CRIME AMONG THE YOUTH AT MENTZ VILLAGE, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

by

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

MASTERS OF ARTS

in the

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: DR C.E OLIVER

2021

ABSTRACT

The rise of crime committed by young offenders in South Africa has become a major concern (Pelser 2008:1). The Mentz community – a small township situated in Ga-Mamabolo - likewise experiences high levels of crime and violence, much of which is committed by young, unemployed offenders. Although the findings in this research are not necessarily applicable to other places in South Africa, it is the researcher's opinion that the situation in Mentz Village is representative of many other places in this country, especially in rural areas. This study investigated crime among the youth in Mentz Village and focused on factors that contribute to crime among the youth. Qualitative methodology had been employed in this study and case studies, together with semi-structured interviews, were used to obtain information.

Keywords: Youth crime, Mentz Village, unemployment, fatherlessness, quiting school, alcohol and drug abuse, police corruption, peer influence, Self confessed criminals.

DECLARATION

I announce that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted or presented to any other institution for academic consideration and that all the sources I used are shown and acknowledged by clear references.

Name: MM Selowa

Signed_____

Date: 7 December 2020

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late mother, Mamaila Rosinah Selowa, who saw the potential in me but never lived to see my success. You taught me well.

May your soul rest in eternal peace.

This work is also dedicated to my Grandmother for her enormous support and prayers that kept me going. Lastly, I dedicate this work to my siblings, Tshepo Selowa, Simon Selowa, Samuel Selowa and Mary Selowa who always believed in me and gave me their support in my studies.

They all mean the world to me

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank God for giving me strength, wisdom, motivation, good health, patience and peace throughout my studies, without which, I could not have completed this work. Secondly, my sincere appreciation goes to my academic supervisor, Dr C.E. Oliver, for always being available any time I needed his assistance. He gave me guidance and constant positive criticism and his sincere wish to see me succeed deserves gratitude.

Thirdly, I would like to extend my gratitude to my colleagues and friends at the University of Limpopo for their support and encouragement towards the completion of my studies. Your assistance and constant motivation are highly appreciated. For that I thank you. Fourthly, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the members of Mentz community for participating in this study. Their time and efforts they invested in this study are highly appreciated. Last, but not least, to my loving family, my grandmother, my four siblings, Tshepo, Simon, Samuel and Mary, not forgetting my beautiful daughter, Boitumelo. I would not have made it these far without you all. I would like to say that only God could pay you.

Table of Contents

xi

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Crime among the youth is a worldwide problem that many countries attempt to control (Heilbrun, Goldstein & Redding, 2005:5). The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2015), reported that about 200 000 homicides occur among youths worldwide every year, which constitutes 43 per cent of all homicides. It also revealed that homicide is the fourth-highest leading cause of death in youths aged 10–29 years of age and that 83 per cent of these deaths involved male victims (2015: np). Regarding the South African situation, Gray (1999:376) designates the issue of crime among the youth in South Africa as "…particularly severe…" when compared to other countries. According to a media release by Stats SA (2016:np), approximately 70 per cent of South Africa's 20 million young people (below 35 years of age) were more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of assault, robbery and property theft than those 35 and older. It also mentions that 64,5 per cent of assault perpetrators are aged between 15 and 35.

As for the causes of this problem, Groenewald (2005:225) quotes the severe ordeal that many children in South Africa experienced in the olden days, "…which paints a grim picture of the general well-being of the youth." According to Pelser (2008:1), the high rates of crime among young people is a repercussion of crime and violence since 1976, which has continued to affect homes and schools. Many youths seem to regard crime as a way of life (Groenewald, 2005:225). There is also a strong relationship between drug and alcohol abuse and youth crime. Substance abuse is generally associated with violent and income-generating crimes by youths (Maphumulo, 2010:10). In terms of drug use, Maphumulo (2010:10) cites a report by the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU), released in 2010, which indicated that alcohol abuse and alcoholism amongst young people in South Africa is very high and continue to increase daily. When young people are under the influence of drugs, they are much more likely to engage in criminal acts (Maphumulo, 2010:10).

1

According to Madernather (2005:2), youths aged between 18 and 26 make up 43 per cent of prisoners in South Africa and the Gauteng Province has the highest number of youth offenders in South Africa. Against this background, this study wants to focus on crime among the youth in a rural township in the Limpopo Province. The study involves a qualitative approach where seven young people who are admitted criminals; ten members of the community; and three community leaders were interviewed on aspects related to the topic of the study. Not only the nature of the crime itself but also the effects that it has on the community are included in this study. Although a study of this scope cannot be representative of the situation in South Africa, it is hoped that it could provide a picture of the types of problems many small communities in South Africa have to deal with at the moment.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Growing up in Mentz Village, the researcher can confirm that there is an intense fear among community members concerning the decline of mutual respect between people, social disorganisation, and an increase in anti-social behaviour and materialism among young people. Concerning Mankweng (which is the bigger area within which the Mentz Village is situated), crime statistics between 2017 and 2018 indicate high rates of robbery at residential premises which increased from 78 in 2017 to 109 in 2018. Assault with intended bodily harm increased from 654 in 2017 to 669 in 2018; robbery with aggravating circumstances from 438 in 2017 to 450 in 2018; murder from 2 in 2017 to 38 in 2018; and drug-related crimes from 382 to 625 over the same period.

An important cause of the rise in youth crime is young people dropping out of school before completing their studies and an increase in drug and alcohol abuse by young people, as observed by the researcher. Mentz suffers from the phenomenon of binge drinking by many young people, and when they are under the influence of alcohol, they often commit crimes because they have less control over their behaviour. The youth in Mentz also face many personal challenges such as abusive peer relations, family conflict, poor educational attainment and poverty.

The researcher thought that it would be a valuable pursuit to investigate the whole phenomenon concerning crime among the youth in this village.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

In most communities and schools in South Africa crime has become a part of day-to-day life (Zulu, Urbani, Van der Merwe, & Van der Walt, 2004:170-175). Crimes committed by youth do not only affect South Africa (Maseko, 2009:22) but most countries across the globe. Numerous researchers have embarked on investigating this phenomenon to find solutions for this issue. According to Stiglitz (2012:71), a link has been established between the increase in youth crime and societal inequalities and, according to him, the literature is consistent in noting that crime escalated to a range of anti-social behaviour amongst young people.

It seems that South African children are at risk of exposure to environments considered aggressogenic. In the family, for example, children are at high risk of being exposed to harsh and inconsistent paretenting ,violence, single parenting and criminality of family members (Redpath & Nagia-Luddy 2015:17-20). School is another important area for young people's socialisation and can serve as a protective factor against youth crime. However, many South African schools are chaotic rather than ameliorating enrironments and majority of students fail dropout rates are high. Furthermore,the levels of violence and crime in schools are very high (Redpath & Nagia-Luddy 2015:17-20). Redpath and Nagia-Luddy (2015:17-20) conclude that current conditions in South Africa are replete with opportunities in social environment for young people to learn violent and criminal behavior,and deficient in opportunities for young people to learn prosocial behaviour, and achieve their goals.

Van der Merwe, Dawes and Ward (2012:79) define anti-social behaviour amongst the youth as impulsive behaviour consisting of immoral conduct, which results in the violation of people's rights such as stealing, assaulting, robbing and damaging property. This is supported by a substantial body of literature which identifies factors leading to crime as

the person, the family he/she belongs to, the school he/she attends, the peers he/she associate with, and the community in which he/she resides (Stiglitz, 2012:71).

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are two criminological theories that can help to explain crime among young people in Mentz Village, namely: the Strain Theory by Robert Agnew (1992) and the Social Disorganisation Theory by Shaw and McKay (1942). According to Agnew's (1995:190) definition, individuals commit crime when they experience strain. Agnew defines "strain" as an individual experience that arises due to a person's inability to achieve his or her goals in life.

The Theory of Social Disorganisation was brought to the forefront by Shaw and Mckay (1942). The general premise of this theory is that poverty-stricken communities, dysfunctional families, and ethnic diversity result in differentiated habits and customs, which makes it difficult to maintain social control, educate young people or tackle issues that are negatively affecting the community (Sampson & Grove, 1989:356).

Both of these theories apply to the situation in Mentz Village. Factors such as poverty, unemployment and dysfunctional families lead to social disorganisation. On the other hand, an ineffective school system and pupils dropping out of school early (which finds place in disorganised settings), leave young people who are limited in their abilities to obtain their life goals legitimately, which causes strain. The theories will be further discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

1.5 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.5.1 Youth

The National Youth Commission Act of 1996 (Act 19 of 1996) as well as the National Youth Policy (9 December 1997) define youths as "persons between the ages of 14 to

35." The World Health Organization (WHO) refers to youths as people between the ages 10 and 29. Several criminologists have attempted to define the term youth, but Muncie (2004:314) sums it up as "an ill-defined and variable period of the life-span between teenage phase and adulthood." For this study, a youth is defined as an individual between the age of 18 and 30.

1.5.2 Crime

According to Cloete, Prinsloo and Coetzee (1993:42-48), crime can be defined as "an unlawful act or omission, which is at variance with either prohibition or junction and which is punishable by the state." In this study, crime will refer to unlawful acts that are punishable by law.

1.5.3 Self-confessed criminal

The Cambridge Dictionary (2008) defines a self-confessed criminal as a person who openly admit to committing illegal acts. In this study the term refers to an individual who testified to the researcher that they are involved in certain criminal activities with the belief that the researcher will keep them anonymous to protect them from facing legal consequences.

1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 Aim

The aim of the study, as mentioned, is to explore crime among the youth in Mentz Village, Limpopo Province.

1.6.2 Objectives

The research objectives are to determine the:
- Types of crime committed;
- causes of crime;
- experiences and perspectives of people living in Mentz on youth crimes, and to
- determine how the community could contribute to crime prevention among the youth in Mentz Village.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research methodology was employed in this study. A qualitative approach was deemed more appropriate to this study as it focuses on the meanings, experiences and understanding underlying the problem concerned. Qualitative research subsequently renders the researcher an opportunity to obtain a better insight into participants' personal experiences. The sample for this study consisted of 20 participants, which consisted of:

1. Seven young people – 18 years and older – who were self-admitted criminals, and with whom interviews were conducted;
2. Ten community members who took part in a focus group session; and
3. Three community leaders who were interviewed.

Inductive Thematic Data Analysis was used to obtain meaning from the data. The inductive nature of the analysis refers to the use of raw data to derive concepts or themes through interpretation by the researcher.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Royce, Singleton and Straits (2010:47) state that the researcher ought to be decent and accountable. The researcher should also carry out research with great attention, be honest in reporting the outcomes and accept new thoughts (Royce *et al.* 2010:47). To

ensure that research ethics were maintained, the researcher carried out the interviews and conducted the interviews carefully and responsibly.

1.8.1 Permission

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Limpopo's Research Ethics Committee (TREC). Permission was also obtained from the Ga-Mamabolo Tribal Council to collect data from members of Mentz Village before data collection took place.

1.8.2 Informed consent

The objectives of the study were explained to the participants. The participants signed an agreement to participate in the study. Participants were informed that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time if they so wished (See the attached consent form in Appendix ii).

1.8.3 Confidentiality

According to Burns and Wellings (2001:223), confidentiality is the researcher's administration of private evidence shared by the participants, which is forbidden to be disseminated or published without the participants' authorisation.

In the current study, the participants were assured that no unauthorised access to the data would be allowed and that the information that they gave would be treated confidentially.

1.8.4 Anonymity

Anonymity involves the concealing of participants' names and identities (Burns & Wellings, 2001:223). In terms of this study, data was protected by concealing names to ensure anonymity and to eliminate unwanted disclosure of participants' identification.

1.8.5 Protection from harm

This study has been approved by the University of Limpopo's Ethics Committee, and no adverse effects to participants were foreseen.

1.9 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

It is hoped that this study would assist academics, the police and the government to better understand the critical situation regarding youth crime in rural areas. This study is also aimed at improving the body of knowledge about the issue of youth crime in South Africa.

1.10 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 focuses on the orientation of the study which deals with the background and motivation for the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the theoretical framework and the definition of terms. Chapter 2 deals with a review of literature on the subject, together with providing a theoretical framework. In Chapter 3, the methodology employed in this study is discussed. Chapter 4 presents the data obtained, and, Chapter 5, deals with an analysis of the data and reflects on how it fits in with the original aim and objectives, the theories used and literature on the subject.

CHAPTER 2: **LITERATURE REVIEW**

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a literature review in this study is to obtain an overview of what literature – both locally and internationally – has to say on the topic under discussion. In rural communities, crimes committed by youth is a growing problem and has a devastating impact on people's lives (Maseko, 2009:22).

2.2 A YOUTH CRIME WORLDWIDE

Youth crime continues to impair societies across the world (Berg & Bernard, 2004:39) The youth are the future of tomorrow because they are energetic, passionate and ambitious. However, many young people engage in criminal activities with the hope of achieving their desired goals within a short period of time (Wilson, 1997:88). As a result, youths may end up in prison and fail societal expectations by committing crime (Anderson, 1990:21). Eide (1994:43) regards unemployment as a major cause of crime, and reckons that highly impulsive people may "improvise" their own means to obtain desirable goals such as money, status and power.

Criminal acts that were usually committed by adults in the past are now committed by youths, for example the two 10-year-old boys who murdered the two year old Jamie Bulger in 1993 and the two brothers (aged 12 and 13) who murdered the 10 year old Damilola Taylor in 2000 (Board, 2014:15). In 2009, the 16 year-old was Shakilus murdered by young males aged between the ages of 17 and 19 and Ben Kinsella, 16, was killed by three young males aged between 18-19 (Board, 2014:15). Crimes committed by young people today also differ in kind; a substantial number of misdemeanours encompass drug related offences, burglary, theft, firebombing, and violence against other people (Henderson, 2016:191-208). This situation displays overall crimes carried out by youths of all racial minority groups and how young the culprits are, and it also emphasises the gravity of crime among young people (Hughes, Stevens,

Hulme & Cassidy, 2018:32-76). Youth participation in crime in Nigeria has recently presumed a daunting dimension (Achunonu, 2012:22-25). Almost everywhere around Nigerian cities, the mood is inflicted with a criminal threat being wrecked on well-behaved, honest Nigerian citizens by criminals (Abosede & Adegboyega, 2015:35-54).

According to Abosede and Adegboyega (2015:35-54), the highways in Nigeria have become venues for repeated robberies, car hijackings and murder, while residential premises fall prey to day-to-day brutal killings by gangs. There are reports of crimes committed mostly by the youths in almost every region of the country (Abosede & Adegboyeya, 2015:35-54 and youth participation in crime has become a fundamental part of the country's everyday life (Adebayo, 2013:350-357). The actions of young people who prove to be criminals have reached alarming levels in modern times. Esiri (2016:8-14) declared that over 70 percent of Nigerian prisoners in this day and age are young people. In addition, accessible figures from the Nigeria Police crime records reveal that, in the middle of 2005-2012; 16 925 robbery suspects were apprehended by the police and the greatest number of them were committed by young people between the ages of 16 and 29 years (Alemika, 2013:1-81).

Crimes committed by young people is also a significant issue in Pakistan and we hear more and more reports of criminal acts and assaults where the perpetrators are between the ages of 17 and 26 (Gillani, Rehman & Gill, 2014:79-98). According to Gillani *et al* (2014:79-98), offences connected to drugs and alcohol, theft, rape robbery, shooting with criminal intent, assault and murder were noticeable criminal acts committed by young people in Pakistan in the Gujrat district in 2013. They conclude that young people were more involved in criminal activities than citizens in other age groups, especially young people from rural areas (Gillani *et al.*, 2014-79-98). Singapore is no exception. Youth involvement in crime is one of the main concerns for the Singapore Police Force (Leo, 2017:84-87). In 2016, the Singapore Police Force registered youth involvement in crimes as one of their three primary areas of concern (Leo, 2017:84-87). Typical crimes

committed by youths include shop theft, theft and rioting; shop theft being the most usual (Mohamad, 2014:32-36).

2.3 CRIME IN RURAL AREAS

Compared to crime in urban areas, crime in rural areas is generally characterised by the long distances between the places where people live and police stations. Residents in South African rural areas mostly use public transport such as busses and taxis to get to their workplaces or shops, and children usually have to walk long distances to get to school (Francisco & Chenier, 2007:134). As a result, houses and other valued properties are often left uninhabited during the day until late in the afternoon or evening when people knock off from work or when children return home from school. Police visibility in rural areas in South Africa is mostly low due to the lack of proper roads and the huge areas that officers have to patrol (Zenzile, 2008:19).

This means that criminals can commit crime in these areas without any difficulty. Rural areas also have critical factors that may lead to higher crime rates among the youth (Zenzile, 2008:19). For instance, poor school performance and low class attendance, increased school dropout rates, and the lack of jobs. In South African rural areas, youth who find themselves sitting at home, unemployed and not attending school get easily bored and end up spending more time with wayward friends, using drugs and engaging in criminal activities; often because - in their areas - there are also no recreational facilities or open spaces for young people to play sports or to engage in other activities (Bhorat, Kanbur & Stanwix, 2017:21-74). In South Africa, crime in rural areas often presents itself in different ways than in urban areas. Rural areas are often characterised by a stronger sense of tradition and belief, their specific ways of living, and strong connections in and between families (Zenzile, 2008:19). People living in rural areas are often reluctant to approach the police when they face crime-related problems and often fail to report crimes (Zenzile, 2008:19). Some people also fail to report cases because they are trying to protect the criminal when they know him, or because they are afraid that reporting him will ruin their relationship with his family. That is why residents of rural areas often take

criminal matters into their own hands and solve it on their own instead of involving the police (Zenzile, 2008:19).

Crime in the poverty-stricken communities has become distinctive in many respects. It is characterised by youthfulness, because both those who commit crime and their victims tend to be young (Bhoratet *et al.*, 2017:21-74). It is implosive - likely to be carried out by and against local residents. It is constant - occurring continuously and committed by the same individuals over and over again (Bhorat *et al.*, 2017:21-74). It is symmetrical in that targets and offenders tend to be of the same of age groups, race and social status. It is mostly violent and this violence tends to be intra– and inter-neighbourhood, and largely, intra-racial, likely to happen on the street and business premises. In addition, it has lately involved the utilisation of firearms (Bhorat *et al.*, 2017:21-74). It is also under-reported: because of the threat of youth retaliation and local loyalties also hinder victims from reporting crime (Metz & Burdina, 2018:133-150). Crime committed by young people in poor rural areas are likely to increase because, being denied the normal route to adulthood and independence, youths from the neighbourhoods find it difficult to 'grow out of crime' and deviant peer groups and are more likely to convert into youth gangs (De Kock, Kriegler, & Shaw, 2015:141-151). The increased rates of crime in South Africa over three years affect the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of the whole country (De Kock *et al.* 2015:141-151).

2.4 CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

Crime remains a serious problem in South Africa, regardless of the decrease in crime rates since 2000 (Nomoyi, 2000:36). The following types of crime have risen from 2017 to 2018: Bank robbery has increased by +333.3%; robbery of cash-in-transit vehicles by +56.6%; driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs +14.8%; illegal possession of firearms +8.8%; sexual offences discovered as result of police action +8.7%; stock theft +7.2%; and truck hijacking +1.6%. Many crimes reported to the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) are also of a violent nature**.** These percentages indicate that the government's goal of ensuring that all South African's should be and feel safe is a long

way from realisation. Despite the measures put in place to combat crime the levels of crime have maintained their high levels, with only marginal fluctuations on an annual basis.

South Africa has encountered many policy adjustment since its democratisation in 1994, and most policies were aimed at rectifying past harms and maltreatment that were affected by the apartheid system. According to Bhorat *et al* (2017:21-74), crime and conflicts in South Africa were steered by poverty, inequality and a slow pace of improvements by the government which, in turn, fuels crime and political confrontation. South Africa, as is now commonly known, has some of the highest unemployment rates in the world and salaries are extremely low for most individuals in the country (Bhorat, Kanbur & Mayet, 2014:277-287).

Many researchers have studied and scrutinised poverty levels and discovered that South Africa has some of the highest poverty levels in developing countries which resembles a low-income country (Budlender, Leibbrandt & Woolard, 2015:142-145). For example, Budlender *et al.*, (2014:227-287) presented evidence that, in 2013, almost half of South African households (47.3 percent) and more than one-third (37.9 percent) of South African households lived below the upper (R577) and lower (R416) poverty lines respectively. According to Verrinder (2013:57-60), there is a positive relationship between crime, youth unemployment and poverty; moreover, youth unemployment and poverty are specifically important for property crime and less so for violent crime, although both are crucial. As a result, it can be concluded that a large amount of people living in South Africa, and more especially black people, are struggling to meet their basic needs for survival (Redpath & Nagia-Luddy 2015:17-20).

According to Naudé (2005:126-139), almost all crimes reported in South Africa involve violence. The biggest categories of violent crimes (homicide, robbery, serious assaults and rape) have shown an increase in South Africa during the early 2000s (Interpol, 2014). Moreover, South Africa counts under the top five countries in the world in terms of serial murders (Naudé, 2005:126-139). In comparison with other countries, South Africa has

abnormally high rates of violent crimes such as rape, murder and assault (Zenzile, 2008:22). The fact that many people make increasing use of private security services in their homes shows that the situation is deteriorating and that the police do not do much about it (Zenzile, 2008:22). South Africans feel afraid to make use of public spaces, while children's ability to play is limited and people are becoming more scared to walk alone around their residential areas (Bhorat *et al.*, 2017:21-74).

According to Altbeker (2007:12), the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation was contracted in February 2007 by the South African government to examine the main characteristics of crime in South Africa. The study determined that the high rates of crime in South Africa are a result of the following main factors:

- Violence is no longer seen as a taboo;
- People are relying only on the police to tackle crime;
- The existence of criminal subcultures;
- Dysfunctional families;
- Youth unemployment, poverty and inequality (Altbeker, 2007:12).

2.4.1. Mankweng crime statistics

Table 1: Mankweng Crime Statistics (2012 – 2019)

Crime	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	4546	4896	4790	5658	5631	6104	6177	6099
Murder	44	27	35	33	27	29	38	46
Sexual Offences	344	315	268	236	249	220	196	207
Attempted Murder	20	26	32	53	25	28	26	32
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	671	732	608	758	713	654	669	589
Common assault	512	628	480	515	644	506	436	384

Common robbery	264	291	191	261	272	256	211	182
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	186	191	331	431	385	438	450	438
Arson	15	28	21	26	26	22	16	14
Malicious damage to property	282	254	244	315	384	299	330	324
Burglary at non-residential premises	148	207	240	179	172	219	174	181
Burglary at residential premises	713	709	867	951	818	1004	914	857
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	49	36	37	52	43	30	25	44
Stock theft	84	91	44	54	67	71	80	98
Illegal possession of firearm and ammunition	16	18	21	18	14	21	23	39
Drug-related crime	98	205	242	268	283	382	625	498
Driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs	26	70	31	96	150	204	249	301
All theft no mentioned elsewhere	564	566	507	746	994	979	929	1036
Commercial crime	64	65	69	101	118	157	147	179
60	107			55	59	43	99	138
34	63			104	75	78	109	94
Robbery at non-residential premises	46	55	54	41	63	77	68	82

(Source: Statistics South Africa – *https://www.crimestatssa.com/precinct.php?id=49*)

These statistics show that the total number of crimes in 2019 has risen by 34,1 per cent - from 4 546 in 2012 to 6 099 in 2019. For the same period, attempted murder increased by 60 per cent; robbery with aggravated circumstances by 135,5 per cent; burglary of non-residential properties by 17,6 per cent, burglary of residential properties by 28,2 per cent; drug-related crimes by 537,8 per cent; robberies at residential premises by 159,5 per cent; and robberies at non-residential premises by 47,8 per cent. The violence associated with such crimes is particularly worrisome.

2.5 CAUSES OF YOUTH CRIME

Many factors may affect the high crime rates among young people in South Africa. For instance, coming from a dysfunctional household, having deviant friends, living in troubled communities, and poverty (Naudé, 2005:126-139). It should even be taken into consideration that some young people have medical conditions that may drive them to criminal or deviant behaviour (Fagan & Najman, 2003:65).
In the literature, reasons for crime are mainly connected to:

- Economic factors;
- Social influences; and
- Family influences.

2.5.1 Economic factors

Poverty and unemployment are perhaps the most important economic factors affecting youth crime (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:187).

2.5.1.1 Poverty and inequality

Haughton and Khandker (2009:187) define poverty as a deficiency in economic well-being. According to these authors, inequality can be seen as the differences in the state of living of different people living in a particular country or place. Inequality can also be

defined as the unequal supply of valuable possessions (Naudé, 2005:126-139). Inequality contributes to the high rates of poverty among South African residents, which consequently lead to high crime rates among the youth (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:187). Davids, Theron and Maphunye (2005:37) assert that, while poverty implies a lack of resources; inequality refers to the unequal distribution of resources.

Many youths seem to throw themselves into the world of crime because of poverty (Prior & Paris, 2005:95). Many young people from poverty-stricken backgrounds grow up with a strong desire to take their family out of poverty and to improve their living conditions, but when they find themselves unable to help their families financially in a legal way, they take the route of crime (Naudé, 2005:126-139). Unemployment among the youth and school-dropout ares increasing rapidly in this country (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2005:78). Youth from rural areas often have limited knowledge of- or no access to information about career guidance and job choices (Zenzile, 2008:19). They frequently end up enrolling in courses they know nothing about, and often drop out of school altogether (Zenzile, 2008:19). Moreover, even those who graduate end up sitting at home for years searching for employment without success.

2.5.1.2 Unemployment

Eide (1994: 43) indicates unemployment as the main cause of crime in South Africa. The WHO (2015:np) also reports unemployment in the family context as one of the main risk factors of violence among youths. The youth unemployment rate in South Africa increased by 55.20 per cent in the first quarter of 2019 from 54.70 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2018. The rate of youth unemployment in South Africa averaged 52.28 per cent from 2013 until 2019, attaining an all-time high of 55.90 per cent in the second quarter of 2017 and a record low of 48.80 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2014 (Trading Economics, 2019:np). Gxubane (2014:306) suggests that unemployment remains South Africa's most persistent issue and estimated that extremely gullible individuals might "improvise" their own incomes to attain required goals such as money, status and power. Unemployment lessens normal thinking development and suitable conduct with respect to employment.

Gxubane (2014:306) points out that it is commonly thought that youths turn to criminal activities since they are unable to obtain employment and are not allegeable to being hired because they do not have the required skills for a job. This is the result of low educational levels, which relates to increased crime rates, unemployment and low income (Nomoyi, 2011:68). An unemployed person needs to maintain him- or herself and those dependent on him or her. Therefore, when one struggles to find employment and earn money in a legal way, one could get frustrated and turn to illegal activities to put food on the table (Nomoyi, 2011: 69).

Young people from 18 to 35 years of age often migrate to the cities in search of employment as a result of unemployment in rural areas, which causes overwhelming urbanisation (Terblanche, 1999:34). People who leave their places of birth and go to cities in search of employment without social support networks are mostly young people (Maree, 2002:5). Lack of skills development and low levels of literacy expose these young people to crime because they are vulnerable to jobs with minimum income that will not even maintain their basic needs (Maree, 2005:89). Furthermore, Gxubane (2014:320) states that the youth are normally anxious with the satisfaction of their immediate needs; hence, they are triggered to act impetuously and commit income-generating crimes. Moreover, Gxubane (2014: 320) states that unemployment amongst the youth which leads to a lack of financial resources results in young people engaging in criminal activities to maintain themselves.

2.5.2 Social causes of crime

2.5.2.1 Community environment

In the United States of America (USA), corruption in the law enforcing agencies, high rates of unemployed, youths who do not finish school, the easy availability of alcohol and drugs, lack of recreational facilities for youth and lack of unity in the community are major causes of crime within the community environment (Shaw & Mckay, 1942:95; WHO,

2015: np). In disadvantaged communities, high divorce rates increase the chances of single-parent households which may eventually lead to broken social control in communities (Sampson & Raudenbush, 1997:143).

2.5.2.2 Education and youth crime

Youth crime and school drop-outs are both negatively affecting societies at large (Psacharapoulos, 2007:76) There is a strong relationship between school dropout and high rates of youth crime (Psacharapoulos, 2007:76; WHO, 2015:np). According to Polk (1981:13), people who leave school early are more likely to commit crime than graduates. A study conducted by Hathways, Reynolds and Monachesi (2013:42) among young people in South Africa who finished high school and young people who dropped out of school in their twenties, discovered that young people who did not complete high school clearly show higher levels of criminal engagement than graduates. Therefore, it can be concluded that schools, education and families together have a way of influencing the future of young people. Education is an essential route to success (Psacharapoulos, 2007:77).

The roles that were played by the family in the past are now being played by the education system. The school setting is where young people must learn and develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to survive adulthood (Psacharapoulos, 2007:77). Everyone in the community expects the youth to succeed in life, but young people from poor backgrounds with little opportunities and deviant values experience many difficulties early in their school careers (Psacharapoulos, 2007:76). Braun (1976:123) discovered that educators' expectations towards learners were affected by factors such as physical attractiveness, socio-economic status, sex, names and older siblings. The educators had a low expectation of children who come from poor backgrounds and had older siblings who failed academically (Braun, 1976:123). This affects their treatment of the child, which contributes to his or her failure later in life. Hawkins and Listiner (1987:134) discovered that an unpleasant school environment leads youth to criminal involvement and behaviour. The school often contributes to youth crime by failing to provide a haven for

children from poorer backgrounds. Instead, these children are often reminded of their unpleasant backgrounds while they came to school hoping for a better future (Hawkins & Listiner, 1987:134).

2.5.2.3 Peer influence

Research highlights that young people with self-confidence and positive attitudes when it comes to their future hardly commit crime (Buelhler, 2006:105). Young people find it difficult to become responsible individuals when they do not have strong bonds with their parents. Moreover, the lack of parent-child bonds often results in difficulties making friends with well-behaved behaviour, and they consequently end up in the company of criminals (Buelhler, 2006:105). Deviant friends also make it easier for the individual to cope with strain because deviant friends are not judgmental; in fact, they often encourage criminal behaviour and convince the individual that it is not a bad thing to do (Buelhler, 2006:105).

There is a positive connection between association with deviant friends and deviant conduct. Association with deviant peers is a key predictor in criminal involvement. According to Buelhler (2006:106), "…factors such as peer criminal behaviour, peer sanction of criminal behaviour, affection or loyalty to peers, hanging out with peers and peer pressure and influence for deviance are all connected to youth criminal behaviour". This becomes even worse when the person has no relationship with his/her parents (Buelhler, 2006:105). Young people want to be accepted, so they will do what their peers are doing even when they know it is wrong. They also do not want to be embarrassed or disrespected by refusing to do what their friends do. On the other hand, they do not want to be seen doing something good or positive, because they strongly believe that they will be ridiculed for it (Buelhler 2006:105).

2.5.2.4 Substance abuse

Substance abuse is positively correlated with high rates of property and violent crime in South Africa (Schonfeldt, 2007:54-69) and globally (WHO, 2018:np). The proliferation of drugs and drug abuse in communities may increase young adults' exposure to - and involvement in - crime and violence (Da Rocha Silva, 2004:113). According to Schonfeldt (2007:54-69), the problem of substance abuse by youths is a blight that is a threat to any nation and society. In the Limpopo Province, many youths use dagga, *nyaope* and alcohol and, when they are under the influence of these substances, end up committing more crime than when they are sober (Maseko, 2009:97). There is a positive and growing connection between substance abuse and the high crime rates among the youth in South Africa (Schonfeldt, 2007:54-69).

Several factors can play a role in substance abuse. For instance, alcohol abuse by an individual youth can be seen as a result of association with bad friends; the result of boredom, and the misuse of alcohol in the community. In disadvantaged communities, there tends to be a tavern at almost every corner, and these taverns sell to everyone regardless of their age (Schonfeldt, 2007:54-69). It is also easy for youths, even for those who are underage, to buy alcohol from local taverns. The determiner for drug use involves the desire to change an emotional state, to deal with stressful life events, and for pleasure (Maseko, 2009:97).

Other factors influencing the increasing drug and alcohol use in South Africa include; coming from a low-income family, family disruption and conflict, absent fathers and single-mother households (Da Rocha Silva, 2012:34). Substance abuse is positively associated with several kinds of crimes, such as violent and property crimes (Maseko, 2009:97). Several studies have also proved that substance abuse is connected to bad sexual conduct (Da Rocha Silva, 2012:34). Young people who use drugs while still at school are highly associated with criminal behaviour, and these youths tend to perform poorly at school; they are truant from school; they repeat the same grades several times and drop out of school early (Da Rocha Silva, 2012:36). In addition, young people who abuse drugs

are also more likely to experience long periods of unemployment, commit crime, experience poverty and social rejection, and manifest violent conduct (Maseko, 2009:97).

Furthermore, substance abuse is mostly linked to gang violence, violence at school, and frequently results in unpleasant teaching and learning settings (Schonfeldt, 2007:54-69). Drug use is also frequently associated with family conflicts, financial problems, and mental problems (Maseko, 2009). This is the reason why young addicts sell their clothes and steal valuable goods from their households and sell them at very low prices just so that they can buy their next fix (Schonfeldt, 2007:54-69). All in all, substance abuse leads to increased rates of crime, corruption in communities and makes it difficult for communities to enforce informal social control (Da Rocha Silva, 2012:36). As a result, these communities tend to suffer at the hand of their own youth and end up being disorganised and more vulnerable to criminal activities (Da Rocha Silva, 2012:36).

2.5.3 Family relations

For the past 30 years, there has been increased recognition that young people are embedded within multiple systems that exert direct and indirect effects on their behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:34) As such, family conduct has been understood to play an important role in the growth and safeguarding of child behavioural problems (Minuchin, 1974:77). Parental conflict and aggressiveness are also highly likely to drive young people to violent crime and parents with a criminal history increases engagement in robbery and burglary (Polk, 1981:13).

2.5.3.1 Family attachment

According to Farrington (2009:160-173), parents persuade the behaviour of children through affection and attachment. In light of this, young people who have strong relationships with their parents will value these relationships and behave accordingly (Farrington, 2009:160-173). Young people who engage in criminal activities often have no supportive relationship with their parents and come from disrupted families (McCord,

McCord & Zola, 1991:156). Strongly-attached young people are more likely to have open communication with their parents, whereas youths who have problems communicating with their parents are more likely to get involved in serious forms of crime (Farrington, 2009:160-173). Parental love reduces crime because it is something young people do not want to lose. Crime among the youth is associated with high rates of marital and family conflict (McCord, McCord & Zola 1991:156) and low levels of parental acceptance and affection (Farrington, 2009:160-173).

2.5.3.2 Family structure

Family structure influences criminal behaviour among youth. Young people who have no positive structures provided for them at home are more likely to end up as criminals (Wright & Wright, 1994:33). Family structure is crucial in determining how children are going to turn out when they become young adults, and children who are not raised well are more likely to become criminals when they approach their early and mid-twenties (Wright & Wright, 1994:33). The family is the building block of society. Many young adults are involved in crime because of unpleasant family experiences and therefore try to deal with their unpleasant home situation by committing crime and living their own separate lives (Wright & Wright, 1994:33).

2.5.3.3 Parental deviance

In a longitudinal study, Farrington (2009:160-173) found that the majority of boys with fathers who are known to be criminals were arrested during their teenage years. Parental deviance is one of the most constant factors in the literature to be related to crime among young people (Farriington, 2009:160-173). Dishion, Nelson and Kavanagh (2003:553-571) concluded that parental deviance tends to determine the likelihood of their childrens' engagement in criminal behaviour.

2.5.3.5 Single-parent households

There is a strong relationship between single parent versus two-parent households and crime among the youth. According to Muehlenberg (2002:71-79), there is a strong relationship between single parent households, more especially single-mother families, and criminal behaviour among the youth (Wright & Wright 1994:37). It is no secret that single parents find it harder to discipline their children and to supervise their movements (Knoester & Haynie, 2005:112). Most single parents who find themselves in the workplace find it even harder to monitor their children and to make sure that they do not associate with deviant friends. These single parents often do not even have time to take part in any community social activities aimed at preventing crime (Knoester & Haynie, 2005:112).

Thus, there is a strong connection between young people's involvement in criminal activities and their relationships with their fathers (Muehlenberg, 2002:71-79). Boys who grow up without fathers are highly likely to associate with deviant friends, abuse substances, and engage in criminal activities (Muehlenberg, 2002:71-79). These boys tend to care less about the rights and wellbeing of other people; they are bitter and angry with their absent fathers and often think the world owes them something (Dishion *et al.*, 2003:553-571). In addition, these fatherless youths go around causing chaos in the community trying to cope with their day-to-day depression, and it is hard for single mothers to discipline them (Dishion *et al.*, 2003:553-571).

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there are two theories, in particular, that can help to explain crime among young people in the Mentz Village, Limpopo Province, namely the Strain Theory by Robert Agnew (1992) and the Social Disorganisation Theory of Shaw and McKay (1942).

2.6.1 The General Strain Theory (GST)

The General Strain Theory is originally the work of Robert Agnew (2006) and is largely based on work by Robert Merton (1938); Agnew himself (1987); and Messner and Rosenfeld (1994). According to Agnew (2006), individuals may commit crime when they experience strain or stress. He defines "strain" as an individual experience that arises due to one's inability to achieve one's goals in life (Agnew, 1985:151-167).

The General Strain Theory (GST) identifies three types of strain:

1. The first type of strain has to do with "the inability of individuals to achieve their goals" or "goal blockage" (Agnew, 1992:167). Another way of looking at this is to see it as a disjunction between an individual's aspirations and expectations, where the goal of success seem to be out of reach (Brezina, 2017:np).
2. A second type of strain deals with "noxious or negatively valued stimuli" such as bullying by peers, negative relationships with parents and teachers or criminal victimisation (Agnew, 1992:167; Brezina, 2017:np).
3. The third type of strain involves the "loss of positively valued stimuli". This could involve experiences such as the theft of valuable property, the loss of a romantic relationship, or the withdrawal of parental love (Agnew, 1992:167; Brezina, 2017:np).

When people experience strain or stress, it can lead to negative emotions such as anger, frustration, depression and despair (Brezina, 2017:np). This may "…generate pressure for corrective active" of which criminality may be one response (Brezina, 2017:np). In other words, the individual may attempt to ameliorate the negative effects of strain by using crime as a solution. For example, a person with a serious need for money may commit crimes such as robbery, while other people may commit crimes such as illegal drug use to cope with life challenges and to lighten their burdens (Agnew, 2006:238).

2.6.2 The Social Disorganisation Theory

The Theory of Social Disorganisation was brought to the forefront of criminology by Shaw and Mckay's 1942 study of juvenile delinquency in a Chicago neighbourhood and regained popularity with Sampson's work in this area (Sampson & Groves 1989:356). The general premise of this theory is that poverty-stricken communities, dysfunctional families, and ethnic differences result in different habits and customs, which makes it difficult to maintain social control, educate young people, and tackle issues that are negatively affecting the community (Sampson & Grove, 1989:356). As a result of the difficulty to function as united communities, these communities become socially disorganised. And consequently, these communities experience higher rates of crime.

Poverty-stricken rural areas, residential uncertainty and ethnic differences in communities could also lead to social dysfunctionality. These kind of areas have difficulty connecting as united communities, which makes it harder to maintain social control, educate young people, and tackle issues that are negatively affecting the community, and, for that reason, the levels of crime continue to increase. Dysfunctional families, such as those that experience family disruption, conflicts and single-parent households are also added to the list of factors that may prevent the community from enforcing informal social control (Rephann, 1999:111-127). Scholars often find significant relationships between social disorganisation, poverty, disrupted communities, dysfunctional families, differences in customs, values and belief and crime and thus decide that the social disorganisation theory also covers rural communities (Rephann, 1999:111-127). Rephann (1999:111-127) also found that poverty, unemployment and school dropout, respectively, play a major role in the increase of crime in rural areas. It is normal for communities to be different when it comes to providing their youth with situations and occasions that increase their chances of reaching their desired goals in life (Haynie, Sliver & Teasdale, 2006:25). Disorganised neighbourhoods are therefore normally characterised by poverty, absent fathers and criminal sub-cultures which play a role in the occurrence of crime and the absence of things that are required to motivate the youth to fight for a brighter future (Haynie et al., 2006:25). Structurally disadvantaged neighbourhoods that lack the

resources to supervise their youths successfully make it even more difficult for the youth to stay away from bad friends and to focus on building a better future for themselves and their families (Earls, 1997:14).

Furthermore, young people who are poorly supervised tend to associate themselves with bad company and engage in bad behaviour (Henry, Tolan & Gorman-Smith, 2001:22). As a result, disadvantaged communities provide the youth with limited opportunities which makes it easy for them to rebel and take the easy route to success (Henry *et al.*, 2001:22). In this way, the easy route to success and quick money is an association with deviant friends and criminal involvement (Henry et al., 2001:22). The cause for this is that the youth from poorer families and communities may notice the limitations of their circumstances and give up on their futures (Skinner, 1995:14). As young people from these neighbourhoods evaluate the kinds of future they might have because of their dire circumstances, they can decide on little possibilities of achieving their desired goals through legal means such as furthering their qualifications or seeking for employment.

A study conducted on by Skinner on self-efficacy determined that a person's expectations concerning his or her future success influence behaviour (Skinner, 1995:14). Thus, youths living in very poor communities often have an overwhelming feeling of worthlessness and no hope for their future and may behave in ways that will have a negative effect on their self-development (for example: neglecting school and leaving school without completion, involvement in criminal behaviour, and substance abuse) (Skinner, 1995:14).

2.7 SUMMARY

Chapter 2 reviewed literature on the topic at hand. This has enabled the researcher to obtain a better understanding and knowledge of various forms of crime committed by youth in South Africa and across the world and the causes of crime. The General Strain

Theory and the Social Disorganisation Theory can also help to clarify the reasons why young people commit crime.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in this study. A qualitative research design was used in this study, as qualitative research generally advances a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon at hand (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:22).

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Qualitative research is interested in studying the natural context in which social events take place (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:22). Moreover, it goes to great lengths to observe and describe what happens and what people do and experience in actual social settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:22). A qualitative approach also concentrates on the meanings, experiences and understanding of the phenomena that the study is concerned about (Engel & Schutt, 2010:10). This research uses an exploratory design. Engel and Schutt (2010:10) explain that an exploratory research design is used when the researcher searches to learn how people interact in specific situations, what meaning they render to their actions, and what challenges affect them. An exploratory research design is an attempt to lay the foundation that will lead to forthcoming studies or to determine if what is being perceived could be explained by a currently existing theory (Engel & Schutt, 2010:10). In temporal terms, this study involves a cross-sectional approach which implicates that it attempts to provide a picture of the situation as it exists at a certain point in time. To ensure that external factors play as small a role as possible, the researcher tried to complete the research in as short a period as possible. All interviews and focus groups were completed during November 2018.

3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

3.3.1 Population

The target population refers to the elements of the study that the researcher wants to focus on and to which the results obtained by testing a sample should be generalised (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:96). Mcmillan and Schumcher (2006:119) describe a population as "A group of people, objects or events that conform to a certain criterion which makes them the focus of a study".

The population for this study consists of Mentz community members, including young people who have committed crime, community leaders, and other members of the community.

3.3.2 Sampling

The researcher applied non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling can be defined as a sampling method that is used when the size of a population is unknown (Royce *et al.*, 2010:172). Purposive sampling was used thus the researcher resides at the area of study and knew where to find participants who may provide useful information.

3.3.3 Sampling selection

The sample size is the selected number of elements within a sample. In purposive sampling, the sample size is determined by the level of saturation of data to be obtained.

- Seven young people, 18 and older who were self-admitted criminals, who were interviewed. This number was obtained by reviewing young people until the researcher felt that data saturation was reached;
- Ten community members who took part in a focus group session; and

- Three community leaders who were interviewed.

In the case of the seven self-admitted offenders, the researcher made use of snowball sampling, where participants referred the researcher to other potential participants. Community members were selected based on their perceived knowledge of the village and the topic at hand. The types of people the researcher used in the focus group interviews were adults in the community, mostly parents. Community leaders were interviewed on a one-on-one basis.

The researcher met with the seven offenders individually at a well-known supermarket. Most interviews consisted of the researcher buying them cold drinks while conversing with them. Each participant was ensured that everything they told the researcher would remain confidential and will not be used against them in any manner. As a rule, the participants seemed resilient at first, but, as they learnt to trust the researcher, opened up.

The focus group interview took place at the soccer field in Mentz Village. It was the only open place the researcher could find. Candidates who agreed to participate in the focus group interview were approached individually at their homes to obtain their cooperation and to inform them about the date, time and location the focus group would take place. All the participants were eager to attend, as they believed that they had an important contribution to make. Therefore, all of them came regardless of their busy schedules. Their cooperation was excellent; they were free to speak, and they enthusiastically contributed to the discussion. Lastly, the individual interviews with the three community leaders took place at their homes. The researcher visited them at their homes since they are old, while some were working, and the only time the researcher could interview them was in the early evening. Hence, for the individual interviews, the researcher had to make one-on-one appointments.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Methods triangulation was used, which involves utilising different data collection methods to facilitate a better understanding of the data. The two data collections tools used were the following:

3.4.1 Data collection tools

3.4.1.1 Interviews

For the interviews of the seven youths and the three community leaders, separate semi-structured interview guides were constructed that were in line with the objectives of the study. Interview guides were constructed in Sepedi and English since these are the languages that almost all of the people in the township could understand. The interviews took place from 10 June 2019 until 28 July 2019.

Data was gathered by recording the interviews on an audio recorder (a cellular phone with an audio-recording application) with permission from the participants. At the end of each interview, the interviewer made notes concerning the interactions and observations that were noted during the interviews. In terms of the interviewing of the young people, the interviews continued until data saturation was reached.

3.4.1.2 Focus group interview

The researcher applied a focus group as a second data collection tool. Focus group interviews deal with a selected group of participants collectively answering questions prepared by the researcher (Barbour, 2007:2). According to Barbour (2007:2), a focus group should ideally consist of six to twelve participants sharing their experiences and ideas about the questions (Barbour, 2007:2).

The variance of the focus group interview procedure is that, unlike other qualitative researchers who frequently produce a list of interview questions and go through them one by one, focus group interviews utilises reminders. A reminder can be an announcement that the researcher tosses out to the focus group participants and leave it to the group to disseminate instead of asking plenty of questions (Barbour, 2007:2). As mentioned above, a focus group session was held containing ten community members of Mentz Village. This session took place on the 13th of July 2019 and was held at a local soccer field named Sadam. The group was used to obtain a more in-depth understanding of their perceptions and attitudes on why youth engage in criminal activities and what should be done to eradicate the youth criminal culture. According to Rubin and Rubin (2011:30), focus groups can also help participants to re-calculate or judge a statement.

3.4.2 Duration of the interviews

The interviews with youths took approximately 25 minutes per participant, and the focus group session about 60 minutes. Interviews with the community leaders took about 25 minutes each.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was done using Inductive Thematic Data Analysis. Thematic Data Analysis has become a commonly accepted qualitative technique within the social sciences (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1996:12). It is a tool which aims to discover knowledge and a deep and clear demonstration of details (Wesber, 1985:7). The inductive nature of the analysis refers to the fact that the themes that were developed in this study were closely related to the data provided by the participants. Thematic Data Analysis was utilised to obtain a deeper understanding of participants' perceptions and experiences on crime among the youth in Mentz Village. The researcher transcribed the collected data from the recordings so that the themes could be properly investigated. The researcher used Tesch's (1990:61) eight steps of data analysis to analyse the data:

- The researcher read the entire transcript carefully to obtain a sense of the data and to jot down some ideas.
- The researcher selected one case, asked "what is this about?" and thought about the underlying meaning of the information. The researcher's thoughts were written in the margins of the notebook.
- A list was made of all the themes or topics. Similar themes or topics were clustered together.
- The researcher applied the list of themes or topics to the data. The themes or topics were abbreviated as codes, which were written next to the appropriate segments of the transcripts. The researcher found the most descriptive wording for the themes or topics and categorised them. The researcher made a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetically categorised the codes.
- The data material belonging to each category was assembled, and a preliminary analysis was performed.
- The researcher recoded existing material if necessary (De Vos & Strydom, 1998:67).

3.6 QUALITY CRITERIA

There are four aspects of trustworthiness that qualitative researchers must establish: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Statistics Solutions, 2019:np).

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility deals with how processes such as the selection of research participants, context, data collection and analysis methods address the purpose of the study (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004: 105-112).

3.6.2 Dependability

Dependability is the ability for information to remain unchanged over a period in various conditions (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utrianen & Kyngäs, 2014:2). This means that the findings should be persistent and have an ability to be repeated for other researchers to conduct the research exactly how initially it was conducted using the same methodology (Lincon & Guba, 1985 317:318). Furthermore, dependability can also be ensured by applying a thick description of the research methodology (Brink *et al.,* 2006:33). Recordings and transcripts were kept as evidence (Brink *et al.*, 2006:33).

3.6.3 Conformability

Conformability refers to the possible correspondence between two or more independent participants about the accuracy, meaning and relevance of the collected data (Elo *et al.,* 2014:2). In this regard, conformability was ensured by applying more than one approach to investigate the research questions to intensify confidence in the results (triangulation).

3.6.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to the ability to use the findings in another context (Brink *et al.*, 2006:33). Transferability was ensured by applying a thick description of the research methodology. A detailed explanation is a method that researchers in qualitative studies offer to make their knowledge during data collection strong. The researcher presented an adequate indication that the present study is applicable.

3.7 BIAS

Almost all research reflects a certain amount of bias (Bezuidenhout, 2011:52). The researcher is responsible for making it a priority to ensure that bias is reduced as much as possible. According to Bezuidenhout (2011: 52), the greatest influence upon the subject and context of the study lies with the researcher.

As a result, the standard for trustworthiness applicable to qualitative research becomes important by ensuring that the research reveals more information about the subjects than about the researcher (Bezuidenhout, 2011:52).

3.8. SUMMARY

This chapter reflected on the methodological approach relevant to the objectives and the aim of this study. Exploratory research design was chosen and applied to collect data on the topic. Sampling was achieved by the use of purposive sampling, and the sampling procedure was explained. A focus group and semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. Interview guides comprised of semi-structured questions were carefully applied. Inductive Thematic Data Analysis was used to analyse the data.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aimed to explore crime among the youth at Mentz Village in Limpopo province. This chapter presents an analysis of the gathered data and a discussion of the results. In light of this, data presentation is done in line with the objectives of the study.

4.2 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.2.1 Case studies

The case studies refer to interviews with self-admitted young criminal offenders.

4.2.1.1 Case 1

Participant one is a 22-years-old boy from Mentz Village. He was born and raised in Mentz. He has three siblings whom he stays with under the same roof together with both his parents. His mother is unemployed, and his father is working but not earning much. Their family conditions are not pleasant because his father finds it difficult to maintain them with his low salary. The participant speaks of his father as an alcoholic. Apparently, his father spends his income on alcohol and providing for them at home. At times, his parents would argue, and his father would go to the extent of beating up his mother, especially when he has had too much to drink. According to the participant, this continued for a number of years and until eventually, his mother got tired of the ill-treatment and abuse. His mother one day had the strength to do what is good for her and moved out to stay in her father's house in the same village. Unfortunately, the participant and his siblings suffered the consequences of their mother's decision. His father lashed out at them and started to abuse him and his siblings. According to the participant, the father would just beat him up or start shouting at his siblings for no particular reason. He also came back with different women every month-end.

He would buy beer for the women while his family starved. The participant and his siblings wanted to go and live with their mother, but their father refused and used them to pick a fight with their mother. The participant once tried to run away from home, but he thought of his siblings and returned. The participant stated that he started to isolate himself from his family and depended much on his friends for support and comfort. He spent as much time as he could away from home in search of peace of mind. His friends eventually had much influence on him and started to negatively affect his behaviour and day-to-day conduct. His friends introduced him to *nyaope*. At first, they would buy it for him, and they would smoke it together. As he started to depend more on it, he had to start buying it for himself, and therefore as a result, he started to commit crime to maintain the habit. The participant mentioned that he committed mostly theft and mugging crimes to get money to buy *nyaope*. He also mentioned that he once stole food from his aunt's spaza shop and went to sell the stolen goods at half price at the nearby village. He emphasised that: *"When I'm high I would laugh non-stop and forget about all the problems at home".* Their (he and his friends') targets are mostly Somalian shops; they would steal goods from Somalian supermarkets and sell them to community members who did not ask too many questions about where they have acquired the goods; these goods too were sold at a lower price.

The participant attended Mphetsebe High School in Mentz and dropped out when he was in grade 10. He emphasised that, because of the problems he was facing at home, he could not concentrate on his schoolwork. He repeated grade 10 three times until he dropped out. "*I started committing crime more often after dropping out of school because I had more time on my hands*". He specified that he also committed crime because of easy money, to deal with stress, to forget his family problems, and to please his friends so that they can continue considering him their friend and hanging out with him. He also stated that he would like to go back to school and finish grade 12 and be somebody in life because he does not want to commit crime for the rest of his life. Moreover, he also emphasised that he does not want to end up in jail. And then concluded by saying *"If I had a child I would advise him/her not to be controlled by his/her present situation and to push harder to achieve his/her goals no matter what"*.

4.2.1.2 Case 2

Participant 2 is a 26-year-old boy born and raised in Mentz. He lives with his mother, grandmother, uncle, three younger siblings and three cousins. He never knew his father and his siblings have different fathers who also are nowhere to be found. His mother worked as a cleaner at a hospital. The participant describes himself as being streetwise and not academic-wise. He struggled at school and only made it to grade 10 through being condoned to the next grade every year. He dropped out of school after repeating grade 10 four times. He clearly stated that there is no way he will ever go back to school because it will just be a waste of his precious time. The participant was smoking, drinking and stealing from other learners before he could even drop out of school.

Before he turned 21, the participant was in and out of prison for different kinds of crimes such as; assault, theft, housebreaking and attempted murder, but all the cases were dropped due to insufficient evidence. However, he did not deny committing any of the crimes. The community members once chased him after they suspected that he attacked an elderly man with his girlfriend, just after he got home on the day he received his old-age social grant money. The old man was not cooperating, and as a result, they hit him on the head with a hammer and burned him with a candle on the same spot, took his grant money and left him for death. The participant and his girlfriend became the main suspects because they were seen leaving the old man's house before he was found dead. The police arrested them, but they were released the next day due to lack of evidence to support the allegations. Also, he said that he was attacked by the community mob at his home because they said he was stealing electric cables. He added; "*Yes I steal the cables, I make reasonable money from selling them*". He adds that everyone is afraid of him; "*When I come across someone wearing expensive shoes or in the position of a smartphone I can simply order them to give them to me, and they will do so without hesitation because they know what am I capable of*", he added "*I run the village; I only care about one person and that person is my mother. She does not judge me. She also defends me when people accuse me of doing bad things and being a bad person.*"

"*I commit crime with some of my friends once in a while, but mostly I prefer doing it alone, and my girlfriend became my lookout. It comes with great benefits when you commit crime alone. Having to share the stolen goods with a group of people takes the fun out of it, and we often end up fighting over the stolen goods,*" he said. Committing crime is a daily routine for him. Furthermore, the participant stated that he needs money to buy *nyaope* and that thing is very expensive. He also added that he needs to look good and does not wear clothes without labels, and so is his girlfriend. When asked what advice he would give his child if he had one he answered as follows "*If I had a child I would hope for a boy and teach him how to be a man and survive in this cruel world we are living in. This world is a jungle; you either hunt or starves to death*".

4.2.1.3. Case 3

Participant 3 is a 26-years-old boy from Mentz Village. The participant was born and raised in Mentz. He lives with his grandmother, mother and four siblings. Both his grandmother and mother are unemployed, and he is also unemployed. They all depend on his grandmother's old-age grant and his three younger siblings' child-support grants. His father walked out on them a few years ago and went to live with another woman. According to him, he did well at school until his parents started fighting, and he took all the strain, and he found it difficult to cope. He emphasised "*Things changed completely when my father left and now is like we do not exist to him; on the other hand, he is taking care of another man's children. I think my father is bewitched*". The participant is convinced that his fathers' current wife fed him something to make him abandon his children.

The participant's mother started giving the younger siblings more attention, and he had to mother and father himself. *"I started hanging out more with bad boys in the community."* He was now associating with bad friends and neglecting his schoolwork. As a result, his academic performance took the strain. The smart boy took the wrong path, and he started drinking and smoking dagga and *nyaope*. One night his friends invited him to an Somalians shop around Mentz Village, and he did not know their intentions.

It was 7 p.m in the evening… *"When I was there, they told me what we were about to do. I could not talk myself out of it. We went in, and at first we pretended as if we wanted to buy some cigarettes while checking how many people were inside at the moment, and others were standing outside, the Somalian teller was alone, we closed the door, pointed out our knives, and one of our friends had a fake gun"*. They threatened to kill him if he did not cooperate or did anything stupid. They instructed him to give them all the cash he had made from the morning and out of fear, he gave them every cent. *"We didn't even bother covering our faces… there are plenty of us; some of us were not even at the scene…so if he dare speak to the police, it would be the last thing he ever did, and he knew that, since it wasn't for the first time, my friends robbed him."* They even stole some goods, sold them with half prizes, and shared the money as usual.

Things worsened when he was doing grade 11. The participant was suspended from school for several weeks after he was found smoking dagga on the school premises. He never went back to school after the suspension expired. He stated that he did not like the person he had become and hated what he is doing but somehow, he cannot find the will to stop: *"At first I committed crime to escape from my reality and try to cope with the challenges and problems that life have thrown at me, but before I knew it, I was committing crime to please and keep my new friends. Friends whom I did not need, how ironic."* He is scared of been labelled a coward or a sell-out, and he does not see a way out. In a weird way, he is now afraid of his new friends. He also stated that he wishes he could go back to school to finish grade 11, pass grade 12 and go to university and study civil engineering and perhaps find employment after graduating and start looking after his siblings. *"I have failed myself"*.

The participant then said that he does not want to commit crime for the rest of his life. He does not want to end up in jail like some of the people he know. He emphasised, *"I often feel very bad and guilty after my friends and I have committed crime and ask myself what I have done; am I a horrible person? God is going to punish me and I also never commit crime on my own"*.

According to him, he could have stopped committing crime a long time ago, but his friends keep on encouraging and influencing him to continue, and he does not have the strength to say no to his friends. The participant is somehow afraid of the things they might do to him if he decides to part ways with them. On several occasions, he and his friends would approach and attack young couples roaming the streets in Mentz Village. They would take their phones and wallets and take some of their clothes if they seem or known to be expensive. If it is dark or it is night, they even go to the extent of raping the girl and beating up the boy. However, he denies ever taking part in any physical contact. He also admitted to robbing elderly people on the day they receive their old-age social grants. The participant shows great remorse towards all the crime he ever committed in the company of his friends. He also stated, "*If I had a child, I would advise him/her to never get involved with bad friends nor do anything he/she does not want to please friends. I will advise him to study hard and strive for success. I would make it a point that he knows that quick, easy money does not last, and it comes with consequences.*"

4.2.1.4. Case 4

Participant 4 is a 22-year-old boy, born and raised in Mentz Village. The participant never knew his father and his mother keeps jumping from one relationship into another, so he says. He has two younger half brothers and sister. He is desperate to know his father because he believes if his father was around or part of his life in any way life could turn out differently. Despite his father's absence and his mother's unstable love life, his mother was not happy when she learned about his criminal activities, "*My mother hates the person I have become,*" he stated. He emphasised how his mother made it clear, after she discovered his criminal tactics, not to bring anything that he stole back into her house. She could not even accept money from him no matter how desperate or in need of money she was. She would frequently tell him that if by any chance he finds himself in jail, she will not bail him out or even visit him. The participant stated that he loved school, but it was never enough. He says something was always lacking. He wholeheartedly wanted to be a 'cheese boy', and as he explained, cheese boys wear expensive clothes and shoes and have fancy hairstyles.

He had to find ways to buy them for himself, since his mother could not afford them. The participant also emphasised that although he loved school, he loved fashion even more. He made it clear that to accumulate nice and expensive things through education takes time and he was not willing to wait that long because life is too short and you never know what tomorrow holds. "*You only live once*", he said. He adds, *"Even girls want to date boys who have money and swag*". Unfortunately, he dropped out of school in grade 10. He emphasised having ambitious and goal-driven friends who encouraged him to work hard. However, he said, "*I was an idiot, I was stealing from teachers in the staff room starting from their wallet, but they never knew it was me."* It got worse when I tried stealing my science teacher's smartphone in the staff room when no one was looking - unfortunately, I was caught.

Consequently, they filled the dotted lines, it became obvious from that moment who was the thief all along, and he could not deny it. He managed to escape before the police could arrive and was on the run after that. The police managed to arrest him at Mentz Village two weeks after the incidents in the nearby tavern when he had started to relax after being convinced by some of his friends that two weeks have passed, and the police might have given up on looking for him. He spent three days in jail, and he was released "*they let me off lightly,*" he says. After being released, he stopped going to school because he did not have the guts to face the teachers and learners. Moreover, he was afraid of being labelled a thief or anything else crime related by the school body. Therefore, he started frequenting taverns and made new acquaintances at the tavern. They taught him new ways to commit crime. He transformed from an amateur to a pro in just one week. They would first drink alcohol and smoke dagga or *nyaope* and, if they did not have money to buy more, they would then go to steal or rob someone. "*Crime became a way of sustaining me, and I started stealing and making a living out of crime. I would buy myself nice clothes".* He was involved in housebreaking, robbery, theft, and others he refused to mention. The participant and his group of friends would target *'makwerekwere'*, referring to foreign nationals, because they knew they were illegal and would not report the crime. They also targeted the Somalian supermarkets because they say the Somalians at Mentz Village do not bank their money, but keep it on themselves.

When asked if he would to go back to school, he said, "*well I don't regret stealing all the things I stole, I only regret getting caught. Being caught changed all the cards. Also, a part of me still wishes to finish school while another part of me is happy with the money I'm making recently, illegal or not, money is money".* When asked if he had a child what advicewould he give to the child, he answered as follows: *"I would advise my children to follow their passion and to fight for their heart's desires. Do what makes them happy because they only get to live once".*

4.2.1.5 Case 5

Participant 5, a 23-year-old boy from Mentz Village. Born and raised in Mentz Village. The participant is without parents, and when his parents passed away, all of his relatives looked the other away. None of them wanted to accommodate him and his younger brother. Therefore, he and his younger brother both ended up staying with their maternal grandmother, who was too old to take care of them. His grandmother tried to be there for them, but because of her age, she was unable. She did not have the energy and strength. The participant had to be an adult at an early age and look after his younger brother. He had to take all the responsibility of a parent, and at the time he was only 14 years old. He was practically a child, but the participant did miscellaneous duties that are supposed to be done by parents or guardians for children.

As his grandmother got older and weaker, things got worse. On top of taking care of his younger brother, he had to play nurse to his grandmother. The participant's aunts and uncles only came by on the date on which they knew that their mother has received her old-age grant money, and they would take some of her money and go back to feed their children at home. Having struggled all the way, as he did after the death of his parents, he wanted to study social work, but along the way, his studies took the strain. The responded was a smart child, but he had a lot on his plate to deal with, therefore, he could not keep up. He stated that life became a burden too heavy to carry.

At the age of 16, doing grade 10, the participant stopped going to school and decided that it is time to look for a job because his school uniform was torn and in no shape to be worn, and there was no one to buy him a new school uniform. Furthermore, the participant also emphasised that he could not bear sleeping on an empty stomach and going to school also on an empty stomach. He dropped out of school and used his free time to clean yards for people, and cultivate when it is summertime and take care of livestock for people. The people paid him small amounts of money, and some of the people would pay him with a bag of maize meal.

As time passed, this was no longer enough to sustain him and his younger brother because he tried to keep his younger brother at school. Hence began stealing from people's households at night, and he would target houses, which did not have locks at their gates or have small fences, which are easy to climb. He would steal metal stuff to weigh them for cash in return and anything valuable that he could sell quickly. When he turned 18, he started associating with bad boys from the community and began to use drugs such as dagga and *nyaope* and drinking alcohol. According to him, his new friends did not mind buying him those things, and they always had money on them. The participant says when he is high everything seems okay, and he can have a good laugh and forget about whatever he is facing in life. He said, "*When I'm high, I get temporary happiness, and I like the feeling. I would love to feel that way every minute of the day for the rest of my life*".

Through his association with bad company, he eventually graduated to committing more serious and rewarding crimes, unlike the ones he used to commit when he was doing it all alone and sobre. He started engaging in crimes such as robbery, theft, assaults, and burglary at residential and business areas. He stated that he wished his parents were still alive, and perhaps his life would have turned out differently. In addition, he wished he could have stayed at school and completed grade 12. However, he speculated that it was beyond his control and he was left with no choice but to quit school.

When asked what advice he could give to his child if he had one he said, *"I would advise my children to remain in school and study hard to qualify for a bursary after matric to be able to pursue their dreams since their father failed to secure their future"*. (Life views/Work hard at school).

4.2.1.6. Case 6

Participant 6, a 26-year-old boy from Mentz Village. The participant left school because he failed grade12 twice and he could not afford to upgrade his matric marks at college. The participant said that he always wanted to further his study at tertiary, but since he failed matric, he considered going to college. Unfortunately, his parents were unable to help him regarding furthering his studies, and he was out of options. The participant stays with both his parents and four siblings, and none of his parents are working. The family depends on his younger siblings' child-support grant money.

At the age of 20, the participant felt the need to go out and look for a job. He looked for a job for a long time without luck, and as time went by he had nothing useful to do with his time and it was difficult seeing his former classmates who did well in school and passed matric doing great in life; some were graduating from tertiary, others were getting decent jobs, and worst of all for him, other were driving fancy cars. The pressure was too much to handle, and it was eating him alive. Furthermore, he could not control the jealousy he was slowly developing for his neighbour who also had everything he wanted. This made him even more spiteful. Therefore, he started mugging people and stealing their handbags, and run off with them to take anything valuable from the bags and sell the bag. He started spending most of his time in taverns and the streets hanging around with other boys who also have it hard in life. The participant started adopting the bad habits of his street friends, including alcohol and drug abuse. This new association changed his daily routine and his way of living. Sometimes he would not even sleep at home, and he would go for days without bathing.

As a result of all this, he gave up on the dreams he had as a child and became a living ghost. His parents could not even recognise him anymore. He started to intimidate them.

He also resorted to stealing from his parents when he had no money to buy *nyaope*. He sold all the electric appliances from his parents' house and some of his parents and siblings' clothes just to buy *nyaope*. In light of this, his new friends have somehow brainwashed him, as he would do anything to make them happy, it seemed. Furthermore, the participant kept on emphasising the fact that his friends are the ones who introduced him to crime. He said, *"We started with shoplifting at shops around the village. Before we knew it, we were pointing sharp stuff at people at bus stops early in the morning and late at night when they come back from work to take all their belongings, and we stabbed those who didn't cooperate and take their stuff while they fought for their lives".*

One day he went out to drink with his friends at one of the popular taverns at Mentz Village called 'Codesa', and in the early evening on their way home potential crime opportunities presented themselves. They robbed at least three people. They took their cell phones, wallets, took off their clothes, leaving them with only their underwear on, and '*roughed them up a bit*' (beat them up). This is what the participant does for money daily, and '*it pays well*', he says. When asked if he would like to go back to school and upgrade his grade12 results, the participant said: "*I tried that once before, but I already know how that movie ends. It hurts a lot when matric results come out and your name is not there. Therefore, I would not put myself through that trauma ever again. I tried two times in a row, and I failed every time. In a way, I tried my best, even God can vouch for me*". When asked what advice he would give his child if he had one, he said: "*I would encourage my child to love school and pay full attention to their studies. I would not want to see my children following in my footsteps. Even with my younger siblings, I want them to finish school and find a way to go to university, and maybe with God's will be able to take our parents out of poverty since their bigger brother was unable to do so*".

4.2.1.7. Case 7

Participant 7 is a 26-year-old boy who lives in Mentz Village. He was born and raised in Mentz Village. The participant is the only child and was raised by a single mother. His parents were never married, and he had no relationship with his father. His mother was the one supporting him financially. According to him, his mother treated him like an egg. She spoilt him rotten and spoon-feed him. She would do anything and buy him anything he wanted without hesitation. Academically he was struggling. He repeated almost every grade. His mother was often summoned at school to explain her son's continuous poor school performance until she was convinced that the school was incompetent, and the teachers hated her son. As a result, his mother enrolled him in a new school at Makanye Village where he still failed. One day his mother decided to consult a *sangoma* (traditional healer). "*The sangoma told my mother that there is an old woman in our street, and she was the reason I performed poorly at school. The sangoma emphasised that a few years back, they stole my book and bewitched it for me not to progress in school*". His mother did not take this news well and decided that her son should remain at home until she figured out what to do. And accordingly, the participant stayed at home for a year doing nothing and searching for odd jobs without luck.

Eventually, he became tired and just took each day as it came. He stated: "*I started smoking cigarettes, there was a spaza shop nearby where I used to go during the day and hang out with my homeboys, some boys would come with dagga, and I tried it for the first time and liked how I felt afterwards*". He further emphasised that he felt like a brand-new person with no care for the world. As more days passed, other boys introduced him to *nyaope*; he smoked it until he got seriously addicted to it. Unfortunately, *nyaope* was more expensive than dagga, and he could not afford it, so he had to strategise and find means to obtain it. *"I started selling things at the house, and eventually, there was nothing left to sell, and I was only left with stealing… so I started stealing electric cables, and metal equipment in people's yards to exchange for money."* When asked if he would like to go back to school and finish grade 12 he said, "*as far as school is concerned I do not care much. I am not a smart boy. The school wasn't created for people like us*".

He also added on that by saying: "*the person who bewitched me did me a huge favour because I didn't like school anyway*". In his own words, when asked if he had a child what advice would he give him or her, he said, "*I don't want to have kids; kids are a headache that I do not need in my life. My life is perfect just the way it is*".

4.2.2 Findings on interview schedules with self-admitted offenders

The ages of the participants ranged from 22 to 26 years old. Two of the seven participants grew up with both parents, four were raised by a single mother, and the remaining one was an orphan. Only one out of seven participants had a matric certificate. Taking a closer look at the interviews, it would seem that many youths are overwhelmed by the challenges of growing up and of becoming responsible adults. Most of them indicated that they started to commit crime due to the lack of support and the bad influence of friends they became acquainted with.

The following themes and subthemes emerged from the data:

Table 2: Themes emanating from interview schedules with admitted offenders

Themes	Subthemes	Sub-subthemes
Family circumstances (Participants 1,2,3,5,6)	Overcrowded living conditions (Participants 2,3)	
	Poverty (Participants 1,3,5,6)	
	Unemployment (Participants 1,3,5,6)	
	Alcohol and/or drug abuse by a parent (Participant 1)	
	Domestic violence (Participants 1,3)	Towards spouse (Participants 1,3)
		Towards children (Participant 1)
	Broken homes (Participants 1,2,3,4,5,7)	Single parent (Participants 1,2,3,4,7)
		Absent father

		(Participants 1,2,3,4,7)	
		Absent mother and father (Participant 5)	
	Adultery/mother and/or father having sexual affairs with others	Father (Participants 1,3,4)	
		Mother (Participants 2,4)	
	Grew up with a grandmother (Participants 2,5)		
	Had to care for younger sibling/s (Participant 5)		
	Overprotective mother (Participant 7)		

4.2.2.1 Family circumstances

Family circumstances, as described by participants, can be broken down into ten categories:

4.2.2.1.1 Overcrowded living conditions

Two participants (2 and 3) mentioned the overcrowded living conditions in which they grew up. Participant 2, for instance, mentioned that he grew up with his mother, his grandmother, uncle, three younger siblings and three cousins. Participant 3 mentioned living with his grandmother, mother and four siblings.

4.2.2.1.2 Poverty

Four participants (1,3,5 and 6) mentioned growing up in poverty stricken family. Participant 3, for instance, mentioned that he grew up with his whole family depending on his grandmother's old-age grant and his three younger siblings' child grants. Participant 6 also mentioned that his parents are not working and they all depend on his younger siblings' child's grant money.

4.2.2.1.3 Unemployment

Four participants (1,3,5 and 6) mentioned growing up in poverty stricken families. Participant 6, for instance, mentioned that both his parents are not working.

4.2.2.1.4 Alcohol and/or drug abuse by a parent

Participant (1) speaks of his father as an alcoholic.

4.2.2.1.5 Domestic violence

Two participants (1 and 3) mentioned experiencing domestic violence. For instance, participant 1 mentioned that his parents would argue, and his father would go to the extent of beating up his mother, especially when he had too much to drink; furthermore, the father would also beat him up or start shouting at his siblings for no particular reason. According to participant 3, he did well at school until his parents started fighting, and he took all the strain, and he found it difficult to cope.

4.2.2.1.6 Broken homes

Five participants (1,2,3,4 and 7) grew up in broken homes. For instance, participant 1 mentioned that his father was an alcoholic and abusive towards his mother. Apparently his mother got tired of being abused and moved out, leaving him and his siblings behind. Participant 7 also mentioned that he is the only child and was raised by a single mother. His parents were never married, and he had no relationship with his father.

4.2.2.1.7 Adultery/mother and/or father having sexual affairs with others

Three participant (1,3 and 4) mentiond their parents having unstable sexual affairs. For instance, respodnet 1 mentioned that his father came back home after drinking with different women every month-end.

Participant 3 mentioned that his father walked out on them few years ago and went to live with another woman. Participant 4 mentioned that he never knew his father and his mother keeps jumping from one relationship into another.

4.2.2.1.8 Grew up with a grandmother

Two participants (2 and 5) were raised by their grandmother. For instance participant 2 mentioned that he lives with his mother, grandmother, uncle, three younger siblings and three cousins. While participant 5 mentioned that they were raised by their grandmother.

4.2.2.1.9 Had to care for younger sibling/s

One participant (5) mentioned caring for his siblings. He mentioned that he had to be an adult at an early age and look after his younger brother, he had to take all the responsibility of a parent, and he was only 14 at the time.

4.2.2.1.10 Overprotective mother

One participant (7) mentioned having an overprotective mother. According to him, his mother treated him like an egg. She spoilt him rotten. Spoon fed him. She would do anything and buy him anything when he wanted without hesitation.

Table 3: Causes for becoming criminal

Withdrawal from family (Participants 1,3,4,6)	Could not find a job (Participants 1,2,4,6;7)	
	Started to drink (Participant 6)	
Peers (Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6,7)	Negative influence of peers (Participants 1,3,4,5,6,7))	Introduced to alcohol/drugs (Participants 1,5,6)
		Introduced to crime (Participants 1,3,4,5,6,7)

	Difficulty of getting away from friends (Participants 1,2,3)	Difficult to change lifestyle because the youth does not want to alienate/disappoint friends (Participants 1,3,6)
		Afraid of leaving friends (what they might do) (Participant 3)
Drugs (Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6)	Require money to sustain habit (buy drugs) (Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6)	
	Crime committed under the influence (Participants 1,2,4)	
Need for money (apart from the drugs mentioned in the previous theme) (Participants 2,4,5)	Luxury goods such as name brand clothes and shoes (Participants 2,4)	
	Girls (Participants 2,4)	
	Look after younger brother (Participant 5)	
Academic failure (Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6,7)	Dropped out of school (Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6,7)	Bad academic progress (Participants 1,2,3,4,6,7)
		Family conditions (Participants 1,3)
		Influence of peers (Participant 3)
		Suspended from school (Participants 3,4)
		Theft at school (Afraid to go back) (Participant 4)
		Poverty (Participants 5,6)

4.2.2.2 Causes of becoming criminal

4.2.2.2.1 Could not find a job

Five respondents (1,2,4,6 and 7) mentioned that they could not find a job. For instance participant 6 mentioned that at the age of 20, he felt the need to go out and look for a job. He looked for a job for a long time without luck.

Participant 7 also mentioned that he stayed home for a year doing nothing and searching for odd jobs without luck and eventually, he got tired.

4.2.2.2.2 Started to drink

One participant (6) started to drink under the influence his peers. He mentioned spending most of his time in taverns and in the streets hanging around with other boys who also have it hard in life, and he adopted their bad habits, including alcohol and drug abuse.

4.2.2.2.3 Negative influence of peers

Six participants (1,3,4,5,6 and 7) mentioned being negatively influenced by peers. For instance, participant 1 mentioned that his friends had too much influence on him and negatively affected his behaviour and day-to-day conduct. Participant 3 also mentioned how he started hanging out with bad boys and neglecting his school work until his academic performance suffered. Participant 4 mentioned how he made new acquaintances at a tavern and how they taught him new ways to commit crime. Participant 6 metioned how he adopted his friends' bad habits, including alcohol and drug use.

4.2.2.2.4 Difficulty of getting away from friends

One participant (3) mentioned being afraind to go against his friends. For instance, he mentioned that he is scared of been labelled a coward or a sell-out, and he does not see a way out.

4.2.2.2.5 Require money to sustain habit (buy drugs)

Three participants (1,3 and 7) mentioned committing crime to buy drugs. For instance, participant 1 mentioned how his friends would buy drugs for him at first, and as he started to depend more on it.

He had to start buying it for himself, as a result, he started to commit crime. Participant 3 mentioned that if they did not have money to buy more, they would go on to steal or rob people. According to respodent 7, *nyaope* was more expensive than dagga, and he could not afford it, so he started committing crime.

4.2.2.2.6 Crime committed under the influence

Two participants (3 and 6) mentioned committing crime under the influence of drugs and alcohol. For instance, participant 3 mentioned they would first drink alcohol and smoke dagga or *nyaope*, and if they did not have the money to buy more, they would then go on to steal or rob people. Participant 6 mentioned that one day he went out to drink with his friends at one of the popular taverns at Mentz Village called 'Codesa', and on their way home potential crime opportunities presented themselves, where he and his friends robbed at least three people of their possessions.

4.2.2.2.7 Luxury goods such as name brand clothes and shoes

Two resposdents (2 and 4) mentioned that acquiring luxury goods is one of the reasons they commit crime. For instance, participant 2 mentioned that he cannot help himself when he come across someone wearing expensive shoes or in the position of a smartphone, therefore he robs them, while participant 4 mentioned how boys wear expensive clothes and shoes and do fancy hairstyles, and that he had to find ways to buy these expensive brands of clothing for himself, since his mother could not afford them.

4.2.2.2.8 Girls

Two participants (2 and 4) mentioned a relationship between their criminal behaviour and girls. For instance, participant 2 mentioned that he commit crime with his girlfriend, while participant 4 mentioned that he needs money and luxury items to impress girls and be a ladies man.

4.2.2.2.9 Look after younger brother

One respodent (5) mentioned how he had to be an adult at an early age and look after his younger brother. Apparently, he had to take all the responsibility of a parent, and he was only 14 years old at the time.

4.2.2.2.10 Dropped out of school

Seven participants (1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7) dropped out of school. For instance, participant 1 mentioned that he dropped out of school when he was doing grade 10 because of family problems which led to him repeating grades. Participant 2 mentioned he struggled at school and only made it to grade 10 through being condoned to the next grade every year. He, therefore, dropped out of school after repeating grade 10 four times. Participant 3 mentioned that things worsened at school when he was doing grade 11. He was suspended from school for several weeks after he was found smoking dagga on the school premises. He never went back to school after the suspension expired.

Participant 4 stated that he loved school, but it was never enough. He says something was always lacking, and so he dropped out of school in grade 10. Participant 5 mentioned he stopped going to school while doing grade 10 and decided it was time to look for a job because of financial circumstances due to the passing of his parents. Participant 6 mentioned he left school because he failed grade12 twice and he could not afford to upgrade his matric marks at college. Participant 7 mentioned that he repeated every grade. His mother was often summoned at school to explain his continuous poor school performance. This went on until his mother decided to enrolled him in a new school at Makanye Village where he continued to fail until he eventually dropped out of school.

Table 4: Specific crimes mentioned by participants

Crimes committed (Participants)	Street robberies (Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6)	
	Business robberies	

	(Participants 1,2,3,5,6)	
	Housebreaking (Participants 1,4,5)	
	Theft (Participants 4,5,6)	
	Scrap metal including copper cables (Participants 2,4,5,7)	
	Assault (Participants 2,3,5)	
	Rape (Participants 2,3)	
	Murder/attempted murder (Participant 2)	

4.2.2.3 Crimes committed by participants

4.2.2.3.1 Street robberies

Six respondnets (1,2,3,4,5 and 6) mentioned committing street robberies. For instance, participant 1 mentioned that he committed mostly theft and mugging people to get money to buy *nyaope*. Participant 2 mentioned that he was in and out of prison for different kinds of crime such as: assault, theft, housebreaking and attempted murder. He added by saying "*When I come across someone wearing expensive shoes or in the position of a smartphone I can simply order them to give them to me*". Participant 6 stated that he mugg people and steal their handbags and run off with them. Participant 6 mentioned robbing at least three people in different time zones with his friends. Apparently, they took the victims' cell phones, wallets, and took off their clothes, leaving them with only their underwear on, and gave them a beating. In addition, participant 2 mentioned stealing people's phones and their clothes as they walked around the streets.

4.2.2.3.2 Business robberies

Five participants (1,2,3,5 and 6) mentioned their involvement in business robberies. For instance, participant 1 mentioned that he once stole food from his aunt's spaza shop and

went to sell the stolen goods at half price at the nearby village. Participant 4 mentiond that he was involved in housebreaking, robbery, theft, others he refused to mention. However, he mentioned that they would target *'makwerekwere'* referring to foreign nationals because they knew they came to South Africa illegally and would not report the crime. Moreover, he and his friends also targeted the Somalians supermarkets because they say the Somalians at Mentz do not bank their money but keep it on themselves. Lastly, respoondent 6 mentioned being involved in shoplifting at shops around the village.

4.2.2.3.3 Housebreaking

Three participants (1,4 and 5) mentioned being involved in housebreaking. For instance, participant 4 mentioned that he was involved in housebreaking, robbery, theft, others he refused to mention. Participant 5 mentioned stealing from people's households at night. He also mentioned engaging in other crimes such as robbery, theft, assaults, and burglary at residential and business areas.

4.2.2.3.4 Theft

Three participants (4,5 and 6) mentioned being involve din theft. For instance, participant 4 mentioned that he was stealing from teachers in the staff room starting with their wallets to their cellphones*.*

4.2.2.3.5 Scrap metal including copper cables

Four participants (2,4,5 and 7) mentioned scrap metal and copper cables theft. For instance, participant 4 mentioned that he would steal metal stuff to weigh them for cash in return and anything valuable that he could sell quickly.
Participant 7 mentioned that he started stealing electric cables, and metal equipment in people's yards to exchange for money. Participant 2 also mentioned that he was attacked by the community at his home because they said he was stealing electric cables.

4.2.2.3.6 Assault

Three participants (2,3 and 5) mentioned being involved in assault. For instance, participant 6 mentioned himself being involved in attacking and robbing people at bus stops early in the morning and late at night when they come back from work. He further elaborated that they would stab those who did not cooperate. In addition, participant 5 mentioned engaging in different crimes such as robbery, theft, assaults, and burglary at residential and business areas.

4.2.2.3.7 Rape

Two Participants (2 and 3) mentioned rape during the interviews. For instance, participant 3 mentioned that on several occasions, he and his friends would approach and attack young couples. They would take their belongings and sometimes go to the extent of raping the girl.

4.2.2.3.8 Murder/attempted murder

One participant (2) mentioned an incident of murder during the interviews. He mentioned killing an eldely man during an attempt to take his social grant money.

Table 5: Specific victims mentioned by participants

Victims (Participants 1,2,3)	Somalian shops (Participants 1,2,3,4)	
	Family (Participants 1,6,7)	
	Old people/pensioners (Participants 1,2,3,5)	
	Homeowners (Housebreaking) (Participants 2,5,6)	
	Young couples (Participant 3)	

	Foreigners (Participant 4)	
	People at bus stations (Participant 1)	

4.2.2.4 Victims mentioned by participants

4.2.2.4.1 Somalian shops

Four participants (1,2,3 and 4) mentioned targeting Somalian shops. For instance, participant 1 clearly mentioned that their targets are mostly Somalian shops; they steal goods from Somalian supermarkets and sell them to specific community members. Participant 3 mentioned a crime incident whereby his friends invited him to a Somalian shop around Mentz, where they threatened to kill the cashier if he did not cooperate. Participant 4 aslo mentioned that they targeted the Somalian supermarkets because they say the Somalians at Mentz do not bank their money they keep it to themselves.

4.2.2.4.2 Family

Three participants (1,6 and 7) mentioned stealing from their families. For instance, participant 6 mentioned stealing from his parents. He sold all the electric appliances from his parents' house and some of his parents and siblings' clothes. Participant 7 also mentioned selling items from the family house until there was nothing left to sell.

4.2.2.4.3 Old people/pensioners

Four participants (1,2,3 and 5) mentioned targeting the elderly.

For instance, participant 2 that community members once chased after him after they suspected that he and his girlfriend attacked an elderly man just after he got home on the day he received his elderly social grant money.

4.2.2.4.4 Homeowners (Housebreaking)

Three participants (2,5 and 6) mentioned being involved in crime at residential premises. For instance, participant 5 mentioned stealing from people's households at night, and he would target houses that did not have locks at their gates or have small fences, which are easy to climb.

4.2.2.4.5 Young couples

Participant 3 mentioned that he and his friends would approach and attack young couples roaming the streets in Mentz Village and take their belongings.

4.2.2.4.6 Foreigners

Participant 4 mentioned targeting foreign nationals because they knew they were illegal immigrants and would not report the crime.

4.2.2.4.7 People at bus stations

Participant 6 mentioned attacking and robbing people at bus stops early in the morning and late at night when the people come back from work.

Table 6: Progression into crime
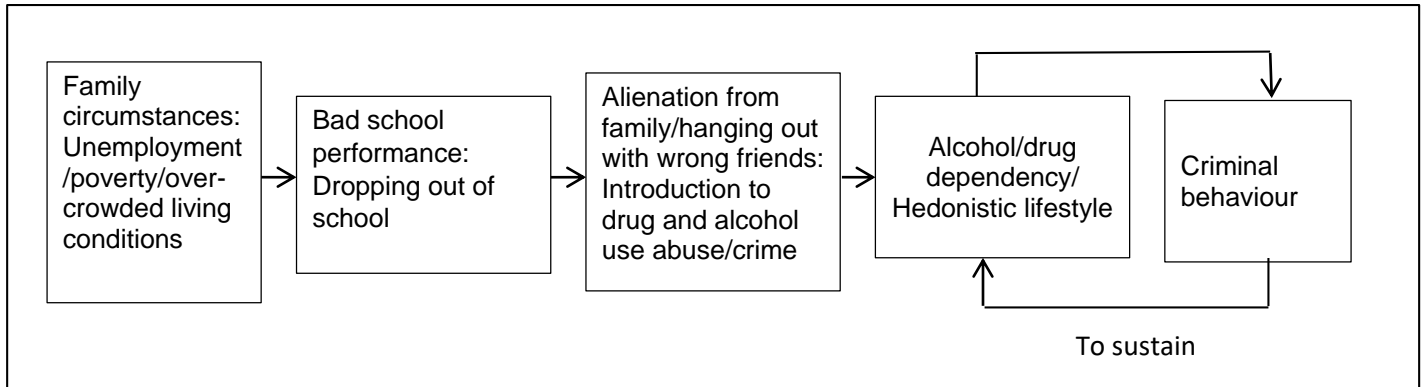
4.2.2 Focus group interviews (community members)

Question 1: How big is the problem of youth crime in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*It is too much, if it was possible we would make it compulsory for every member of the community to take their boy children to boarding, and they would come home once during December holidays. We are fed up with these deviant children*".Participant 2*: "It is very big; it makes me mad just to think of it".* Participant 4: *"Crime here in Mentz Village is very high. Many young people have dropped out of school because of drugs and alcohol abuse and they resort to committing crime when they do not have money to feed their addiction".* Participant 6: *"Youth crime in this community of ours is overwhelming. Our youth are starting to regard crime as a way of life and also as the only way to make money. Those who obey the law are called stupid and full of themselves."* Participant 9*: "Young people no longer bother themselves with searching for available jobs because their daily schedule is fully occupied with criminal activities. Crime is their full-time job. It is all they can think about, and they do not know any ways to make money except committing crime. They do not even want to know. They are obsessed with committing crime to the extent that they label those who want to make it in life through education and getting a decent job, as cowards.*

They shout at young people who are goal-oriented and self-driven and tell them that they can go to school and graduate thousand times, but they will never find a job. That is pretty much hurting, and someone who does not know what they want in life will be easily discouraged."

Question 2: Types of crimes committed by young people in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*Housebreaking, stealing electric cables, robbery, rape and breaking into Somalians shops to steal grocery and sell it with a lower price after that*". Participant 2: "*Selling of illegal drugs, robbery and housebreaking*". Participant 4: "*Housebreaking, robbery and shoplifting at Somalians supermarkets*". On the issue of housebreaking young people tend to leave the doors of their own homes unlocked and invite their friends to come and steal specific items so that it can look like a common house robbery."* Participant 7: "*Housebreaking, cable theft, robbery, murder and rape.*" Participant 3: "*Housebreaking, robbery at Somalians shops, stealing car parts. There was a recent shocking episode where young boys stole a car at night while it was parked outside a garage at night. Thankfully the car was found at a nearby village after one week*." Participant 9: "*Housebreaking and stealing from Somalians shops.*" Participant 6: '*Rape, assault and robbery*."

Question 3: How afraid are other members of the community of youth crime?

The following verbal quotes concur with the issues raised above:

Participant 4: "*We do not open our front doors anymore during the day no matter how hot it gets in the house. You rather grab a plastic chair, close the door and sit outside. That is how afraid we are. These young boys aimlessly roam the street during the day spotting houses which they are going to break into at night. Opening the front door during the day is like advertising your furniture and valuable items to potential criminals*". Participant 6: "*They are very afraid…Many people in this village find it risky to walk in the street at night and early in the morning to work*".

Participant 1*: "The youth these days grow up too fast. They are as big as their parents, they are taller than us, and they are always wearing some hats or cabs. These force us to be vigilant when walking down the street. You have to look more than twice not only because of fear but to be at ease with yourself because they look suspicious .The truth is we are afraid of these youths because we know what they are capable of"*. Participant 4: "*People who own plasma TVs no longer feel comfortable and safe watching TV after 6 pm because they are afraid criminals will detect their Plasma TVs and break in and steal them when they are asleep"*. Participant 2: *"A group of boys can be intimidating. If you walk towards them while they are all over the streets, they will not even bother making way for u to pass, they will stand there. You'll hear your blood pressure rising and your heart rate increasing".* Participant 3: "*There are many young people roaming the streets, more boys than girls who have dropped-out of school and don't have jobs. The acts they carry out are robbery, substance abuse, theft, assault and rape and murder occasionally and other unacceptable behaviour that are not crimes but bother community members and originate a feeling of fear"*.

Participant 4: "*We are even scared of pointing them out not, to mention reporting them. It is not like we don't know them, we know them very well, we also know their families and yet we decide to keep quiet as they continue doing as they please destroying our village's name. Some of the parents know very well what their children get up to when they are not at home, yet they continue with life like nothing is wrong. They even to go the extent of protecting them or finding them a hiding place when the police come looking for them"*. Participant 7: "*Members of the community are scared of these young people who commit crime around the village. I myself I am afraid of them. What if I report them and the next thing my children become continuous victims of their criminal activities? I cannot afford to put myself and my family at risk. These boys are heartless they can kill a person in cold blood. Even during the mass attacks of the whole village. Community members always chicken out to throw the first stone or punch, because when people have their backs against the wall when the police start asking questions they will not hesitate to point out names of those who started the mass attacks and you will be arrested and no one will bail you out"*.

Participant 9: "*Members of the community no longer feel safe in the street and in the comfort of their own homes because anything can happen at any time in Mentz Village. I wonder how people who do not have burglar proofs at their doors and windows sleep at night. It is not safe out there. I even went to the extent to putting burglar proof at my garage door. These young boys are unpredictable and I do not have a male person in the house to play superman and scare them away, hence I am not taking any chances".*
Participant 9: "*We spend half of our time trying to protect ourselves from crime that might occur, and that is exhausting. We live like prisoners in our own houses and we are not free to walk around in our community. Worst part is our own children are grouping themselves with criminal friends and steal from the hands that feed them".*

Participant 2: "*If you want to be safe in Mentz Village stay indoors, do not go out at night. Which is something our young generation will consider a punishment. There is a traumatising habit of young people, both boys and girls, even adults spending all night at a well known bottle store which goes by the name of 'So Good'. They will be bragging to the entire village during the day saying they are going to 'Selaleng' which means they will spend the whole night dancing, drinking, smoking and getting up to no good till dawn. One cannot help but wonder what goes on behind those walls at night, what happens to people especially girls who decide to go home after they get tired and wasted. They are plenty of cases of people who got stabbed on the way home after a long night of drinking at the bottle store some even lost their lives. Many girls got raped and most of them could not report these to the police because they were too drunk and cannot recognise their perpetrators.*"

Participant 8: "*These boys like to hangout in groups outside the Somalians shops sharing cigarette, dagga and nyaope. Early in the morning, during the day and also in the evening you will find them. The Somalians shops closes late at night, they close around 9pm at night, but when it gets dark outside they close the burglar proof at the front door and start selling through it because they are also afraid of being robbed".*

Question 4: What are the causes of youth crime in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*I strongly believe that young people are taking the route of crime only for financial benefits. If they had jobs they would have zero motives to commit crime. They are merely committing crime to generate income and meet their daily human needs and wants".* Participant 3: *School dropout, lack of jobs and laziness drive young people into the life of crime because it is the only thing they are good at and it does not require much effort or have ten thousand requirements".* Participant 4: "*The higher youth unemployment rate, the higher the rate of crime among youth. Young people from their early to late twenties carry out the duty of feeding and clothing themselves, especially those who have poor parents or no parents at all… they have to start being adults, and adulthood comes with independence. It is difficult for them to be the adult everyone expects them to be without employment or any source of income. As the pressure increases, they take the easy way out and start engaging in criminal acts".*

Participant 1: "*Young people commit crime because of poverty and lack of money to feed their drug addiction".* Participant 2: "*Often youth commit crime because of financial problems. Youth belonging to poor families easily get involved in crime.They want to be like other children and wear nice clothes and look cool. As a result, they go for quick easy money and end up as common criminals".* Participant 7*: "Young people carry a heavy weight of having to take their parents and their siblings out of poverty and they put themselves under a lot of pressure. They end p being vulnerable to committing crime".* Participant 8*: "Youth commit crime as a result of poverty and laziness to go and find work. Many youth in this village are without qualifications and are lazy to carry out heavy work load".*

Participant 1: *"I think a lot of young people in this village do not have a lot of discipline at home, parents are afraid of their own children. Sometimes home is a stressful place and they spend plenty of time with their friends. They feel happier surrounded by friends than at home with their family".* Participant 2: *"The youth have no respect for people's rights*

and obeying the law is not a word in their vocabulary. Furthermore, parents do not seem to want to discipline their children. Poor parents are scared of their own children".
Participant 3 "*Youth of today are more exposed to television… they see different kinds of things happening on TV and when they go outside they mimic what they saw on TV, show off to their friends and like being labeled as 'cool'… There is also the issue of bad friends, young people are easily manipulated by their friends".* Participant 4: "*Unfortunately it is their decision. They make the choice to commit crime".* Participant 5: "*The parents are definitely to blame… I believe in equality, but it is no secret that since women have become breadwinners and started working families are divided and falling apart. There is nobody home to monitor the children and inforce some form of discipline, the family morals and principles are slowly fading, everyone is chasing paper".*

Participant 6: "*I personally don't think that their parents can control them at this age, I think a lot of it has to do with peer influence and wanting to own expensive items. They all want to wear the expensive label clothes, own smart phones and fancy watches".* Participant 9: "*Drug abuse and peer pressure are the main causes of youth crime in every community including Mentz Village".* Participant 3: "*Mentz Village have nothing for youth to do to keep themselves busy, focused and entertained. Young people spend their days roaming the streets and asking people they know for R2 to buy cigarette".*

Participant 7*: "Being bored and having absolutely nothing to keep them busy is definitely the reason why youth commit crime. Here at Mentz there is literally zero things for the youth to do that do not include cheap alcohol and smoking. They should find jobs some say. Unfortunately, youth unemployment rate is very high. To find employment young people have to go to Johannesburg".* Participant 9*: "Youth face many problems, as they grow old from family problems to social problems. They cannot run away from these struggles or ignore them. Sometimes it is just boredom. Furthermore, it is no secret that some young adults are proud to say they have done some time in prison and are encouraging others to follow their footsteps".*
Participant 2: "*Alcohol, nyaope and dagga are sort of part of the culture of today, because so many people have it as a part of their lives, and so many young people are dependent*

on it ….and they will do whatever it takes to get money to buy them …. Some would even steal from their own parents if they can do so." Participant 7 "*Most youth end up using substances that are always available in their homes such as glue just to cool them down. As a result, when substances are easily reachable to young person, they tend to abuse them"*. Participant 7: "*Most of the youth in our village do not have parents and some of them are poor so they get frustrated when they cannot afford certain things like buying fashionable trending clothes and smart phones, so they end up using substances like dagga, nyaope and alcohol"*.

Participant 5: *"A lot of young people at Mentz have dropped out of school for different reasons. Others were just not serious about school, smoking dagga and nyaope on the school premises and got suspended and decided never to go back, others have repeated the same grade 2 to 3 times, and others dropped out of school because of family circumstances such as poverty"*. Participant 2: "*Many young people have dropped out of school because of poor academic performance. This is because they have been bunking classes and at times, they will be pretending to go to school but never reach the school"*.

Question 5: What can be done by the community to reduce or prevent crime among the youth in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*Parents should force their kids to go to school. Parents can even open up a car wash, a spaza shop, and haircut salons for their children if they are struggling academically, to keep them off the streets"*. Participant 2: *"There should be a Community Police Forum in our village, we should get rid of drug sellers, strictly sell alcohol to people who are 18 years and above and renovate our sports ground to encourage our youth to participate in sports and stay away from drugs and criminal activities"*.
Participant 3*: "I think it is best to start with the youth. Most crime comes from criminal peer group related activity in one way or another. We have to deal with these deviant groups and separate them. We do this by implementing better youth programs including sports and music programs, many youths are involved with the wrong crowd because of money, so offering the youth safe opportunities to make money would counteract that"*.

Participant 5: *"Community members shouldn't protect the people who are committing crimes they should also create campaigns that will protect the community like CPF".*
Participant 9: "*I think if we can have a workshop whereby we train unemployed youth and equip them with certain skills I believe we can reduce crime within our community".*
Participant 4: "*The problem is that prison these days is too comfortable and they go easy on these convicted criminals. Prison should not be comfortable at all and punishment must harsh".*

Participant 6: *"I think all community members should be the police of the community. Keep an eye open and call the police for even small or suspicious activities".* Participant 7*: "The biggest problem that we are facing as a community is that young people do not have positive role models. Their role models are not medical doctors, lawyers or scientists. Their role models are criminals".* Participant 8: *"In the old days we did not have cellphones, we knew nothing about the internet and there was no Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and WhatsApp. Everything young people read or watch is either violent or sexual".* Participant 9: *"People who own spaza shops should be monitored to ensure that they do not sell illegal drugs to our youth."*

Participant 1: *"The court and the police are not effectively doing their jobs. Criminals are walking free. Victims are not getting their justice. The constitution of South Africa is too soft on young people and these youths need some tough love".* Participant 3: "*The community as a whole should donate money and build facilities for young people to turn their negative energy into something positive".* Participant 9: *"There is nothing to keep our youth fully entertained, which is why they spend their days in groups smoking in the streets and playing dices at the bottle stores.*
The environments in which they grow up in lure them in at a young age. There is also the issue of negative peer influence and lack of motivational support to make good choices in life".

Question 6: What can be done by the government to reduce or prevent crime among the youth?

Participant 1: "*The government should support the youth by providing them with jobs and skills necessary for their own wellbeing".* Participant 3: "*Hire more police officials, have the police to patrol the community as often as possible especially at night. Moreover the south Africa justice system should fight against poice orruption".* Participant 6: "*The government can help prevent or reduce youth crime by providing our youth with employment opportunities and skills training programs".* Participant 7: "*Youth who commit crimes must be handled accordingly. They should not be breast fed and treated like victims. Drug dealers should be arrested and police officials should not accept being bribed".*

4.2.3 Findings on focus group interview schedules with general community members

Looking carefully at the above data it is recognised that youth crime in Mentz Village is increasing daily and need undivided attention. The fear of crime is a serious concern as much as the criminal activities are concerned. It is emotionally and physically draining for the residents. For the residents' behaviour is negatively influenced by their fear of crime. Evidently, the majority of community members who were interviewed emphasised that crime is not the problem of the police alone. Additionally, the participants outlined the importance of community involvement and intervention. Suggestions were made that the community as a whole should unite and work together with the police and parents or caregivers to support and discipline their children.

The following themes and subthemes emerged from the data:

Table 7: Themes emanating from focus group interview schedules with general community members

Themes	Subthemes	Sub-subthemes
Fear of crime (Participants 1,2,3,4,6,7,9)	Living in constant fear (Participants 2,3,6,7,9)	Keeping out of the street at night and early morning (Participants 2,9)
		Unexpectedness of attacks Participant 9)
		Forced to install buglar bars (Participant 9)
	Change of lifestyle (Participants 2,4,9)	Locked up inside homes (Participant 9)
		Hiding possessions (Participant 4
	Physical advantage of youth (Participants 1,2)	Suspicious of young men (Participants 1,2)
		Attitude of youth (Participant 2)
	Negative impact on whole community (Participant 2)	
	Afraid of reporting crime (Participants 4,7)	Distrust of other community members to stand against crime (Participant 7)
		Reprisal (Participant 7)
		Parents who defend delinquent youth (Participant 4)

4.2.3.1 Fear of crime expressed by participants

For the fact that many crimes are being committed by young people in the community create an automatic suspicion of youth, more especially males. Because as a result of

their culture of crime and deviance, community members cannot freely carry out their daily duties without the fear of being crime victims.

4.2.3.1.1. Living in constant fear

Five respodents (2,3,6,7 and 9) of the community members who are affted by youth crime mentioned living in constant fear. For insance, participant 1 emphasised the fear they have of the youth because they know what they are capable of. A similar example is given by participant 3, where he described the behaviour of young men and how these acts bother community members and instill an intense feeling of fear in them. Participant 6 expressed fear of youth crime by underlining how risky it is to walk to and from work in the street in the morning and in the late evening. Furthermore, participant 7 declared youths as heartless beings capable of cold blood murder. Accordingly, participant 9 also expressed their fear of youth crime by emphasesing how members of the community no longer feel safe in their own houses.

4.2.3.1.2 Change of lifestyle

Three participants (2,4 and 9) mentioned how their lifestyle changed as a result of youth crime. For example, participant 2 expressed how they stay indoors just to be safe. In addition, participant 4 stated that they keep their front doors closed under any weather conditions and keep their palsma TVs off and out of the way after 6pm.

4.2.3.1.3 Hiding possessions

Participant 4 emphasised the hiding of their possessions. The participant mentioned closing the front doors at all times to hide furniture and valuabe items from potential criminals. The participant also expressed how they switch off their TVs after dark to avoid them being spotted by criminals.

4.2.3.1.4 Physical advantage of youth/suspicious of young men

Three participants (1 and 2) note physical advantage of youth which draw the suspicion of young men. For instance, participant 1 emphasised on the body structure of young men and their dress code, while participant 2 emphasised how an intimidating a group of young men tends to appear.

4.2.3.1.5 Negative impact on whole community

Participant 2 expessed how youth crime negatively affect the community by emphasising on the health issue. Apparently people experience high blood pressure and abnornal heart rates whenever they come across the so called suscipicous youth. Moreover, the community also lost its sense of unity because of the high rate of crime.

4.2.3.1.6 Afraid of reporting crime

Two participants (4 and 7) described their fears of reporting crime. For example, participant 4 emphasised by saying that they know them (the criminals) but they cannot report them for fear of being attacked by criminals or hated by their parents. Participant 7 also expressed the same fear similar to participant 4.

Table 8: Crime normalisation and description of youth behaviour by participants

Crime normalisation (Participants 6,9)	Those who try to be law abiding are belittled and demeaned (Participants 6,9)	
	They do not even search for other jobs (Participant 9)	
	Only way to make money (Participant 6)	
Description of youth behaviour (Participants 2,3,8,9)	Spend whole night drinking and dancing (Participant 2)	
	Hanging out at Somalian stores using drugs and alcohol (Participant 8)	
	Aimlessly roaming the streets (Participant 3)	

4.2.3.2 Crime normalisation and description of youth behaviour by participants

4.2.3.2.1 Crime normalisation

Two participants (6 and 9) mentioned the normalisation of youth crime. For example, participant 6 expressed how non-criminals are ridiculed and labelled 'stupids'. Participant 9 underlined how crime has consumed young men, killed their interest to look for employment and how they now see crime as a paying job.

4.2.3.2.2 Description of youth behaviour

Four participants (2,3,8 and 9) gave different descriptions of youth behaviour. Firstly, participant 2 mentioned the habit of yonung men of frequenting bottle stores to drink alcohol and dance throughout the night until sunrise. Secondly, participant 3 mentioned a habit of the youth of Mentz Village of roaming the streets asking random people for money.Thirdly, participant 8 mentioned how young men day in and day out hangout in

groups outside Somalians shops and smoke dagga. Lastly, participant 9 mentioned something almost similar to participant 8 and added gambling at bottle stores.

Table 9: Causes of youth crime mentioned by participants

Family circumstances (Participants 1,2,4,5,7,8,9)	Lack of parental discipline, supervision and support (Participants 1,2,4,5)	Parents afraid of their children (Participants 1,2,4)
	Poverty (Participants 2,3,4,5,7)	Absent mother and father (childheaded households) (Participants 4,7)
	Single parenting (Participant 5)	
Unemployment (Participants 1,2,3,4,6,7)	Chasing easy money (Participants 1,2,4)	Luxuries and fancy clothes (Participants 2,6)
	Laziness (Respodent 3,7)	Lazy to look for work (Participant 8)
	Only way to make money (Participant 6)	Unwilling to do hard labour (Participant 7)
Negative peer influence (Repondents1,3,6,9)	Want to please friends (Participants 1,3,6)	Want to be accepted by friends (Participant 9)
	Find comfort from friends (Participants 1,9)	

Drugs and alcohol abuse (Participants1,2,4,7,9)	Easy accessibility (Participant 7)	Plenty of tarvens (Participant 7)
	Money needed to buy drugs (Participants 1,2)	
	Using drugs to escape reality (Participant 2)	
School dropout (Participants 2,3,4,5)	School negligence (Participant 5)	Bunking classes (Participant 2)
	Poor school performance (Participants 2,5)	Grades repitation (Participants 4,5,2)
	Suspension from school (Participant 5)	Theft and using drugs on school premises (Participant 5)
Boredom (Participants 3,7,9)	Lack of productive activities (Participants 3,7)	
	No proper sports fields and recreational halls (Respondnet 9)	
Exposure to negative media (Participant 3)	Copy what they see on television (Participant 3)	
Disrespect (Participants 2,4)	Choice (Participant 4)	
No positive role models (Participant 9)		

4.2.3.3 Causes of youth crime mentioned by participants

4.2.3.3.1 Family circumstances

Seven participants (1,2,4,5,7,8 and 9) mentioned family circumstances as the cause of youth crimes. Participants 4 and 7 emphasised on the issue of childheaded households. Whereby orphans have to feed and clothe themselves, which is difficult without any source of income.

On the other hand, participants 1 and 2 mentioned lack of parental discipline, whereby parents are afraid of their children and are unable to inforce proper discipline. Moreover, participants 1 and 8 touched on the issue of poverty and emphasised that young people commit crime because they come from poverty stricken families. Furthermore, resondent 5 raised the issue of single parenting by expressing that families are divided and are falling apart; women are forced to become breadwinners and work long hours, while children spend most of the time under no parental supervision at home.

4.2.3.3.2 Unemployment

Six participants (1,2,3,4,6 and 7) mentioned unemployment as a cause of youth crimes. For instance, participants 1,2,3 and 4 emphasised that lack of jobs motivate the youth to engage in criminal acts, whereby young people commit crime to generate income meet their needs and wants. Moreover, participant 6 raised the issue of youth laziness to search for employment or carry out hard labour, whereas they are material-driven.

4.2.3.3.3 Negative peer influence

Four participants (1,3,6 and 9) mentioned negative peer influence as a cause of crimes. For instance, participant 1 outlined that youth tend to feel happy and at peace in the company of their friends rather than at home with their families. In addition, participants 3, 6 and 9 stated that young people are easily manipulated by their friends.

4.2.3.3.4 Drugs and alcohol abuse

Four participants (1,2,7 and 9) mentioned drugs and alcohol abuse as the cause of youth crimes. For instance, participants 1 and 2 mentioned that young people commit crime to generate money to feed their drug addiction. While participant 7 emphasised on that there is nothing for young people to participate in at Mentz Village except cheap alcohol and

drugs. Accordingly, participant 9 expressed that the youth commit the majority of crimes under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

4.2.3.3.5 School dropout

Four participants (2,3,4 and 5) mentioned school dropout as a cause of youth crimes. For instance, participants 2, 3, 4 and 5 emphasised that many young people have dropped out of school as a result of either poor academic performance, grade repetition, school negligence and suspension due to illicit activities.

4.2.3.3.6 Boredom

Three participants (3,7 and 9) mentioned boredom as a cause of crimes. All the participants emphaisised on the Mentz Village as having nothing productive for youth to participate in.

4.2.3.3.7 Exposure to negative media

Participant 3 expressed the negative effects that the media has on young people. For instance, youth see different kinds of gratuitous scenes of violence and sex on TV; therefore, when they go outside they mimic what they saw on TV.

4.2.3.3.8 Disrespect

Participant 2 mentioned disrespect as a cause of youth crimes. The participant stated that young people have no respect for people's rights and for the law. In addition, participant 4 mentioned the issue of choice, whereby young people make the decision to commit crime out of free will.

4.2.3.3.9 No positive role models

Participant 9 mentioned lack of positive role models to play the motivation and inspirational role that will shape and direct the lives of young men and women in the right direction.

Table 10: Specific crimes mentioned by participants

Crimes committed (Participants)	Housebreaking (Participants 1,2,3,4,7;9)	
	Business robberies (Participants 1,3,4,9)	
	Street robbery (Participants 1,2,4,6,7)	
	Rape (Participants 1,6,7)	
	Stealing car parts and electric cables (Participants 1,3,7)	
	Assault (Participants 3,6)	
	Selling illegal drugs (Participant 2)	
	Murder (Participant 7)	

4.2.3.4 Specific crimes mentioned by participants

4.2.3.4.1 Housebreaking

Six participants (1,2,3,4,7 and 9) mentioned housebreaking as type of crime committed by youth.

4.2.3.4.2 Business robberies

Four participants (1,3,4 and 9) mentioned business robberies as a type of crime committed by the youth; and most of these robberies took place at Somalian shops.

4.2.3.4.3 Street robbery

Five participants (1,2,4,6 and 7) mentioned street robbery as a type of crime committed by youth.

4.2.3.4.4 Rape

Three participants (1,6 and 7) mentioned rape as type of crime committed by youth.

4.2.3.4.5 Stealing car parts and electric cables

Two participants (1 and 7) mentioned stealing electric cables as a type of crime committed by the youth. Participant 3 mentiond the stealing car parts.

4.2.3.4.6 Assault

Participant 6 metioned assault as a type of crime committed by the youth.

4.2.3.4.7 Selling illegal drugs

Participant 2 mentioned Selling of illegal drugs as a type of crime committed by the youth.

4.2.3.4.8 Murder

Participant 7 mentioned murder as type of crime committed by the youth.

Table 11: Possible solutions mentioned by participants

What can be done by community members (Participants 1,2,3,5,6,7,9)	Encourage school attendance (Participant 1)	
	Empower youth to become enterpreneurs (Participant 1)	

	Encourage youth to participate in sports (Participants 2,3)	
	Introduce community police forums (Participants 2,5)	
	Join forces as a community to fight against youth crime (Participants 1,3,5,6)	Introducing community watch (Participant 6)
		Identifying and separating deviant groups (Participant 3)
		Treat each other with compassion (Participants 1,3)
	Do not hesistate to report crime (Participant 3)	
	Introduce positive role models to children (Participants 7,9)	

	Arrest and prosecute drug dealers (Participants 2,9,7)	
	Jobs creation (Participants 1,9)	
What can be done by the government (Participants 1,2,4,7,9)	Introduce youth empowerment programs in rural areas (Participant 1)	Build recreational facilities in rural areas (Participant 1)
	Inforcing harsher punishment to convicted criminals (Participant 4)	
	Stop corruption in the justice system (Participant 1)	
	Hire more police officails (Participant 2)	Increase police visibility in rural areas (Participant 9)

4.2.3.5 Possible solutions mentioned by participants

4.2.3.5.1 What can be done by community members

The majority of community members who were interviewed emphasised that crime is not the problem of the police alone. They highlighted the importance of community involvement and intervention.

4.2.3.5.1.1 Encourage school attendance

Participant 1 underlined the importance of encouraging youths to go to school; for example, participant 1 mentioned that young people should be forced by either their parents or guardians to go to school.

4.2.3.5.1.2 Youth empowerment

Two participants (1 and 9) mentioned youth-empowerment. For instance, participant 1 came up with a distinct idea and underlined that parents can help their children to own up businesses if they are not competent in formal education. Participant 9 mentioned the introduction of workshops, whereby the youth can be taught and equipped with productive skills.

4.2.3.5.1.3 Encourage youth to participate in sports

Two participants (2 and 3) emphasised sports participation among youth. For instance, participant 2 outlined the need to renovate sport grounds to encourage sport participation among the youth. Additionally, participant 3 mentioned youth programs and named sports as some of the activities that the youth can get involved in.

4.2.3.5.2.4 Introduce community police forum

Two participants (2 and 5) mentioned the introduction of a community police forum (CPF). For example, participants 2 and 5 outlined that there should be a community police forum in the village, since it is not there.

4.2.3.5.1.5 Join forces as a community to fight against youth crime

Two participants (3 and 9) mentioned the importance of the whole community working together. Participant 3 expressed the view that deviant groups should be identified and separated. Participant 9 emphasised the issue of spaza shops that sell illegal drugs and cigarettes to children under the age of 18.

4.2.3.5.1.6 Do not hesistate to report crime

Two participants (5 and 6) mentioned the tendency of community members to hesitate to report crime which has to end. For instance, participant 1 emphasised by stating that the community should stop people from protecting criminals. Participant 6 also underlined that community members should report every crime no matter how small.

4.2.3.5.1.7 Introduce positive role models to children

Three participants (7,8 and 9) expressed the importance of introducing positive role models to children. For example, participant 7 emphasised on the biggest problem that the community faces whereby children have no positive role models, but look up to criminals. On the other hand, participant 8 underlined the issue of negative media, where everything young people read, watch or listen to is of either a violent or sexual nature. Lastly, participant 9 mentioned that youth lack motivational support to help them make better life choices.

4.2.3.5.2 What can be done by the government

It is no secret that the community cannot fight the problem of youth crime on their own without the help of the government. The government also has an important role to play in ensuring positive results. Accordingly, community members suggested few things that they believe the government can do to help fight the problem of youth crime in their village.

4.2.3.5.2.1 Arrest and prosecute drug dealers

Participant 7 metioned the importance of arresting drug dealers to claim back a drug free community.

4.2.3.5.2.2 Jobs creation

Participant 1 mentioned that the government should create more jobs for youth.

4.2.3.5.2.3 Introduce youth empowerment programs in rural areas

Two participants (3 and 6) mentioned the introduction of youth empowerment programs to help reduce and prevent youth crimes. For instance, participant 3 stated that the youth should be mentored and shaped so that they can become productive members of society. Participant 6 mentioned that the government can do a great deal to reduce and prevent youth crime by implementing youth programs in rural areas that will equip each youth with marketable skills and help them to find employment.

4.2.3.5.2.4 Inforcing harsher punishment to convicted criminals

Three participants (1,4 and 7) mentioned the enforcement of harsher punishment to deter crime. For instance, participant 1 emphasised on the softness of the constitution of South Africa towards young people.

Participant 4 mentioned how comfortable prisons are whilst participant 7 mentioned that criminals should be punished according to the crimes committed.

4.2.3.5.2.5 Stop corruption in the justice system

Participant 1 outlined zero tolerance to police corruption. Criminals should not walk free and victims deserve their justice.

4.2.3.5.2.6 Hire more police officails

Participant 3 mentioned hiring more police officials to increase police visibility in rural areas.

4.2.4. Individual interviews with community leaders

Question 1: How big is the problem of youth crime in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*The problem of youth crime is very big. There are many cases of people being robbed and stabbed to death at one of the popular taverns namely Codesa, So Good, So Nice and Dinokeng at Mentz*". Participant 2: "*Crime is a big problem in Mentz Village. It keeps fellow community members up at night wondering if they locked the gate, closed all the windows and locked all the doors. Nowadays, these youth go to the extent of committing crime during day light. They no longer wait until it gets dark outside*". Participant 3: "*The problem of youth crime is growing at an alarming rate, community members find it too risky to walk late at night*".

Question 2: What types of crimes are committed by young people in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*Housebreaking, theft, mugging and rape*". Participant 2: "*Cable theft, housebreaking, burglary at business premises, and rape*". Participant 3: "*Youth target mostly Somalians shops, they steal metals and electric cables and weigh them in exchange for money; they break into houses to steal anything valuable that they can*

carry, more especially plasma TVs and other electric appliances. They also mug people when they come back from work in the evening, more especially towards month end".

Question 3: How afraid are other members of the community of youth crime?

Participant 1: "*The community is living in tremendous fear of youth crime. This has led to people avoiding walking around at night, installing intensive security fences and building big walls surrounding their houses, Some community members have guns in their houses for their own protection*". Participant 2: "*Community members walk around the street with the fear of being attacked at any time; regardless of whether it is during the day or during the night. Most community members went to the extent of putting burglars at their homes, on their doors and windows*". Participant 3: "*It is not safe to walk around alone in the evening and early in the morning. Therefore, because of fear of being attacked and robbed, people do not walk around alone*".

Question 4: What are the causes of youth crime in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*Drug abuse and alcohol misuse, poor parenting and school dropout are the main causes of crime among youth. Most of the youngsters at Mentz are taking drugs, especially dagga and nyaope. They drink alcohol everyday. You will find a young man early in the morning going home from the tavern, meaning they spent the whole night there*". Participant 2: "*I believe nyaope, boredom, school dropout and unemployment are what drive youth to crime. Many youths at Mentz Village neglect their schoolwork, they bunk classes and end up not going to school at all and hanging out at the Somalians shops smoking and harassing young girls who come to the shop. If they are not at the Somalians shops, they are aimlessly roaming around the streets of Mentz and take any crime opportunity that present itself and if an opportunity doesn't knock, they build a door*". Participant 3: "*The main cause of crime is school dropout and boredom. These young people are bored. Since they are no longer going to school they have a lot of time in their hands and they do not know how to use it productively. They do not know the importance*

of school and never took school seriously. They would go to school only two times in a week, and they fail repeatedly".

Question 5: What can be done by the community to reduce or prevent crime among youth in Mentz Village?

Participant 1: "*Youth crime is not a problem for the police alone. The community as a whole should take responsible and come up with an intervention to assist the police. Those who commit crime should be locked up and punished accordingly. The police can arrest someone and release him/her before they could even get to the police station. Even if they get to the police station, he/she will be released the following day".* Participant 2: "*The community should unite and discuss problems they are facing regarding youth crime and come up with effective practical solutions. Parents should discipline their children and never endure their children's mischief because that is where illicit manners are born. The community can also form a community youth program where the youth can participate in different recreational activities to keep them focused and busy. If the sports ground can be renovated, I believe our youth will willingly take part in sport. Not forgetting those who are already addicted to drugs and alcohol, community members can donate some money so that they could all be taken to rehabilitation centres".*

Participant 3: "*Every parent can coach their children not to become future criminals. It all starts at home; what kind of support system did the youth receive from an early age. Parents should be hands-on with their children, monitor their children, know who they hang out with and question their whereabouts".*

Question 6: What can the government do to reduce or prevent crime among the youth?

Participant 1: "*Firstly, the government should create more jobs. Secondly, curb corruption in the police system. Thirdly, come up with programs that will empower youth, and lastly,*

for deterrence the consequences of crime must be very harsh to deter others from engaging in crime".

Participant 2: *"Our municipality can apply for tenders from the government, install street lights at Mentz Village. The police should also patrol the village every day, especially at night at regular intervals. Harsher punishment should be implemented. The government can also reduce youth crime by providing youth with employment"*. Participant 3: "*The police should patrol the community daily on an interval of at least two hours. Harsher punishment should be implemented; harsher punishment will send a loud and direct message to those who are committing crime outside prison"*.

4.2.5 Findings on interview schedules with community leaders.

Going through the above data It was made clear that youth crime in Mentz Village is very huge and does not show any sign of decreasing. Participants live in constant fear and have changed many aspects of their lives as a result of youth crime.

The following themes and subthemes emerged from the data.

Table 12: Fear of youth crimes mentioned by participants

Fear of crime (Participants 1,2,3)	Changed lifestyle (Participants 1,2,3)	Vigilant (Participant 2)
	Attitude of youth (Participant 2)	
	Negatively affecting the community (Participants 1,2,3)	
	Living in constant fear (Participants 1, 2,3)	Protecting their possessions (Participants 1,2)

4.2.5.1 Fear of youth crimes mentioned by participants

Youth crime in Mentz Village is a serious problem and have a devastating impact on the community. Community members live like prisoners in their own village and do not feel safe in the comfort of their own homes. It can be concluded from the interviews with

community leaders that, youth crime at Mentz Village is increasing daily and does not show any sign of declining.

4.2.5.1.1 Changed lifestyle

All participants (1,2 and 3) clearly expressed their fear of youth crime. For instance, participant 12 mentioned that the whole community is restless and they have no sense of security.

4.2.5.1.2 Attitude of the youth

Participant 2 outlined the attitude of youths by emphasising their disrespectful tendencies to commit crime during day light.

4.2.5.1.3 Negatively affecting the community

All three participants (1,2 and 3) emphasised the negative effects of youth crime on the community. For instance, participant 2 declared youth crime as a nightmare.

4.2.5.1.4 Living in constant fear

All the participants (1,2 and 3) mentioned living in constant fear as a result of youth crime. For example, participant 1 mentioned installation of intensive security fences surrounding their houses just to put their minds at ease. Participant 2 emphasised on how community members walk around the streets with the fear of being attacked at any time. Participant 3 expressed something almost similar to participant 2 by stating how unsafe it is to walk around alone in the evening and in the early morning.

Table 13: Causes of youth crime mentioned by participants

Causes of crime (Participants 1,2,3)	Drugs and alcohol use (Participants 1,2)	
	Boredom (Participants 2,3)	
	School dropout (Participants 2,3)	School negligence (Participant 3)
	Unemployment (Participant 2)	
	Lack of parental care, support and disclipline (Participant 2)	

4.2.5.2 Causes of youth crime mentioned by participants

4.2.5.2.1 Drugs and alcohol use

Participant 1 mentioned drugs and alcohol use as the main cause of youth crime. For instance, participant 1 outline that youth drink alcohol seven days a week. Consequently, this means they are never sober and they commit different types of crime when they are either under the influence of drugs, or when they want to feed their addiction.

4.2.5.2.2 Boredom

Two participants (2 and 3) mentioned boredom as a cause of youth crime. For instance, participant 2 described few things that youth get up to when they have plenty of time on their hands; for example, hanging out at Somalian shops smoking and aimlessly roaming the streets. Smoking and harassing young girls who come to the shop to purchase and spotting potential crime targets. Similarly, to participant 2, participant 3 emphasised how bored young people tends to get when they are not attending school or working.

4.2.5.2.3 School dropout

Two participants (2 and 3) mentioned school dropout as a cause of youth crime. For instance, participant 2 outlined that many youths at Mentz Village neglect their

schoolwork, they bunk classes and end up not going to school at all. Lastly, participant 3 added by mentioning that youth do not value education.

4.2.5.2.4 Unemployment

Participant 2 mentioned unemployment as a cause of youth crime. Participant 2 emphasised that unemployment drive the youth to commit crime because they want money to take care of themselves.

4.2.5.2.5 Lack of parental care, support and disclipline

Participant 2 mentioned the lack of parental support and discipline as a cause of crime. For example, parents are not involved in their children's lives, and some do not support their children emotionally and financially. As a result, children end up with the responsibility to feed and clothe themselves from a young age.

Table 14: Specific crimes mentioned by participants

Crimes committed (Participants)	Housebreaking (Participants 1,2,3)
	Business robberies (Participants 2,3)
	Street robbery (Participants 1,3)
	Rape (Participants 1,2)
	Cable theft (Participants 2,3)

4.2.5.3 Specific crimes mentioned by participants

4.2.5.3.1 Housebreaking

Three participants (1,2 and 3) mentioned housebreaking committed by the youth.

4.2.5.3.2 Business robberies

Participant 2 mentioned burglary at business premises.

4.2.5.3.3 Street robbery

Two participants (1 and 3) mentioned robbery.

4.2.5.3.4 Rape

Two participants (1 and 2) mentioned rape.

4.2.5.3.5 Cable theft

Two participants (2 and 3) mentioned cable theft.

Table 15: possible solutions mentioned by participants

What can be done by community members (Participants 1,2,3)	Community members working together with the police (Participant 1)	
	Effectively discussing issues affecting the community (Participant 2)	
	Parents enforcing discipline (Participants 2,3)	Encouraging parental supervision and support (Participant 2)
		Giving children a positive upbringing (Participant 3)
	Encouraging sports participation (Participant 2)	
	Taking drug addicts to rehab (Participant 2)	

	Jobs creation (Participants 1,2)	
	Stop police corruption (Participant 1)	

	Introduce youth empowerment programs in rural areas (Participant 1)	
What can be done by the government (Participants 1,2,3)	Inforcing harsher punishment to convicted criminals (Participants 1,2,3)	
	Installation of street lights in rural areas (Participant 2)	
	Police visibility (Participants 2,3)	Police patrol (Participants 2,3)

4.2.5.4 Possible solutions mentioned by participants

4.2.5.4.1 Solutions suggested by community leaders

4.2.5.4.1.1 Community members working together with the police

Participant 1 stated that, in order to curb youth crime, the community and the police should work hand-in-hand.

4.2.5.4.1.2 Effectively discussing issues affecting the community

Participant 2 outlined that, in order to tackle the issues of crime, the causes and impacts of youth crime should be effectively discussed and analysed.

4.2.5.4.1.3 Parents enforcing discipline

Two participants (2 and 3) emphasised the importance of parental discipline. Both outlined parents practicing the correct methods of discipline to teach their children to become law abiding citizens*.*

4.2.5.4.1.4 Encouraging sports participation

Participant 2 mentioned encouraging sports participation among the youth. Renovations of the sports grounds in Mentz Village will encourage the youth to participate in sports.

4.2.5.4.1.5 Sending drug addicts to rehab

Participant 2 mentioned the importance of donationg money as a community to refer drug addicts to rehabilititation centres to give them a second chance in life.

4.2.5.4.2 Responsibilities of the government mentioned by participants

4.2.5.4.2.1 Jobs Creation

Two participants (1 and 2) mentioned the creation of more jobs. Both emphasised youth unemployment as the main cause of youth crime. As a result, more jobs is equal to less crime.

4.2.5.4.2.2 Stop police corruption

Participant 1 expressed the need to curb police corruption. The community has lost faith in the police due to high rate of police corruption.

4.2.5.4.2.3 Introduce youth empowerment programs in rural areas

Participant 1 outlined implementation of youth empowerment programs in rural areas.

4.2.5.4.2.4 Enforcing harsher punishments for convicted criminals

Three participants (1,2 and 3) mentioned the enforcement of swift punishment to convicted criminals. The participants are of the opinion that harsher punishment can act

as a deterrence of crime by sending a message to those who are not yet arrested to change their ways.

4.2.5.4.2.5 Installation of street lights in rural areas

Participant 2 mentioned how street lights can act as a method of crime prevention.

4.2.5.4.2.6 Police visibility

Two respondents (2 and 3) outlined police visibility as one of the preventative measures that the government have to consider. For instance, participant 2 mentioned that the police should patrol the community on a daily basis at intervals of at least two hours.

4.2.6. Summary

Chapter 4 focused on the presentation of the results and the discussion of the research findings. It is evident from the study's findings that causes and crimes committed outlined by participants in different interview schedules are interlinked. Different themes and sub-themes were identified. In the next chapter, the researcher will summarise the research and give recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: SYNTHESIS, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter revisits the purpose and objectives of the study and the main issues that influenced the researcher to embark on the study. The main results of the study and the conclusion and recommendations made by the researcher will be explained in full detail, and will be connected to the recommendations on how to remove the issues that drive the youth to commit crime.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF MAIN FINDINGS

5.2.1 Causes of youth crime

This research divulged that the majority of youths who commit crime come from dysfunctional families where they experience poverty, abuse, lack of parental discipline and love. Others have absent fathers and some are orphans. The assertion that young people from dysfunctional families are highly likely to become criminals is supported by Brownfiled, Sorenson and Thompson (2001:73:89), who state that there are different theories which argue that dysfunctional homes produce children who are highly likely to become criminals. Negative peer influence was also mentioned by respondents as a key predictor of youth crime in Mentz Village. The self-admitting criminals mentioned that friends helped them to cope with their problems, introduced them to drugs and initiated a life to commit different crimes. According to Buelhler (2006), associating with deviant friends is a major key predictor in criminal involvement, again deviant friends and substance abuse go hand-in-hand. It was then discovered by the researcher that all self-admitting criminals were introduced to different substances by their friends. According to Maseko (2009:97), young people tend to abuse substances that are mostly in reach for them and easy to get in their communities and stress is also a serious contributory factor of substance abuse. Young people get overwhelmed by the challenges of growing up and being adults.

96

In addition to substance use comes the issue of boredom. Young people seem to have nothing to do with their time except smoking and drinking alcohol, roaming the streets and engaging in different criminal activities. Participants stated that there is only soccer, no parks and no recreational centers in the village to keep the youth busy in a variety of activities. Furthermore, young people get bored at home only because they have dropped out of school and unemployed. Observing the data from the different scheduled interviews, it can be said that Mentz Village has a high number of young men who dropped out of school. All self-admitting criminals interviewed were unemployment. Morrow, Panday, and Richter (2005:204), stated that unemployed people find it difficult to build their self-esteem and suffer from depression.

5.2.2 Fear of youth crime

Crimes committed by youth in Mentz Village is a serious problem and it is growing at an alarming rate of growth. From the interviews conducted with community members and community leaders, it was recognised that youth crime in Mentz Village is on the increase. The fear of crime is a serious concern as much as the criminal activities. Living in constant fear is not living at all. It is emotionally and physically draining for the residents and has changed their lifestyle in a drastic manner. Moreover, fear of crime also affects the development of the community whereby people take their businesses elsewhere because they are afraid of being robbed and losing their hard-earned money. Community members cannot normally and freely carry out their daily duties without the fear of being crime victims.

5.2.3 Crimes committed

Common types of crimes committed by youth in Mentz Village includes: housebreaking, burglary at business premises, shoplifting at Somalian shops, cable theft, mugging, selling illegal drugs, assault, rape and murder. They commit either money-related crimes or violent crimes. Most of the crime episodes turn violent when the victim does not comply with the demands of the criminals or tries to fight back.

The types of crimes mostly mentioned by participants which are on top of the list, are: housebreaking, business robbery and street robbery in the same order, followed by cable theft, rape and assault, ending with murder and selling illegal drugs.

5.2.4 Long term goals of self-admitting criminals

Four out of seven self-admitting criminals expresssed no desire to go back to school. It is nowhere near their long-term goals to go back to school. Apparently, they have no regrets. They are living for the present and they do not worry or care about what tomorrow holds for them. It is unfortunate, therefore, to discover that there are young people who still believe that crime is the easy way out. They do not see anything wrong with committing crime as they proudly say they love their life as it is. In addition, these young criminals are not even bothered by how their actions affect other people. If anything, gleaned from their responses and attitudes towards their criminal behaviour, they are all about themselves and surviving today.

Three out of the seven of self-admitting criminals interviewed in this study expressed the desire to go back to school. They are constantly beating themselves up wishing they had done things differently and remained in school until they completed Grade 12 to be able to further their studies. Regardless of how much they try to justify their actions, they have plenty of regrets. Moreover, they are aware of the importance of education and know that crime does not pay. They believe life was and is unfair; and they strongly believe their lives would have taken a better turn if they were born in different/better backgrounds.

5.2.5 What can be done to reduce/prevent youth crime?

Participants mentioned possible solutions to either prevent or reduce crime. On several occurrences, it was said that the only way that the community members can successfully fight the problem of youth crime is through unity. Parents should discipline, supervise and support their children financially and emotionally.

Furthermore, community police forums and community watch should be established to reduce or prevent crime. People who sell illegal drugs should be identified, reported and arrested. Youth programs should be developed to keep young people off the streets. It is no secret that the community cannot fight the problem of youth crime without the help of the government. Therefore, the government has an important role to play in ensuring positive results with regard to the reduction and eradication of crime. Community members suggested a few things that they believe the government can do to help fight the problem of youth crime in their village. Some participants suggested that the government should hire more police officers to patrol Mentz Village day and night. Constant police visibility is crucial to discourage youth crime. Furthermore, it was emphasised by the community members that the government should go the extra mile and implement structures that aim at teaching youth positive skills since there are many youths in the community who have dropped out of school. It was also mentioned that jobs should be created for the youth and that stricter sanctions for convicted criminals should be applied.

5.3 REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

5.3.1 The findings in terms of research objectives

5.3.1.1 Findings in terms of Objective 1: To identify common crimes committed by young people in Mentz

Data obtained from the interviews make it clear that the youth in Mentz Village are causing serious crime-related problems and distress to the community. The interviewed youths admitted to committing various crimes, and the information of their admittance corresponded with the information given in the interviews conducted with community leaders and general members of the community. The crimes the youths admitted to have committed include robbery, mugging, housebreaking, burglary at business premises, assault with grievous bodily harm, rape, murder, attempted murder and illegal drug use.

With regard to this, in Case 1, participant stated that "*The targets are mostly Somalian shops; they steal goods from Somalian supermarkets and sell them to community members who do not ask too many questions at a lower price*". Another participant mentioned that they target houses that are vulnerable to housebreaking and look fancy.

5.3.1.2 Findings in terms of Objective 2: To identify factors that lead young people to commit crime

Several factors were mentioned during the interviews. Some of the factors were mentioned more often than others. Two dominating factors that lead young people to commit crime during interviews with self-admitted criminals, community members and community leaders are bad friends and substance abuse. Deviant friends encouraged substance use which leads to substance-dependency and abuse in most cases, which then triggers criminal behaviour. According to Schonfeldt (2007:89), the high rate of property and violent crimes in South Africa are caused by the misuse of drugs and alcohol. All self-admitted offenders in the present study ended up in the company of bad friends, and as a result found themselves using substances such as *nyaope*. The participant from case one stated: "*I started committing crime more often after dropping out of school because I had more time on my hands*". This participant specified that he also commits crime because of easy money, to deal with stress, to forget his family problems, and 'to please his friends' [peer pressure/influence by friends] so that they will continue considering him as their friend and keep hanging out with him. Participant 3 mentioned something similar. He stated that: "*At first I committed crime to escape from reality and also to try to cope with the challenges and problems life have thrown at me, but before I knew it I was committing crime to please and keep my new friends.*" He is afraid of being labelled a coward and a sell-out, and is, hence, convinced that there is no way out.

None of the youths who participated in the study were employed; unemployed youth are more likely than employed youth to be forced by their circumstances to commit crime to maintain themselves. Gxubane (2014:320) remarks that young people are generally preoccupied with the gratification of their material needs. According to Nomoyi (2009:6),

when one struggles to find employment and earn money in a legal way, one could get frustrated and turn to crime. All the participants who dropped out of school ended up committing crime at some time during their lives. It was mentioned that Mentz Village has a high number of young boys who drop out of school. These boys spend most of their lives on the street, smoking drugs and drinking alcohol. Accordingly, there is a strong relationship between school dropout and high rates of youth crime (Psacharapoulos, 2007:76). According to Polk (1981:13), people who leave school early are more likely to commit crime than graduates.

5.3.1.3 Findings in terms of Objective 3: To explore young people's perspectives on youth crime

Three out of the seven young people who participated in the study acknowledged their wrongdoings and are not proud of their criminal tactics, while the remaining four participants feel entitled and do not see themselves doing anything wrong. For instance, participant 2 of the self-admitted criminals emphasised how committing crime is a daily routine for him. He also stated that he needs money to buy *nyaope* which is expensive. The participant added that he does not wear cheap unbranded clothes.

The majority of youth participants from the case studies blamed their criminal lifestyles on their parents; that their parents either abandoned them or did not care enough. In light of this, it seems that participants, in general, refuse to be held accountable for their actions. It can therefore be concluded that the youth of the 21st century expect things to be given to them on a silver platter and that they easily give up when they come across hardships in life by taking the easy way out. Despite their unpleasant circumstances and limited resources, they were all given the same opportunities to obtain an education and, instead of grasping the opportunity with both hands and put it to good use, they played with it, hence some of the participants are living with regrets, wishing they had stayed on at school.

Most of the participants do not see the importance of education then but they see it now, though others are still in denial. Today, they are struggling to find decent jobs and are lured deeper into a world of crime.

5.3.1.4 Findings in terms of Objective 4: To gather experiences and perspectives of people living in Mentz on crimes by youth

Crime among the youth has a negative impact on the community as a whole. The fact that crime is committed by young people create an automatic suspicion of the youth. Apparently, when community members see a young man approaching, they do not hesitate to hide their phones and wallet. This gives the impression that people walk around with fear of being the next victim of youth crime. Participants mentioned that they are scared to walk to and from work early in the morning or late at night. Participant 4 said that *"People who own plasma TVs do not switch them on after 7pm because they are afraid of criminals breaking into their houses to steal them."* Which means people are forced to change their lifestyle to protect themselves and their property. Participants indicated that they feel like prisoners in their own homes. The fear of crime is a serious concern for community members. It is emotionally and physically draining for residents who live in communities with high crime rates*.*

5.3.2 Research findings in terms of theories used in the study

5.3.2.1 Findings in terms of the General Strain Theory

According to Agnew (2006a, 2006b: 134) strain influence a set of unpleasant strong feelings and, as a result, committing crime is a reaction when young people experience negative emotions and want to feel better. They use crime to escape from the strain and also use illegal drugs to cope with their emotions. With reference to the general strain theory, these emotions also decrease the individual's power to use the acceptable way or legal means to cope the strain.

Furthermore, the strain an individual experiences tends to cloud their judgment and the only thing that grabs their attention is substance use and crime. Hence, young people turn to abuse substances to comfort themselves when they are facing difficulties in life and in their families. They also seek acceptance from bad friends as a way to deal and forget their problems and, at this point, the strain they are going through clouds their

judgement and they are easily encouraged to engage in criminal activities. Strained people often perceive crime as the only available option (Agnew, 1999:48).

5.3.2.2 Findings in terms of the Social Disorganisation Theory

The value of social networks in poor communities influence the kind of adult relations that young people get involved in, which encourage the role models they choose and their overall life choices. Participant 7 noted that; *"The biggest problem that we are facing as a community is that young people do not have positive role models. Their role models are not medical doctors, lawyers or scientists. Their role models are criminals".* According to the Social Disorganisation theory*,* disadvantaged communities provide the youth with limited opportunities which makes it easy for young people to rebel and take the easy route to success (Henry, *et al.*, 2001:22)*.*

The researcher discovered that young people in Mentz Village lack exposure to successful law-abiding adults. It was also highlighted by one of the participants that adults move out of the village and relocate to urban areas once they become successful, which means they do not give back to the community and youth are left with a lack of exposure to familiar successful people. As a result, young people have little or no chances to explore and learn approaches such as general positive life choices, educational and career openings, financial planning and responsibilities that comes with adulthood. According to Skinner (1995:14), youth people from poorer families and disadvantaged communities may notice the limitation of their circumstances and give up on their future.

5.3.2.2.1 Youth crime in rural areas.

It is normal for communities to be different when it comes to providing their youth with situations and occasions that increases their chances of reaching their desired goals (Haynie, Sliver & Teasdale, 2006:25). Mentz Village is characterised by poverty, absent fathers and criminal sub-cultures and all these things plays a role in the occurrence of crime and the absence of things that are required to motivate the youth to fight for a

brighter future and focus on the positive. Structurally disadvantaged neighbourhoods that lack the resources to successfully supervise the youth, make it even more difficult for the youth to stay away from bad friends and to focus on building a better future for themselves and their families (Earls, 1997:14). It can be concluded that youth from the present study were discouraged from a young age that it is impossible to accumulate wealth and reach one's desired goals through education or any other legitimate means. Some of these youths are even starting to regard crime as a full-time job and do not bother with looking for proper employment.

From the collected data it is clear that, in Mentz Village, there is no community learning activities such as parks; libraries, computer labs, access to Wi-Fi or any other activities that promote physical and socio-emotional well-being. There are also no proper sports fields. Some sections do not even have proper roads and they also do not have street lights. Residents are forced to walk long distances catch a taxi to go to work or to go shopping. According to Skinner (1995:14), youth living in poor and unpleasant communities often have an overwhelming feeling of worthlessness and no hope for the future and may behave in ways that will have a negative affect on their self-development (for example neglecting school and leaving without completion, involvement in criminal behaviour, and substance abuse).

5.3.3 Research findings in terms of the literature

5.3.3.1 Family settings

Father-absenteeism seems to be the number one factor that results in crime. Boys who grew up without their fathers are more likely to commit crime than boys who grew up with their fathers around. Fathers' absenteeism is also connected with plenty of social problems, including poverty, parenting complications, delinquent friends and poor academic performance. From the present study it was discovered that youth who commit crime in Mentz Village are from either single-mothers' families, step parents' families, only guardian families due to death of both parents and families of adult cohabitation. This was

104

supported by a young man (case 4) who stated that he never knew his father and he believes that, if his father was a part of his life, he would have done things differently.

Furthermore, most of the self-admitted criminals were raised by single mothers and, when looking at the literature, it was highlighted that there is a strong relationship between single parent household and youth crime. Single mothers find it difficult to discipline their boy children, in particular. According to Farrington (2009:160-173) youth who engage in criminal activities are mostly those who have no strong bond with their parents and come from disrupted families.

5.3.3.2 Parental conflict

Parental conflict has a negative effect on children. The case studies, in particular, highlighted that there is a strong relationship between parental fighting and young people's involvement in criminal activities. Participant case 3 supports this notion by stating how his father walked out on them. According to this participant, everything in his life was going well until his parents started fighting and it became more difficult for him to cope.

Parental fighting harms and damages children. The more regular and intense the fighting, the more children are affected psychologically. From the data it can be deducted that family conflict increases the chances of young people's involvement in delinquent behaviour and substance abuse.

5.3.3.3 The effects of poverty on youth crime.

Poverty in Mentz Village, like in many rural areas in South Africa, is a serious problem that keeps on getting worse. Poverty was mentioned in the interviews with all participants. It was highlighted that many youths who commit crime grew up in poverty-stricken families. Participant 2 from the focus group interviews stated: "*Often youth commit crime because of financial problems. Youth belonging to poor families easily get involved in crime. They want to be like other children and wear fancy clothes.*"

The researcher noticed that young people do not always commit crime because are they are bored or want to buy drugs. Some commit crime as a means to an end. Participant 3 noted that he had to drop out of school to look for a job because he could not continue going to school wearing a torn school uniform and being hungry all the time. Furthermore, he stated that he had a little brother whom he tried to keep at school. When the money he made from doing odd jobs in the community was no longer enough to cater for their needs, he began stealing from other people's households.

5.3.3.4 Unemployment and youth crime

Unemployment is a serious problem and affect many young people, causing violence and economic crimes. It causes frustration, misery and dependency on family members, spouses and friends, who might have problems of their own to cope with. The increasing high rates of youth unemployment in South Africa as a whole contribute to poverty and self-doubt in people. From the present study it was realised that unemployment is the main cause of social depravities, such as; robbery, burglary, poverty and murder/attempted murder. Thus, youth unemployment poses intense fear and high risk of victimisation on Mentz community members.

Notably, Mentz Village is a need of urgent assistance and interventions to get young people completely occupied in productive endeavors and off the streets. Participant 1 is of the opinion that *"If young people had jobs they would not commit crime, because they will be having financial security."* Gxubane (2014:320), adds by saying that young people are generally preoccupied with gratification of material needs. This can trigger young people to commit crime or behave impulsively.

5.3.3.5 The relationship between education and youth involvement in crime

An individual educational attainment determines his/her economic status and freedom. Hence, the skills, knowledge and values the community reflects as crucial can only be accumulated through education. From the collected data it was highlighted that young people takes education for granted and they all end up dropping out of school and

resorting to criminal activities at some time in their lives. As a result, it can be concluded that poor educational attainment leads to an increase in criminal involvement. The above statement was supported by participants 2 from focus group interviews who stated "*Many young people have dropped out of school because of poor academic performance. This is because they sometimes bunk classes.*" Education mingles young people to become better residents and treat other people with respect and compassion. It reduces the mental and emotional responses to crime which lead to a decline in rewarding criminal activities. No one in their right sense of mind would risk getting a criminal record when they know they did well in school and stand a great chance of getting a fulfilling job in the near future.

5.3.3.6 The relationship between substance abuse, deviant friends and youth crime

Community members, young people and their families all experience numerous penalties because of drugs and alcohol misuse. According to Rincker (2009:25), it was observed that drugs obstruct the growth of logical intelligent processes.

Deviant peer groups and peer pressure was discovered by the researcher to be a key predictor among youth crime in Mentz Village. The issue of associating with bad friends were raised by the majority of the research participants. Apparently, these friends helped them to cope with their problems and eventually got them involved in criminal activities. All youth participants admitted to using the following substances; Nyaope, dagga, glue and alcohol. The determiner for substance misuse involves the desire to change an emotional state, to cope with stressful life events, to be accepted by their friends and to feel brave and less guilty when committing crime. Youth who used substances while at school proved to have performed poorly at school and repeated the same grade several times until they dropped out.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

In order to articulate preventative interventions to reduce crime among the youth, we need to pay more attention on the features that are driving young people to take the route of crime. Looking at the above proclamations, different recommendations to help reduce or prevent crime among the youth in rural areas are made below. The following is proposed:

5.4.1 Informal social control

Informal social control simply specify that the community should police themselves and look out for each other. Community members should work together and become the eyes and ears of one another. No crime should go unreported and no criminal should get away with their crime.

5.4.2 Peer pressure approaches

There should be peer pressure approaches which are aimed at giving youth tips on how to fight pressure from peers to participate in deviant and criminal activities from substance abuse, robbery and other different crimes. Peer pressure affect the way young people conduct their lives daily. Therefore, parents should know who their children's friends are; they should have an open relationship with their children to make their children feel free to share with them what is happening in their lives. This will help the parents to combat, early, any inclination towards criminal or deviant behaviour in their children.

5.4.3 Expose people who buy stolen goods

Young people often, if not all the time, steal goods to sell them. Meaning, there are people who actually buy stolen goods and see nothing wrong with it. If people who buy stolen goods are exposed and stopped; these people are accomplices in a way, for buying stolen good. therefore, if they are brought in the light and shamed for encouraging crime, stealing

goods to sell them will no longer be attractive; since the young criminals will have no buyers, crime will eventually decline. Let us take stolen goods off the market.

5.4.4 Eliminate the availability of illegal drugs in the community

The community together with the police have to work harder and eliminate the availability of illegal drugs. Drug addicts have difficulty finding or keeping employment. As a result, they struggle to finance themselves and to feed their drug habit. Eventually they end up committing robbery and stealing from others in order to buy drugs. People who sell drugs should be arrested and given longer sentences.

5.4.5 Encourage young people to finish school

It is a sad truth that many young people still turn a blind-eye to the importance of education. There should, therefore, be some youth awareness campaigns at least once a month to highlight the importance of being educated as a young person in this modern world. Because evidently, education increases the chance of being employed and also reduces the chance of getting involved in crime.

5.4.6. Create more job opportunities

Increased jobs opportunities can assist to reduce or eliminate crime. If more youth can be employed, they will have no time to roam the streets, misusing drugs and alcohol, which are the key drivers of criminal behaviour. In light of this, job creation for youth will decrease the crime rate all in all. Therefore, young people should be trained and taught different skills to survive in the work market.

5.4.7 Fight corruption

Young people are not afraid of getting arrested because they know that the police can be easily bought and bribed. If they get arrested after committing crime they will be home soon. Accordingly, the elimination of police corruption will lead to crime reduction.

5.4.8 Introduce village courts

Community courts should be implemented to deal with less serious crime in order to reduce the load of cases in district courts. This can improve the efficiency of the criminal justice system in rural areas.

5.4.9 Harsher punishment

Many young people are not afraid to commit crime and the thought of getting arrested does not scare them anymore, because they perceive prison as a lavish place to be. Many young people have been to prison before, so they act as a reference to others. Harsher treatment may consequently cause criminals to think twice before committing crime.

5.4.10 Community Regeneration Programs

The community can unite and work together to develop a safe haven where members of the community can meet once in a while. Such a program can offer various interventions such as after-school programs, youth recreational activities and development of employment. In addition, youth should be encouraged to engage in social crime prevention in the community.

5.4.11 Positive social setting for youth development

Young people's social surroundings should be a setting that attempts to allow community members and parents to nurture their youth – as goes the African poverb: "A child is raised by the whole village". The main goal should be to offer facilities that guarantee the psychological, physical, educational, recreational and cognitive health of young people. These issues should be openly and clearly addressed.

5.5 Further research

Further research on crime among the young people at rural communities should be steered to determine the fundamental causes of crime among young people as alleged by youth who engage in criminal activities. The present study was limited to one rural area, represented by members of the particular community.

It is important to carry out wider research in Limpopo Province and South Africa as a whole since this is a complex phenomenon. An inclusive youth program is required that includes different involvements designed to develop the resilience of youth towards crime.

5.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Young people of today live and grow up in a setting that provides incredible choices and challenges during the transition from late childhood to early adulthood. Youth's setting is molded intensely by the existence or nonexistence of various aspects, these aspects include; family possessions, community facilities, academic and employment prospects. Based on the present study, youth adopt "risky" routines categorised by drugs and alcohol misuse, unprotected sexual behaviour, school drop-out, criminal behaviour, gang membership, and ultimately, violence.

Young people do not decide to commit crime overnight. It takes a long-complicated process to come to that decision. The majority of young boys in Mentz Village, as show through the presented interview responses and analysis, engage in criminal activities at

some time in their lives. However, these youths stop committing crime along the way when they reach middle or late adulthood without any intervention. Early identifying of young people who are at risk of committing crime and tackling their problems through different preventative measures will reduce youth crime. It can be concluded from the study, therefore, that young people from rural areas have no access to information and those who do sit on it rather than using to act and get ahead. Youth are into the 'get rich quick' scheme and mentality. They are suffering from financial pressure and opt for easy money. It is no secret that many youths find it difficult to achieve their goals when financial odds are against them.

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ANNEXURE A: LETTER TO REPONDENTS

Dear Participant

My name is Mamolele Maria Selowa, I am doing research titled: Crime among the youth at Mentz Village. The aim and objectives of the study is to explore crime committed by the youth and implement strategies to prevent crime among the youth at Mentz Village. This study is conducted in compliance with the need to fulfil the requirements of MA (Masters of Arts in Criminology) at the University of Limpopo.

Thank you in advance for your contribution and co-operation. Please understand that you are under no obligation to participate in this survey.

If you do choose to participate, however, your participation is crucial to the accuracy, consistency and validity of the outcome of this study. If you agree to take part, you still have the right to change your mind at any time during the study and to withdraw from the study. The information you provided in this research will be kept confidential and you will be represented as anonymous.

Kindly answer the interview questions

Yours sincerely: Selowa M.M.

ANNEXURE B: CONSENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE: **CRIME AMONG THE YOUTH AT MENTZ VILLAGE, LIMPOPO PROVINCE.**

PROJECT LEADER: SELOWA M.M

I realise that:

1. The Ethics Committee has approved that individuals may be approached to participate in the study.
2. The research project, i.e. the extent, aims and methods of the research, has been explained to me.
3. I will be informed of any new information that may become available during the research that may influence my willingness to continue my participation.
4. Access to the records pertaining to my participation in the study will be restricted to persons indirectly involved in the research.
5. Any questions that I may have regarding the research, or related matters, will be answered by the researcher.
6. Participation in this research is voluntary and I can withdraw my participation at any stage.
7. I indemnify the University of Limpopo and all persons involved with the above project from any liability that may arise from my participation in the above project or that may be related to it, for whatever reasons, including negligence on the part of the mentioned personnel.

3. Statement by the Researcher

1. I provided verbal and/or written information regarding this study
2. I agree to answer any future questions that may arise regarding the study
3. I will adhere to the approved research ethics.

Signed at_____ this _____ day of _____

ANNEXURE C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

This section of the questions refers to background information of participants. The information will allow the researcher to be aware of the kind of participants who participated in the study.

Please cross (x) the appropriate box where required.

1. What is your gender?

Female	
Male	

2. What is your age?

18-24	
24-30	
30-35	

3. Educational level?

Grade	
Tertiary Level	
Postgraduate	
Other	Specify……………….

4. Occupation?

Government servant	
Private sector	
Unemployed	
Self-employed	

Other	Specify…………………….

Section 2

Interview schedule for community leaders and general community members

Q 1: How big is the problem of youth crime in Mentz Village?

Q 2: What types of crime are committed by young people in Mentz Village?

Q 3: How afraid are members of the community of Mentz Village of youth crime?

Q 4: What are the causes of youth crime in Mentz Village?

Q 5: What can be done by the community to reduce or prevent youth crime in Mentz Village?

Q 6: What can be done by the South African Government to reduce and prevent youth crime in Mentz Village?

Interview schedule for the young people

Background

- ✓ Describe your Family background
- ✓ What is your current situation?
- ✓ What is your highest grade passed?
- ✓ What did you do after school?

Crime

- ✓ Who introduced you to crime?
- ✓ Describe the crime you commit?
- ✓ Who do you commit crime with?
- ✓ Why do you engage in crime?
- ✓ What kind of crimes do you commit?
- ✓ When do you commit crime?
- ✓ Have you ever been arrested?

Mindset

- ✓ What are your expectations and goals in life?
- ✓ What are your plans for the future?

✓ Do you think what you are doing is wrong?

✓ What should be done by themselves/ community/ government?

Northern Sotho Version

Motšeakarolo

Kenna Selowa Mamolele Maria, kemoithutikaYunibesithingya Limpopo yo e le go mahlwaadibonawadithutotšabosenyi. Kediranyakišišo (research) ka tlasegahlogo yeo e re go "Thutokwešišo yeo bosenyibaswengbjamotsewa Mentz, phorofentshengya Limpopo, ga-Mmamabolo". Maikemišetšo a poledišano ye ke go hwetšathušokgoboketšongyatshedimošoyadinyakišišo.

Bjwalo ka moithutiyo a dirago MA (Masters of Arts in Criminology), yunibesithiya Limpopo, dinyakišišotšedibohlokwa go dithutotšaka le go badudiba Mentz. Ba tšeakarolobagopotšwa gore se ke ka go ithaopa, gommebana le tokaya go tlogelanenglenenggebanyaka. Le kgopotšwa gape gore sengwe le sengwe se letlogo se bolela se tlodirwasephiri, ka faoga le gapeletšwe go fa monyakišišimaina le ditlabekelotšalenatšaboitsibišo. Go kgathatemagalena go bohlokwa kudu go katlegoyadinyakišišotše.

Ka kgopelo araba dipotšišotše di latelago

Karolo 1
1. O monnagobamosadi?
2. Naa o na le mengwaga e me kae?
3. O fihlilekaekadithuto?
   -Mphato
   - Thutoyamaemo a godimo (tertiary)
   - Dithutotšamoragoga go hwetšakgerata
   - Tšedingwe (hlalosa)
4. O šomakae?
   - Kemošomiwammušo
   - Kešomalefapeng la phoraebete (private)
   - Ga kešome

Karolo 2

5. Hlalosabosenyibja go tlwaelegabjoobodirwagokebaswabamotsewa Mentz

   ❖ Kemehutaefeyabosenyi yeo baswaba Mentz baikhwetšagoba le kagaregayona?

   ❖ Kekalebaka la eng o gopola gore baswabadirabosenyibjoo?

   ❖ Keditla-moragodifetšeobaswabalebanago le tšonagebadirilebosenyi?

6. Hlalosadilotšeo di hlohleletšagobaswa go dirabosenyi

   ❖ Kedilodifetšago se loketšeo di dirago go re baswaba dire bosenyi?

   ❖ Keditshupetšodifetša go tlwaelegatšeobaswababosenyibatsebjagokatšonamosetšhabeng? (go swana le dintlotšeobatšwagokagaregatšonagobabagwerabaobaikamanyago le bona)

   ❖ Naagona le dilotšaikonomi le tšasetšhabatšeo di hlohleletšagomekgwayabaswayabosenyimo Mentz?

7. Mmonowabaswakaditla-moragotšeotlhokegoyamešomo e nago le tšona go bosenyi.

   ❖ Naa o nagana gore tlhokegoyamešomo e na le seabebosenyingbjabaswa?

   ❖ Kekalebaka la eng o re tlhokegoyamešomo e tlišabosenyi?

   ❖ Naa o nagana gore mešomo yeo batswadiba e šomago e na le ka moo e tšeagokarolo go bosenyingbjabaswa

8. Hlalosakamokgwa woo batswadi, barutiši le setšhabakakakaretšobakadiragokagona go thibelabosenyimobaswengba Mentz.

   ❖ Naatlhokegoyakamanoyabaswa le batswadi go dilotšeoba di diragotšatšikatšatši go na le ka moo e hlohleletšagobosenyi?

   ❖ Naabatswadibakadiraeng go thibelabosenyi?

   ❖ Naabarutišibakatšeakaroloefe go thibelabosenyimobasweng?

   ❖ Naamaikarabelo a setšhabakeafege re etlatabengyabosenyimobasweng?

   ❖ Naakemekgwaefe yeo lapa le sekolo di ka e dirago go thibelabosenyi?

   Re leboga go tšengkaroloyagago.

130