to further be perpetuated by the youths' unwillingness to comply with societal rules. This signifies a disregard for authority as well as a disregard for consequences of one's actions. This is evident in participant's having violated rules in various ways such as staying out late despite parental prohibitions; truancy; and using substances including on school premises. It further appears that the use of constructive activities may help to reduce recidivism however the participants indicated that one needs to be disciplined to increase the odds of that happening.

6.2 Limitations of the study

The following limitations were identified in this study:

- The sample size was small and cannot be considered to be representative of the entire Polokwane community. The results of the present study cannot be generalisable beyond this study.
- The study consisted of only male participants. This means that factors influencing recidivism among females were possibly not addressed.
- The study consisted of only Black participants which means that recidivism among other racial groups was not explored.

6.3 Recommendations

- More studies using larger samples should be undertaken before generalisation regarding recidivism among the youth could be made. It is recommended that studies include both males and females and well as other races.
- It is recommended that activities such as sport are implemented at school as well as at community level. Involvement in such activities may assist by assisting the youth to use their free time more constructively as opposed to associating with criminally involved peers.
- It is further recommended that psychological services be widely available to communities. The youth would then have access to such services which may assist them in issues such their experiences within the households (such as abuse) and how to better manage/ control their emotions as opposed to responding aggressively.
- It is also recommended that a joint venture to curb substances be implemented. Various departments such as South African Police Services, and Department of Social Development, Department of Education and Department of Health can work together to eradicate substance use through arresting suppliers as well as increasing accessibility to rehabilitation programmes. Furthermore, ongoing psychoeducation can be provided at schools and/or within communities.

- The researcher further recommends that the findings of this study be made available to the participants and staff at Polokwane Secure Care Centre. These findings may assist the recidivists, their families and the staff in gaining deeper insight into the various factors that may lead to and perpetuate criminal behaviour. Furthermore, the study may assist the staff in developing or revising crime prevention, rehabilitation and re-integration strategies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1(a): Interview guide – English version

1. I notice that you have been incarcerated for a while, can you kindly share with me how you ended up here.
2. How do you feel about being here at the centre instead of growing up at home?
3. How old were you when you were first arrested and for which crime/s and how old are you now?
4. Kindly share with me how many times you have been arrested and for which crimes.
5. How do you feel about the crimes that you have committed? Do you regret your actions?
6. Can you share with me how your family and community members related to you after your first arrest. Were you treated differently afterwards?
7. Kindly share with me your family background and your experiences within the family.
8. What do you perceive to be the reasons why you got involved in crime?
9. According to your own experiences, which factors influenced you to go back to a life of crime?
10. What do you think can be done to assist the youth from not going back to a life crime?

Appendix 1(b): Interview Guide – Northern Sotho Version

Semamaretšwa sa 1b: Tlhahli ya potšološišo – Northern Sotho

1. Ke lemoga gore ke sebakanyana o swerwe, na o ka mpotša gore o swaretšweng?
2. Na o ikwa bjang ge o le mo senthareng o sa golele gae?
3. Na o be o le yo mokaakang ge o swarwa la mathomo mme o swaretšwe melato efe. Na lehono o na le mengwaga ye mekae?
4. Hle mpotše gore o swarwe ga kae o swarelwa melato efe.
5. O ikwa bjang ka melato ye o e dirilego, na o a itshola?
6. Na o ka mpotša gore ba lapa le setšhaba ba laeditše kgwerano ye bjang le wena morago ga go swarwa la mathomo. Na ba ile ba go swara ka mokgwa wo o fapanego morago ga fao?
7. Hle mpotše ka ga lapa leno le maitemogelo a gago a ka lapeng.
8. Na o bona mabaka a go go dira gore o obe melato ya bosenyi e le afe?
9. Ka maitemogelo a gago, na ke dilo dife tša go huetša gore o boelele bophelong bja bosenyi?
10. Na o nagaga gore go ka dirwa eng go thuša baswa gore ba se boelele bophelong bja bosenyi?

Appendix 2: Permission letter to the Department of Social Development

Department of Psychology

University of Limpopo

Private Bag X1106

Sovenga

0727

Date: _____

The Head of Department

Department of Social Development

Private Bag X9710

Polokwane

0700

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT POLOKWANE SECURE CARE CENTRE

My name is Katlego Lerato Tjikana, a Masters student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus). I am conducting a study on: "A phenomenological study of recidivism among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre, Limpopo Province". The purpose of my study is to explore recidivism as a lived experience among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre in Polokwane, Limpopo Province.

I do hereby apply to be granted permission to conduct this research at the secure care centre. It is important to point out that the researcher undertakes to maintain confidentiality regarding the identity of the participants in this research project. The participants will be assured about the voluntary nature of this study and further that they are free to withdraw from the study at any time should they wish to do so.

The methods of data collection will be semi-structure individual interviews with the participants.

Sincerely

Katlego Tjikana
Masters Student

Date

Prof T Sodi
Supervisor

Date

Appendix 3(a): Participant consent letter and form (English version)

**Department of Psychology
University of Limpopo
Private Bag X1106
Sovenga
0727
Date: _____**

Dear participant

Thank you for demonstrating interest in this study that focuses on recidivism among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre. The purpose of this study is mainly to understand recidivism from the perspective of the recidivist.

Your responses to this individual interview will remain strictly confidential. The researcher will not attempt to identify you with your responses to the interview questions or to disclose your name as a participant in the study. Please be advised that participating in this study is voluntary and that you have the right to terminate your participation at any time.

Kindly answer all the questions and reflect your true reaction. Your participation in this research is very important. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Katlego Tjikana
Masters Student

Date

Prof T Sodi
Supervisor

Date

Appendix 3(b): Participant consent letter and form (Northern Sotho version)

Depatemente ya Psychology
Unibesithi ya Limpopo (Turfloop Campus)
Private Bag X1106
Sovenga
0727

Letšatšikgwedi: _____

Motšeakarolo yo a rategago

Re leboga ge o laeditše kgahlego mo nyakišišong ye e theilwego godimo ga kgomelo bosenyeng magareng ga baswa ba go golegwa Polokwane Secure Care Centre. Maikemišetšokgolo a thuto ye bogolo ke go kwešiša kgomelo bosenyeng go ya ka mosenyi.

Dikarabelo tša lena go dipotšološišo tše tša motho ka o tee e tla ba sephiri se segolo. Monyakišiši a ka se leke go le tswalanya le dikarabelo tša dipotšološišo goba go utolla maina a lena bjalo ka batšeakarolo mo thutong ye. Hle fahlogelang gore botšeakarolo bja lena mo thutong ye ke bja boikgethelo le gore le na le maloka a go ikogogela morago neng goba neng.

Ka potego araba dipotšišo ka moka mme o laetše maikutlo a gago. Botšeakarolo bja gago mo nyakišišong ye bo bohlokwa kudu. Ke leboga nako ya lena.

Wa potego

Katlego Tjikana
Masters Student

Letšatšikgwedi

Prof T Sodi
Supervisor

Letšatšikgwedi

Appendix 4(a): Consent form to be signed by participant: English version

CONSENT FORM

I _____ hereby agree to participate in a Masters research project that focuses on recidivism among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre.

The purpose of the study has been fully explained to me. I further understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can terminate my participation in this study at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project, whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally. I understand that my details as they appear in this consent form will not be linked to the interview schedule, and that my answers will remain confidential.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4(b): Consent form to be signed by participant: Northern Sotho version

FOMO YA TUMELELANO

Nna _____ ka se ke dumela go tšea karolo mo phorotšekeng ya M.A ye e theilwego godimo ga kgomelo bosenyeng magareng ga baswa ba go golegwa Polokwane Secure Care Centre.

Nepo ya nyakišišo e hlalositšwe ka botlalo go nna. Ke kwešiša gape gore ke tšea karolo ka boithaopo ntle le go gapeletšwa ka mokgwa ofe goba ofe go dira bjalo. Ke kwešiša gape gore nka ikgogela morago mo botšeakarolong bja nyakišišo ye nako efe goba efe ge nka kwa ke sa rate go tšwela pele le gore sephetho se se bjale se ka se ke sa nkama bošaedi.

Ke kwešiša gore se ke phorotšeke ya nyakišišo, yeo nepo ya yona esego go hola nna bjalo ka motho. Ke kwešiša gore boitsebišo bjaka bjalo ka ge bo rotogile mo fomong ya tumelano bo ka se tswalanywe le šetulo ya potšološišo, le gore dikarabo tša ka e tla ba sephiri.

Mosaeno: _____

Letšatšikgwedi: _____

Appendix 5: Application for research ethics clearance: Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee

- **Type** in the required information.
- Complete only form A Part I and Part II for experimental research.
- Complete only form B Part I and Part II for research using human participants (non-experimental research).
- Complete relevant sections of Part III and Part IV for form A and for form B.

FORM A – PART I

PROJECT TITLE: A phenomenological study of recidivism among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre, Limpopo Province

PROJECT LEADER/SUPERVISOR: Prof T. Sodi

DECLARATION

I, the signatory, hereby apply for approval to execute the experiments described in the attached research proposal and declare that:

1. I am fully aware of the guidelines and regulations for ethical research and that I will abide by these guidelines as set out in documents (available from the Secretary of the Ethics Committee); and
2. I undertake to provide every person who participates in this research project with the relevant information in Part III. Every participant will be requested to sign Part IV.

Name of Researcher: Ms. K.L Tjikana

Signature:.....

Date:.....

-

For Official use by the Ethics Committee:

Approved/Not approved

Remarks:.....

.....

.....

.....

Signature of Chairperson:.....

Date:.....

FORM A - PART II

PROJECT TITLE: A phenomenological study of recidivism among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre, Limpopo Province

(it is compulsory for the researcher to complete this field before submission to the ethics committee)

PROJECT LEADER/SUPERVISOR: Prof T. Sodi

(it is compulsory for the researcher to complete this field before submission to the Ethics Committee)

Protocol for the execution of experimental research

1. Department: Department of Psychology
2. Title of project: **A phenomenological study of recidivism among the youth incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre, Limpopo Province**
3. Full name, surname and qualifications of project leader:

Professor Tholene Sodi; Professor
4. List the name(s) of all persons (Researchers and Technical Staff) involved with the project and identify their role(s) in the conduct of the experiment:

Name: Prof T. Sodi	Qualifications: Professor	Responsible for:
Supervision		

Name: Prof C. Roelofse	Qualifications: Professor	Responsible
for: Co-supervision		

5. Name and address of principal researcher: **Katlego Lerato Tjikana; University of Limpopo, Department of Psychology, Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727**

6. **Procedures to be followed:** Participants will be informed of the nature and purpose of the study prior to its commencement. They will be requested to sign a consent form before participating in the study. Participants under the age of 18 will be assisted by a parent/guardian/ caregiver before participation in the research project. Confidentiality will be assured. Should there be a need to identify participants, pseudo names will be used instead of participant's real names. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with participants. All interviews will be audio-recorded.

7. **Nature of discomfort:** Given the nature of the study, some emotional discomfort may be experienced. Should this occur participants will be referred to psychologists for psychological intervention.

8. **Description of the advantages that may be expected from the results of the study:**

The proposed study could deepen our understanding of the factors associated with recidivism among the youth. It is hoped that the study will provide insight into the lived experiences of youth in conflict with law. These insights could help in strengthening crime-prevention and rehabilitation strategies.

Signature of Project Leader/Supervisor:.....

Date:.....

Appendix 6: Ethical clearance letter (Turfloop Research Ethics Committee)



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel.' (015) 268 2212, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:noko.monene@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS

COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 05 July 2016

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/70/2016: PG

PROJECT:

Title: A phenomenological study of recidivism among the youth
Incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre Limpopo
Province

Researcher: Ms KL Tjikana

Supervisor: Prof T Sodi

Co-Supervisor: Prof C Roelofse

School: Social Sciences

Degree: Masters in Clinical Psychology

TAB MASHEGO

CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.

ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

Appendix 7: Ethical clearance letter (Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee)



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

**LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

MEETING: 30th JANUARY 2017

PROJECT NUMBER: 2016/14 PG

Title: A Phenomenological Study of Recidivism among the Youth Incarcerated at Polokwane Secure Care Centre, Limpopo Province

Researcher: Katlego Tjikana

Department: Department of Social Development

Prof S Maputle

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Maputle".

Acting Chairperson: Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee

The Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC) is registered with National Health Research Council (NHREC) Registration Number **REC-111513-038**.

Note:

Should there be any amendment to the approved research proposal; the researcher(s) must re-submit the proposal to the ethics committee for review prior data collection.

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROJECT NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES