

University of Cape Town



Department of Social Development

**EXPLORING THE RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUTH
OFFENDING BEHAVIOR IN CAPE TOWN**

By

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A minor dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Cape Town, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Social Sciences in Social Development.

22nd NOVEMBER 2013

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour in Cape Town, in order to suggest, from a social development point of view, preventive measures that address the risk factors from an outset. The sample that was used consisted of twenty reforming youth offenders (fifteen males and five females) at REALISTIC, a youth restorative centre in Cape Town. The study adopted a qualitative, exploratory approach, using a semi-structured interview schedule for face to face interviews. The sample was purposive and based on the selection of the administrators of the organisation. The results of the interviews, compared with relevant literature and theoretical framework, led to the findings of the study. The findings revealed that substance abuse, academic failure, anti-social peers -low socio-economic status in families and disorganized communities influence offending behaviour among the youth. Additionally, the absence of primary care givers and institutional failures on basic services delivery also exacerbate youth offending behaviour. The implications of the aforesaid conditions are that young people are excluded by the effects of poverty, risky home environments and inadequate education. As a result the youth cannot develop to their full potential abilities in order to access the mainstream economic development. Resources and support structures that could work to build resilience among the youth are insufficient. It is recommended, therefore, that the government, non-governmental organisations, communities and families should focus more on strategies that enhance abilities of children and adolescents. Through enhancing the capabilities of young people, it is possible to prevent youth offending behaviour and yield their positive contribution to socio-economic development in the country.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Emmanuel and Theresa, they should have lived to see this achievement.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AU	Africa Union
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CA	Capability Approach
CASE	Community Action towards a Safer Environment
CBO	Community Based Organisation
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy
REALISTIC	Rebuilding Life and Skills Training Centre
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPS	South African Police Services
SDM	Social Development Model
SLT	Social Learning Theory
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Education Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Youth offending behaviour is a challenge of social development the 21st century (Samara, 2011). It cuts across socio-economic boundaries of development, and has daunting effects on the victims as well as the perpetrators. Bastiaens and Bastiaens (2006) would agree that in the past five decades, youth offending behaviour has continued to obstruct global socio-economic development, with financial drain and social disorganization. Notably, youth offending behaviour discourages tourism and investment; hence it impacts negatively on economic growth of countries around the world (Gie, 2009).

South Africa is an example of a country clouded with escalating acts of youth misconduct, which are often a challenge to development execution (Samara, 2011). The rise in youth offending behaviour in South Africa is seen as having inferences for social development. Similarly, the rising youth illegal acts in the country can be understood as evidence that little attention has been paid to early preventive measures of youth offending. It would seem that Government and other stakeholders focus more on restorative rather than preventative interventions. Legal systems in the country reflect more of the rights based approach and diversion in addressing cases where the youth fall into conflict with the law (Samara, 2011). This means that measures that are put in place to diminish youth offending behavior are less preventive as they come into effect when damage has already occurred; hence the reason for the extensive escalating youth offending behaviour in the country.

Cape Town typifies the South African cities where youth offending behaviour continues to rise, in spite of interventions that are put in place to curb the problem (Gie, 2009). To illustrate this fact, it should be noted that young people, under the age of 24 years, are responsible for more than half of reported offences in Cape Town (Samara, 2011). Furthermore, the majority of the youth are devoted to anti-social peer groups, with most of them being habitual offenders (Samara, 2011). Notably, the youth constitute a majority of the population in Cape Town, as in the rest of the

country and in other developed countries. Hence they are the most vulnerable group concerning socio-economic problems, especially unlawfulness (Holtzhausen, 2012).

Furthermore, it is observed that South African policies tend to follow explanations and examples from the developed world, in order to address unlawful conduct among the youth in the country. Ansell (2005) agrees with this view when he notes that the Western construction of childhood perceptions about young people continue to influence policies and practices in international development. This is proved by advocacy for the rights of young people and diversion programmes, due to globalization of the control of unlawfulness by young people (Muncie, 2005). The above mentioned situation calls for improvements in strategizing against the outset of disorders that could result in illegal conduct among the youth. It calls for more research which targets development of children's capabilities and early prevention of youth offending behavior.

This study explores the risk factors that are associated with offending behaviour amongst the youth in Cape Town. These risk factors include the surrounding social environments and experiences which form part of socializing children in societies (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). The risk factors are studied with the aim of raising awareness of early prevention of youth offending through helping young people to develop to the best of their abilities. This chapter introduces the research by providing the context of the study, statement of the problem, topic formulation, rationale and significance of the study, the research questions and objectives. The key concepts used are clarified and the ethical considerations are also discussed. The chapter concludes by the structure of the research report and an overview of the subsequent chapters.

1.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This section describes the socio-economic profile of the study area, the city of Cape Town. This is necessary because developments in the city correlate with social challenges like youth offending behavior, as it is believed that the city is prone to unlawfulness (Samara, 2011). The study was carried out in Cape Town, the metropolis of the Western Cape province of South Africa. Western Cape is made up

of municipalities that include the West Coast, Cape Winelands, Overberg, Eden and the Central Karoo and one metropolitan area, the city of Cape Town. The Western Cape is the second largest contributor of the country's GDP (Provincial Government Western Cape, 2011). The city of Cape Town dominates the province with regard to economic performance; it is the leading contributor to the provincial Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, the city faces challenges with regard to the people's social wellbeing and safety as shall be outlined below.

One of the challenges to the aforementioned affluence is the lack of safety (City of Cape Town, 2010). This combines with other challenges to make economic development less proportionate to human security and social development in the city. In the midst of economic realization, Cape Town has the highest statistics of substance abuse related offences, violence and murder compared to other cities in the country (City of Cape Town, 2010). It is these conditions of unlawfulness that inspired the researcher to choose a study in Cape Town. By looking at the socio-economic status in the city, local development authorities state that Cape Town is like two cities in one. One city attracts capital and skilled labour, while the other breeds unlawfulness and high a rate of unemployment (Gei, 2009).

Furthermore, Cape Town has the uppermost population statistics in the province, with nearly four million people; of which the youth constitute the majority of the population (City of Cape Town, 2010). This is typical of South Africa, where young people are the largest group of the population, and are mostly the ones that are involved in unlawfulness (City of Cape Town, 2010; Holtzhausen, 2012). The high population growth in Cape Town is also linked directly to migration; another correlate of unlawfulness overshadowing the city. The Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), 2011 mid-year estimates, reveal that most immigrants come from the Eastern Cape (Provincial Government Western Cape, 2011).

The majority of the youth in Cape Town, as in the rest of South African cities, are involved in unlawfulness and violence, as victims and perpetrators, from as early as six years of age (Gei, 2009). This indicates the extent of involvement of young people as perpetrators of unlawfulness in the country (Samara, 2011). Additionally, it

implicates failure in the development of capabilities of children, thus making them vulnerable to the risk factors connected to offending behaviour.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Youth offending behavior constitutes social problems for it has negative effects on social and economic development (Davids et. al, 2009). One of the effects of this can be the loss of potentially productive citizens, resulting from young people not reforming from law-breaking and on later engaging in trans-national undertakings of law-breaking. Youth offending behaviour can also result in the loss of lives, damage to or loss of properties, as well as destruction of social structure. Samara, (2011) argues that local urban planners and renewal authorities often allude to law-breaking, especially by the youth, as the primary obstacle to urban refurbishment. Thus, development is affected because government and societies incur the costs and damages resulting from youth offending behavior. Youth offending behaviour has been extensively studied as observed in various reports and insights, such as the work of Benzuidenhout and Joubert(2003); "*Child and youth misbehaviour in South Africa. A holistic view*". Considering the diverse literature on youth offending behavior, the researcher felt there is a need to explore and understand the risk factors associated with youth offending behavior from young people's viewpoint, especially those that are in the processes of reforming. The researcher considered the topic to be worth studying because youth offending behaviour affects children's abilities to develop and pursue opportunities that would enable them to achieve their goals, and contribute productively to their country's development.

1.4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale of this study emanates from the researcher's undertakings as a student in Social Development. Social Development is understood by the researcher as a process of change in the lives of people resulting from their interaction with other individuals, institutions, and social customs. Davids et al (2009) affirm this view by saying that development is primarily about people, and changes in their lives. Some changes, however, become problems and make people vulnerable while other changes improve people's lives. Examples of vulnerabilities include unlawfulness by young people, and this is what the researcher is interested in. In pursuit of knowledge on the said

challenge of development, the researcher analysed the Child Justice Act 75 (2008) as an assignment in one of her courses. She has always wanted to discover the factors that lead to youth offending behaviour in South Africa. This is because she is of the view that the existing interventions address the problem from an irrelevant perspective. This being the result of interventions which have been copied from the developed countries. Moreover, the researcher thinks that the interventions are unproductive because youth offending is escalating in the country. The outset of youth offending behaviour has always aroused her curiosity; hence she is undertaking a study in the risk factors that are associated with youth offending as partial fulfilment of her Masters degree in Social Development. In the study, risk factors associated with youth offending are explored, so that new approaches to prevent youth offending in South Africa are developed.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is hoped that the outcome of this study will contribute ideas to knowledge vis-à-vis the use of effective strategies in preventing youth offending. The recommendations of this study will inform stake holders in policy making, of the establishment of relevant measures that target the inception of youth offending behaviour in South Africa. The information obtained will also help to inspire partnerships between stakeholders, by way of encouraging school based police services as well as social workers who work from schools. It will also encourage holistic and primary prevention strategies for preventing youth offending. Furthermore, this study will help stakeholders come up with relevant strategies of inclusion in addressing the issue of overall correlates of youth offending. Finally, it will also be beneficial in enhancing existing protective factors that inspire resilience among the youth.

1.6 TOPIC FORMULATION

The topic of this study is “**Exploring the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour in Cape Town**”. It explains the research problem, and also explores new knowledge on early prevention of the risk factors that lead to youth offending. This area of research has not been extensively addressed in Cape Town, a metropolitan and renowned tourist attraction precinct in the Western Cape.

1.7 RESEARCH FOCUS

The focus of this study arises from its purpose, which is to explore the risk factors that are associated with youth offending behaviour in the Cape Town. The study age group is that of the youth aged between 14 and 24 years. This is because they constitute the largest segment of the population in the country; hence they are the most vulnerable group with regard to offending behaviour (Holtzhausen, 2012).

1.8 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the individual risk factors that are associated with offending behaviour amongst youth?
2. What are the peer related risk factors that inspire offending behaviour amongst youth?
3. Which family factors are allied to offending behaviour amongst the youth?
4. Which community and structural risk factors are connected to youth offending behaviour?
5. Which school factors are associated with youth offending behaviour?
6. What support systems are available to help the youth become resilient to the risk factors associated with offending behaviour?
7. What are the youth's perceptions of the preventive measures that are put in place to reduce the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour?

1.9 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this study are related to the research problem. They seek to uncover the risk factors that are associated with youth offending behaviour, according to the insights of young people who have had comparable experiences as offenders. They are as follows:

1. To explore the individual risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour.
2. To discover peer related risk factors which inspire offending behaviour amongst the youth.
3. To ascertain family factors which are allied with offending behaviour amongst the youth.
4. To scrutinize the risk factors which are connected to youth offending behaviour with regard to community and structural conditions.
5. To examine school factors which are linked to youth offending behaviour.
6. To identify support systems that help the youth to become resilient to the risk factors associated with offending behaviour.
7. To discover the youth's perceptions of the measures that are put in place to reduce the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour.

1.10 UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

This study is predicated on the following assumptions:

1. Young people may be influenced to engage in offending behaviour by risky socio-economic conditions stemming from individual, family, peer, community and school factors, which deprive them of their abilities to achieve their goals.
2. The risk factors associated with youth offending have connections with structural conditions prevalent in the country.
3. Young people may not have enough support structures to enhance their resilience to risk factors associated with offending behaviour.
5. Preventive measures may be inadequate and may fail to address youth offending behaviour.

1.11 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The following concepts have been clarified according to how they are used in this study:

- **Youth**

The United Nations (UN) defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years (The World Programme of Action for Youth, 1997). On the other hand, the South African constitution recognizes the youth as people of all ages between 14 and 35 (Child Justice Act No. 75, 2008 cited in Holtzhausen, 2012). The definitions above are broad; since they are inclusive of all age groups of young people, including the young adults. In this study youth is used to refer to young persons of ages 14 to 18 - the school going age group, which still falls under the youth group as defined by the South African constitution.

- **Youth offending**

Youth offending is understood by the researcher as the offences or misconducts and violations of legal standards by young people. It means any form of youth conduct that is illegal and, therefore, punishable by the law (Benzuidenhout and Joubert, 2003). Youth offending will be used interchangeably with unlawfulness of the youth to refer to socially disruptive and illegal actions by the youth.

- **Risk factors**

Bartol and Bartol (2009) describe risk factors as involvements and encouragements, either external or internal, which capitalize on the tendency to go against acceptable conducts in societies. Based on this definition, risk factors shall be used in this study to refer to those occurrences and experiences that influence the youth to engage in unlawful activities. In the absence of protective factors, the aforementioned risk factors can result in disruptions of the socio-economic systems affecting the whole society (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). Below are the risk factors that are associated with youth offending behavior, these include: individual, family, school, peers as well as community risk factors (Holtzhausen, 2012). Support systems that inspire resilience and preventive measures are also clarified because their deficiencies make the youth

vulnerable to the risk factors associated with offending behaviour (Holtzhausen, 2012).

- **Individual risk factors**

The researcher perceives individual risk factors as personal arrogances and weaknesses that make young people inclined to offending behaviour. In this study, individual risk factors are clarified according to the how they are understood by the researcher. They include substance abuse, maleness, aggression and hyperactivity (Holtzhausen, 2012). This group of risk factors is closely connected to peer and family risk factors (Souden, 2007).

- **Peer risk factors**

Peer pressure and association with friends who are involved in unlawfulness and substance abuse can be a risk factor to offending behaviour (Shader, 2000; Souden, 2007). In this study, the researcher used peer risk factors because she believes anti-social friends and peer pressure play a significant role in influencing the choices of adolescents.

- **Family risk factors**

Family risk factors are negative influences from within a family, which often inspire offending behaviour among the youth (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). The family is the first agent of socialization. Accordingly, family-related issues are also major risk factors leading to youth offending behaviour (Holtzhausen, 2012). These issues may include absolute poverty, neglect and abuse (physical, psychological, and emotional), ongoing parental conflict, and lack of proper parental supervision (Souden, 2007). When parents do not show respect for social norms and laws, their children are also likely to develop similar thinking and behaviour (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). In addition, attachment between children and parents matters a lot. Children who have weak attachment to their parents often end up developing delinquent behavior (Souden, 2007).

- **School risk factors**

These factors are understood as negative school experiences and academic failure. School risk factors are used in the study because they can discourage young people from achieving their desired goals, and eventually engage in offending activities (Shader, 2000). These factors include: poor academic performance, truancy, bullying and school disorganization (Holtzhausen, 2012). Lack of parental support in educational matters that affect children can also discourage children from following their dreams in education (Souden, 2007).

- **Community risk factors**

The researcher witnessed disorganization and socio-economic adversities in the community where she found the participants of this study. These conditions included numerous beer halls adjacent to homes, disadvantaged neighbourhoods (shortage of social services), availability of drugs, population explosion and disparities. The researcher considered such conditions as risk factors for the youth. Community risk factors are referred to in this study because they are seen as environments that inspire the youth to engage in offending behaviour. They are seen to be linked to structural conditions. The researcher understands structural conditions as socio-political and economic structures of power. These control the extent of people's participation and inclusion in the mainstream development. They are used in this study because they have external links to youth offending behaviour.

- **Prevention**

Prevention refers to actions, programmes and interventions that prevent an individual from engaging in illegal actions (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). The focus is on addressing the social and environmental factors that may influence young people to commit offences and possibly become persistent offenders later on. In this study, prevention is used because it eliminates the risk factors and bestows capabilities on young people. The researcher understands prevention of youth offending behaviour as the unleashing of the youth's capabilities in order for them to become what they best can be.

- **Support factors**

These are inspirational factors that strengthen people to survive the risk factors that are present in their immediate environments. These are also known as protective factors (Holtzhausen, 2012). They counteract the risk factors as they help children to resist temptations to get involved in offending (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). In this study, support factors refer to the conditions that are present in the children's social environments, which incline them to resist offending conduct and substance abuse. They are used in this research since they constitute measures that can be applied to prevent offending from a social development perspective.

- **Resilience**

Resilience is the ability to survive risk factors and resist challenges (Bartol&Bartol, 2009). It is inspired by variables like socio-economic wellbeing, social competence, good academic performance, parental support as well as protective factors (Souden, 2007). In this study, resilience is used to refer to young people's independent and reinforced ability to resist and survive conditions that are associated with offending behaviour. Resilience is used in this study because it can direct preventive interventions in high risk situations.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In every research, ethics are important for purposes of guidance to safeguard the interests of participants. They are principles by which researchers are bound by in order to evaluate their conduct. They are also useful in avoiding any form of emotional damage, or threat to participants' lives (De Vos et al, 2011). In this research, the following ethical considerations, as suggested by Babbie, and Mouton (2007), and De Vos et al (2011) were looked into, taking into account the interests of both the researcher and the participants.

1.12.1 Debriefing of the respondents

This means a sitting after the study, where the participant and the researcher work through their experiences of the study and its consequences. The researcher ensured that she reviewed the sessions with the participants, who were also asked to air out their views about the interviews. Sessions of this nature are effective means of

curbing possible emotional damage that might have happened, in spite of the precautionary measures adopted by the researcher. Furthermore, debriefing offers an opportunity for the researcher to correct any misunderstanding that might have occurred with the participants after the study (De Vos et al, 2011).

1.12.2 Deception of subjects

Deception is the deliberate misrepresentation of facts in order to make another person believe what is not true, thereby violating the respect to which every person is eligible to (Loewenberg and Dolgoff, 1988, in De Vos et al, 2011, Babbie, and Mouton 2007). The essential information about this study was shared with the participants. They were not promised anything to disguise the actual purpose of the study. There was neither deliberate nor accidental deception in collecting data for the study.

1.12.3 Violation of privacy

De Vos et al (2011) contend that violation of privacy, the right to self-determination and confidentiality are comparable. Privacy in the setting of this study would mean personal privacy, while confidentiality means handling of information in a secretive manner. The privacy of participants can be harmed by hidden voice recorders. There were no hidden devices during the interviews. The information that the participants shared with the researcher was not shared with other people, including their parents and the administrators of Realistic. This was emphasized to the participants before the start of the interviews. The participants remained anonymous; their names were not revealed when writing the transcriptions and in the write up results of the study. By doing this, the researcher ensured compliance with the principles of confidentiality enshrined in the Social Sciences research guidelines of the University of Cape Town.

1.12.4 Actions and competences of researcher

The actions and competence of the researcher mean that they have moral obligations to ensure proficiency to avoid being judgmental in undertaking research, especially in dealing with a sensitive topic (De Vos et al, 20011). The topic of this study is highly sensitive as youth offending is denounced by societies across the world; hence the participants are bound to feel judged. This required objectivity of the researcher in

order to achieve the specified objectives. She proved competence and showed ability in identifying ethical issues before hand. She also showed an understanding of basic ethical concepts such as justice, virtue, human rights, and respect for individual autonomy. In addition, the participants were not compelled to participate in the study. The researcher's competence enabled her to be sensitive to cultural boundaries, as well as to understand the full spectrum of determinants of youth offending and the meaning of social and cultural influence on the participants' behaviors.

1.12.5 Avoidance of harm to the respondents

De Vos et al, (2011) caution that through a scientific investigation, subjects can be harmed physically or emotionally. In social sciences the harm is said to be mainly emotional (De Vos et al, 2011). To avoid this kind of harm, the researcher did not impose any authority on the participants to participate in the study. The participants' point of view and their choices were respected. In cases where some questions were perceived to be sensitive by the participants, they were told that they were free not to answer. Babbie and Mouton (2007) maintain that avoidance of harm is the basic rule in social research, so much that the possible risks must be weighed against the benefits of the study. This means respecting privacy of the subjects, maintaining confidentiality and collecting information unanimously. The researcher followed these guidelines in order to avoid harm to the respondents.

1.12.6 Informed Consent

Informed consent means providing information about the real purpose of study to the participants or their legal representatives, in order to ensure that they understand the study, and decide whether they want to participate or not (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Concerning this, the researcher communicated the purpose of the study to the administrators of the organization, participants and their care givers. Firstly, permission to interview the youth ex-offenders was sought from the administrators of Realistic. Permission was granted, and then the tutor and the staff members of the centre were contacted and requested for permission to conduct the interviews, to which they agreed. The parents of the participants were contacted through the "Memorandum of Understanding", and they all agreed and signed for their children to be interviewed. Before the interviews, the researcher explained, once more, the goal

of the study, the nature of the research, and the credibility of the research to the participants. The procedures which would be followed during the study and the possible advantages and disadvantages were also explained.

1.13 REFLEXIVITY

De Vos et al., (2011) argue that reflexivity entails the ability to be aware of one's own and the participants' subjectivity, and being conscious of one's influence in the interviewing process. Taking this explanation into consideration, the researcher was aware of the sensitivity of the topic. She was, therefore, conscious about issues regarding how she would be received, lack of cooperation and suspicions about the research motives. As a social being, she was mindful of the mindsets of reforming youth offenders and substance abuse former addicts, concerning lack of sensibleness, and lack of accountability. She remained objective and avoided being judgmental. Accordingly, the participants were willing to share their experiences with the researcher. The participants were mannerly around the researcher, except for a comparable dodgy look on their faces. Such exceptional looks were anticipated for from younger individuals with a history of offending. She used her tactics of acceptance and sociability, as she saw from the administrators. The researcher was also expecting to find chronic offenders, and precisely, majority of the participants were recovering from chronic offending. The next section provides a layout of the presentation of the research report.

1.14 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

This research report consists of five chapters, which are arranged as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction to the study

The first chapter introduces the research problem with an overview and the background of the study. The rationale, significance of the study, and topic formulation follow. These are followed by the research questions and objectives, the clarification of concepts and ethical considerations. The chapter is concluded by reflexivity and a summary.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter two includes relevant scholarship that relates to the risk factors of youth offending, as well as the study's theoretical and conceptual framework. These are presented in a critical manner to allow for comparisons and contrasts. The chapter is placed on broader themes including: the risk factors that result in youth offending, protective factors which make the youth resist offending behavior; types of youth offending, prevention of youth offending, correlates of youth offending and the capability approach.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology of the study; it contains the research design or framework, sampling techniques, data collection and analysis methods. The limitations of the study are also outlined in this chapter.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of data. The sections are as follows: Profiles of the recruitment venue, Profiles of the participants, and the Framework for analysis. The discussion of the findings is grouped under broader themes, categories and sub-categories as per the objectives of the study.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents the summary of the findings and conclusions of the study, in relation to the research objectives. The recommendations for strategies and policies which can prevent youth offending are also outlined.

1.15 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the research problem, by way of describing the study as focusing on exploring the risk factors that influence offending behavior among the youth in Cape Town. The research problem was also presented, with an outline of the background of youth offending behavior. The rationale and significance of undertaking the study were stated after the background. The research objectives and questions were outlined and the key concepts were clarified and ethical considerations

were discussed. In the next chapter, the focus shall be on the literature review, where the discussion will cover the views of different scholars with regard to the offending behavior among the youth.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the risk factors that are associated with offending behavior among the youth. The motive was to investigate personal, family, peer, school and community influences that inspire young people to engage in unlawful activities. In exploring the aforesaid risk factors, it is necessary that different scholarly works related to the topic be reviewed, so as to find a theoretical standpoint for the study. The literature used in this study is organized into sections which align with the objectives of the study. The sections include topics such as: theoretical and conceptual frameworks, risk factors, factors that enhance resilience to offending behaviour, measures that are put in place to prevent youth offending, as well as the structural conditions that are associated with youth offending behaviour. The objective for this review is to discover possible gaps in the current interventions, with a view of making suggestions for early prevention and capability enhancement. The first section locates the research questions within relevant theoretical perspectives and conceptual models. This is done in order to explain the research problem.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

According to Hennink et al (2011), a theoretical framework serves as a structure that holds theories and models together to guide a study, and introduce interrelated variables that explain the research problem. This means it brings together the pre-conceived ideas and other scholarly works which are related to the research problem. Taking this explanation into consideration, the framework used in this study is a combination of interrelated theories of learning, which are applicable to acquisition of offending behaviour by the youth. They include: Social Learning Theory, Differential Association Theory and the Social Control Theory (Huang et al, 2001). The theories are intertwined in the Social Development Model (SDM), to show how young people acquire offending behaviour from their social backgrounds (Huang et al, 2001). The section below discusses the Social Learning theory.

2.2.1 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory (SLT) is used in this study because it explains how children learn, as exemplary, the behaviour of their role models (Savage, 2009). The theory is related to the objectives of this study as it explains how the individual, family, school, peers and community can inspire offending behaviour among the youth. The explanation is necessary, therefore, in identifying the origins of unlawfulness among the youth so as to inform relevant capability enhancement and early prevention strategies and programmes. The theory explains that behavior is learned and sustained through responsiveness, memorizing and motivation (Marsh, 2006). This means young people learn and model either constructive or destructive conducts from trusted people (Huang et al, 2001; Marsh, 2006). The implication (of the theory) can be explained by saying that cognitive and moral development of children is predominantly reliant on their social backgrounds. In addition, social factors are dominant in child development, and others like biological variables are conditioned by social factors to predict certain forms of behavior (Savage, 2009). Accordingly, offending behaviour among the youth is understood to be the outcome of ways of socialization of children in societies; hence prevention should target agents of socialization such as the family, community, school and youth social groups.

SLT can be applauded for emphasizing the role of social variables, such as the family, community, peers, school and community in the construction or destruction of children's abilities and behaviour (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). The aforesaid relationship of behavior and social background, therefore, has implications for youth offending behavior. It means that children can develop offending behaviour because they see and value certain forms of conduct that are practiced by their role models (Huang et al, 2001). This highlights the significance of Social of Development; it calls for efficiency in social service delivery systems in South African urban societies.

Nevertheless, the SLT is not without weaknesses, Firstly, it tends to make generalizations about the acquisition of behaviour as if learning cuts across societies in a uniform manner (Marsh, 2006). The theory overlooks the fact that different societies have different conditions which inspire the learning of behaviour among children. Thus, acquisition and learning of behaviour among children cannot always

be vested in their social backgrounds. In corroboration, Marsh (2006) argues that SLT does not take into account individuality, context, and experience as mediating factors in the processes of learning. This means offending behaviour emanates from a combination of different factors which can be context specific.

2.2.2 Social Control Theory

The Social Control Theory is used in this research, as it is understood to be a supplement to support factors. The theory answers the objective of the study which seeks to identify support structures that help the youth build resilience to the risk factors that are associated with youth offending behaviour. The theory explains prevention of deviant conduct among the youth in terms of early supervision, control and setting of social standards of children's behavior, by social support structures like the immediate family, personal control, and the society (Huang, et al, 2001). Legal institutions and societies also have the responsibility of providing values and support for young people to overcome any form of influence from the risk factors that lead to offending behavior (Marsh et al, 2006; Mcurtry and Curling, 2008). The theory stresses social union by control agents, and commitment to social values and norms by youngsters to build resilience (Huang et al, 2001). A lack of commitment on the side of children can encourage youth offending, especially if it happens earlier in childhood (Marsh et al, 2006; Mcurtry and Curling, 2008). The implication is that in South Africa, the existing interventions that are meant to reduce youth offending behaviour are not unified. This can inform policy makers to identify the gaps in preventive interventions, as well as inspire development of strategies that use social learning variables to change behavior of the children as early as pre-school age (Mcurtry and Curling, 2008).

The theory also informs stake holders in child development to develop strategies that take into account social learning variables to change behavior at a pre-delinquency stage, before damage can be done. The idea behind early intervention programs is to provide positive experiences that can complement individual protective factors against youth offending (Mcurtry and Curling, 2008). On the contrary, the use of control sometimes implies that punishment can, as well, be regarded as an act of demotivation and abuse (Marsh, 2006). Control should be exercised with care so that it does not

become a risk factor by restraining children and excluding them from their own development.

2.2.3 Differential Association Theory

The theory of Differential Association is also suitable in answering the objectives of this study, as it explains the role of peer pressure in influencing criminal behavior among children (Sutherland, 1974; in Marsh et al, 2006). It stipulates that offending behavior is learned from association with people of deviant conduct – predominantly the closest and intimate people like friends and in some cases family members – through interaction and either verbal or non-verbal communication with such people (Huang et al, 2001; Bartol and Bartol, 2009). The theory asserts that there is the possibility that children with delinquent peers will end up becoming delinquent themselves (Sutherland, 1974, in Marsh, et al 2006). Young people are more likely to become delinquents if they are exposed to risky environments and people that are prone to getting in conflict with the law as opposed to those who are not (Finlay, 2009; Holtzhausen, 2012). Accordingly, it disproves the conception of the biological theories, which see criminal behavior as innate (Holtzhausen, 2012). The theory corroborates the conception of the sub-culture of violence as a major influence of offending behavior among young people (Marsh, 2006).

In Cape Town, the theory can be used in explaining the influence of anti-social peer groups and learning of offending behaviour skills by youngsters, because there is a subculture of anti-social peer groups, which eventually instills and normalizes offending behaviour among the youth (Holtzhausen, 2012; City of Cape Town report, 2009). Moreover, the theory is seen as applicable in Africa and it, therefore, establishes the validity of this study with a case study outlined below.

A study was done in 2009 at a juvenile detention center, the Ghana Borstal Institute (Finlay, 2009). The objective was to examine the role of peer influence as a risk factor to youth offending. The sample was a group of young offenders in the institution. The outcome suggested, among others, that youngsters who have anti-social friends demonstrate high levels of misconduct and recurrent offending records, than those who had the least associations with anti-social friends (Finlay, 2009). Moreover,

conversations of antisocial peer groups revolve more around unlawful acts and skills, than in sport, school and educational achievements (Finlay, 2009). The above case study supports Differential Association Theory that peer pressure influences offending behaviour among the youth.

2.2.4 Social Development Model

The above mentioned theories are corroborated by the Social Development Model which explains offensive human behavior in terms of learning and influences from developmental relationships with the risk factors (Huang et al, 2001; Cohen, 2008). According to Huang (2001), the model integrates three theories namely: Differential Association Theory, the Social Learning Theory and the Social Control Theory to shed light on the effects of social agents in pro-social and anti-social conducts. These theories contend that there are varied social factors such as the individual self, the family, the school, the peers and the community at large, which can combine or independently contribute to drug abuse, violence and delinquency (Cohen, 2008; Bartol and Bartol, 2009).

The Social Development Model highlights two passages for the development of youth delinquency: the pro-social and anti-social pathways (Cohen, 2008; Holtzhausen, 2012). It combines social conditions and involvements that influence criminal behavior, together with people's abilities and experiences which prevent behavior through interaction and opportunities in a model (Huang et al, 2001). The socializing processes eventually result in the child learning socially acceptable or antisocial behavioural patterns (Cohen, 2008). A socializing process that culminates in socially acceptable behavioural patterns develops along the following path: a child perceives opportunities for positive interactions; the child participates in pro-social interactions and understands that he or she is positively rewarded for his or her participation; the child develops emotional, cognitive, and behavioral skills that allow him or her to earn, perceive and experience positive reinforcement (Huang et al, 2001). The socially acceptable paths and the skills that it leads to, thus, culminate acceptable social behaviour. A child who has experienced such a socialization process will have internalized society's standards for normal behavior, and will believe in the rightness of society's laws and rules. The child will grow into a law-abiding citizen, whose

beliefs inhibit him or her from participating in anti-social behavior (Catalano et al, 1996, in Cohen, 2008).

The SDM predicts that the path to antisocial behavior has three elements: A child perceives a reward for antisocial behavior; the child becomes bonded to persons, groups, or institutions that participate in antisocial behavior, and the child develops beliefs in antisocial values (Huang et al, 2001). The more the child has bonded to antisocial units, the more committed the child becomes to offending behaviour and anti-social values. The child often knows that this standard varies from society's normative rules of conduct, and rationalizes this difference by thinking of the antisocial standard as either an alternative to society's rules or as a code that supersedes society's rules (Catalano et al., 1996, in Cohen, 2008)). It is noteworthy, however, that a child may experience elements from both of these paths.

The elements from the first, path become support factors, while those from the second, antisocial path become risk factors (Cohen, 2008). When support factors outweigh risk factors, the child will have a pro-social orientation, and, when the risk factors outweigh protective factors, the child will have an antisocial orientation. Secondly, most children who commit delinquent behaviors tend to commit to more than one offence. A child or young person who engages in truancy, for example, is likely to engage in vandalism or substance abuse as well. Moreover, such children are at a higher risk for developing school-related problems (Catalano et al, 1996, in Cohen, 2008).

SDM is important in this study because it traces the roots of anti-social tendencies, the roots that manifest in various delinquent activities (Cohen, 2008). It, therefore, offers the possibility of predicting which youths are at risk of becoming chronic offenders before they even commit their first offence (Cohen, 2008). Valuable prevention and intervention resources, therefore, could be used to prevent these particular children from beginning to participate in delinquent activities, or to prevent them from escalating their involvement in these activities if they have already begun to participate in them (Ayers et al., 1999 in Cohen, 2008, Huang et al 2001). These suggest that the most effective way to deal with children who have offending

behaviour problems is to target general anti-social attitudes. However, there is need to enhance capabilities of children from a young age, and the importance of this shall be discussed below, in Sen's Capability Approach.

2.2.5 Sen's Capability approach

In diminishing the risk factors that are associated with offending behaviour among the youth, it is advisable to follow the capability enhancement approach, in order to remove vulnerabilities in the lives of young people. The capability approach (CA) is Amartya Sen's idea of enhancement of human abilities, and removal of those conditions that make life unbearable (Sen, 1999). The CA is used in this study since it advocates for diverse freedoms which help to advance capabilities of human beings. It is therefore seen as applicable in lobbying for prevention of youth offending, through considering children as capable agents of change and active participants in society. This means removing socio-economic conditions that can become barriers, or can advance risk factors for youth offending behaviour.

Development according to Sen (1999) should be a process of expanding the freedoms that are enjoyed by the members of society. The freedoms include: political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security (Sen, 1999 cited in McGreor, 2010). These freedoms also depend on other factors such as social and economic provision of facilities for education and healthcare, as well as political and civil rights. The capabilities help one to do some basic things that are necessary for survival and help one to escape poverty (Sen, 1999). A shortage of functional freedoms relates directly to poverty, which robs people of the freedom to satisfy hunger, to obtain remedies for treatable illnesses, or opportunity to be adequately clothed or sheltered, or enjoy clean water and sanitary facilities (Sen, 1999). The idea is that provision of resources act as support factors, from early stages of childhood. The said resources are essential in enhancing capabilities of children, and their well-being can impact positively on many phases of future (Comim et al, 2011). The government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), communities and families are, therefore, perceived to be accountable in providing support and resources for young people. However, this support can be weakened by the risky environments that make young people vulnerable to unlawfulness (Comim et al, 2011). The failure

of families, government and communities to enhance capabilities of young people results in the advancement of undesirable social capital, and makes young people vulnerable to the risk factors of unlawfulness (Comim et al, 2011).

2.3 INTEGRATION OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The diagram below is a representation of the synthesis of theoretical frameworks implemented by the researcher to describe the risk factors associated with youth offending behavior.

Figure 1. Integration of Theoretical Frameworks

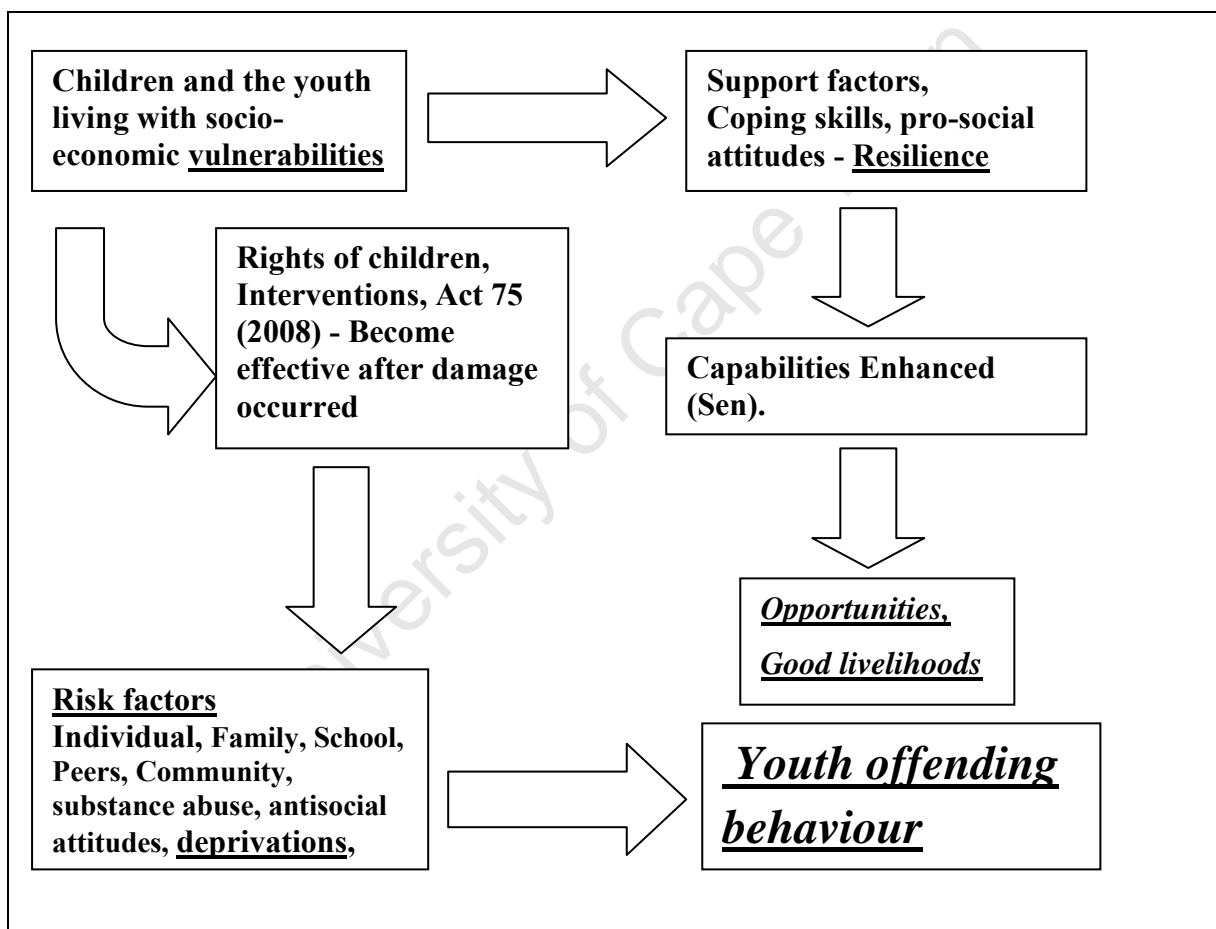


Figure 1 illustrates an integration of the theoretical basis for this study. It reflects the conditions of South African children. The children's capabilities to pursue opportunities that fulfill their goals as productive citizens are released by way of providing necessary support and resources from the outset of their livelihood. Thus, the availability of protective factors assists young people to develop coping skills and intolerance to anti-social attitudes. However, in the absence of such protective factors

the youth become susceptible to risk factors that result in offending behaviour. As a result, there are policy interventions and strategies that are put in place to address youth offending behaviour. These advocate for the rights of children and they are more curative than preventive. They become risk factors because they come into place when damage has already occurred. There is, therefore, need for the government to advance the strategies with a more preventive approach, through enhancement of capabilities of children. These will diminish youth offending behaviour that results from the conditions that shall be discussed below.

2.4 YOUTH OFFENDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Youth Offending behavior is an indefinite, imprecise, legal and social label for several norm-violating behaviors by the youngsters, or minors, and all persons younger than 18 years (Benzuidenhout and Joubert, 2003). It can also be used to mean offending by youngsters or when minors engage in unlawful activities. It is a social, economic and juristic problem, and is strongly affiliated to other social ills like exclusion, poverty, unemployment, violence, substance abuse, schools dropout anti-social peer groups (Holtzhausen, 2012).

South Africa has typically a youthful population (Holtzhausen, 2012). This population group is vulnerable to violence and unlawfulness. Various explanations have been offered as to why South African youth are excessively involved in offending and violence, both as victims and as perpetrators. Such explanations are inclusive of South Africa's past, especially the apartheid era (Holtzhausen, 2012). These include high levels of political and other forms of violence to which children and young people were exposed to as a response to the former national government's discriminatory rule, the disintegration of families and communities under apartheid, and the current high levels of unemployment and poverty (Holtzhausen, 2012). Below here is an outline of the circumstances behind youth unlawfulness in the country.

2.4.1 Background

Youth offending is on the rise in the country (Benzuidenhout and Joubert, 2003). What distinguishes South Africa from other countries is the violent nature of unlawfulness, especially by the young people (Breetzke, 2010). These conditions are perceived as a malfunction of the development and reproduction of a culture of violence and offending amongst the socially excluded youth, who constitute a significant proportion of South Africa's population (Pelser, 2008). Moreover, some scholars have suggested that the process of urbanization, the breakdown of tribal life and of family ties, were the origins of the above-mentioned conditions affecting the youth (Holtzhausen, 2012). It is thus considered that colonial, post-colonial, apartheid and democratic policies towards the youth and the children are a central part of the problem of youth offending (Samara, 2011). The majority of policy makers fail to understand that the greatest number of service users, clients, customers and participants in the South African society are children or youth, and services must be focused towards their needs as a priority.

The above said lack of understanding has been displayed by many government departments which have identified youth-at-risk of offending, or out-of-school youth, as target groups in their policy documents. They nevertheless have also failed to propose ways of addressing their needs (Everatt, 2000). The resources meant to work with youth-at-risk have not been allocated and exceedingly few programmes have been initiated for this target group. This has been called the period of "disillusionment and missed opportunities" in the lives of South African youth (Everatt, 2000:6). In June 1996, the National Youth Commission was established. This way the first significant indication that youth was a priority for the South African government. The Commission has been tasked with developing a National Youth Policy (Samara, 2011).

Typically, however, the policy implemented for young people has tended to focus on single issues such as crime or HIV and sexuality (Everatt, 2000). The programmes initiated to address these issues tend to concentrate on being highly visible rather than effecting long-term behavioral change. Research has shown that "information campaigns" do not change people's patterns of sexual behaviour or attitude towards AIDS (Everatt, 2000). The same can be said for youth offending behaviour. If youth

programmes are to be effective, they must address the educational, economic and psycho-social needs of young people from a pre-school age. Because young people have been steadily disadvantaged and deprived by government policies, only programmes which understand the need for structural changes in young people's lives can prosper (Samara, 2011).

From the background outlined above, it is perceived that young people are uncertainly alienated from their own development. Their needs remain unmet, and they live in social disorganization and with significant socio-economic deprivations. Breetzke, (2010) argues that social disorganization is a comparative state where features of inadequacy are taken by promoters of the dominant morality, such as antisocial peer groups, to indicate a risky society. This means the youth live under risky environments and, therefore, denied opportunities such as education and employment. Many youth are perceived as a local burden or problem; hence they resort to desperate means of survival, inclusive of unlawfulness and environmental harm. Below is further discussion of the contributory factors to offending behaviour by youngsters.

2.4.2 Gender and youth offending

The objectives of this study seek to uncover the individual risk factors associated with youth offending. It is, therefore, important to describe the relationship between gender and youth offending because offending behaviour is perceived as a male enterprise (Shader, 2000). Socialization of male and female children in communities constructs different propensities that can become risk factors for boys (Savage, 2009). The boys are harsh, dominant and brave, as a way of portraying their male gender. Even when contextual risk factors are shared by both male and female youth, the reactions of female lawbreakers to the risks tend to differ from those of their male counterparts (Savage, 2009). This means masculinity is a risk factor associated with youth offending behaviour, while femininity acts as a protective factor. This explains why the majority of offenders are males as compared to females. Thus, prevention strategies should target high risk groups like males.

2.4.3 Race and youth offending

In exploring the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour in Cape Town, it is important that race and youth offending behaviour be reviewed. This is because the majority of offenders are African youth, and this fact could have structural implications for social development. The majority of African youth are trapped in perpetual circle of social vulnerabilities, more than the youth of other races. It was observed that: *“Though the relation between youth offending behaviour and race is complex and may be explained by other contextual risk variables, the total arrest rate for black youths is more than those of other races in South Africa”* (City of Cape Town report, 2009: 105). This means the African and Coloured youth have the propensity to commit offences, more than white teens. With regard to this view, however, it is important to keep in mind that poverty, or low socio-economic status of communities is a predictor of low parental monitoring, harsh parenting, and association with deviant peer groups. All of which are in turn associated with juvenile offending. The majority of adolescents who live in poverty are Africans and Coloured.

2.4.4 Age and youth offending

The relationship between age and offending behaviour is worth clarifying since the majority of offenders are the youth in South Africa, as in the rest of the world. In relation to this view, Holtzhausen, (2012) argues that the highest number of arrests of offenders occurs at adolescence. Young people are involved in a high proportion of offences ranging from property offenses, theft, burglary, and drug abuse. This is because, it is at this time that peer influence and desire for friendship are stronger (Shader, 2000). The above observation is a universal phenomenon, and the ages of the majority offenders are typically around the early teens (Samara, 2011). The age-crime curve also represents most offenders as youth, who have tendencies of opting out of unlawfulness as they grow older (Blumstein, 1995; in Holtzhausen, 2012). This is also why most of the literature refers to youth between the ages of 15-24 being particularly at risk of offending. Poverty and other social deprivations found in communities also affect the youth more than other groups in the population, thereby making them susceptible to offending behaviour.

2.5 THE RISK FACTORS THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH OFFENDING BEHAVIOR AMONG THE YOUTH

These are factors and negative experiences that incline antisocial behavior, hence offending behaviour. In the absence of support factors, these can result in disruptions of the socio-economic systems thereby affecting the whole society (Holtzhausen, 2012). There are a number of risk factors that can influence unlawfulness among the youth. These include individual, family, school, peer and community factors (Shader, 2000, O'mahony, 2009). Protective factors have also been identified, and most notably include high IQ, being female, positive social orientations, good coping skills, and supportive family and community relationships. In addition to the risk factors identified, the absence of care givers also places young people at risk for developing unlawfulness (Johnson, 1996). Below is an outline of the risk factors.

2.5.1. Individual risk factors

The risk factors at an individual level are explained in order to understand personal problems that effect youth offending behaviour. The risk factors include several forms of anti-social behaviour and alienation, offending beliefs, direct and indirect involvement in anti-social behaviour and substance abuse (Marsh, 2006). Moreover, life stressors, mental disorders and conduct disorders resulting from victimization and exposure to violence compel the youth to engage in unlawfulness (Holtzhausen, 2012). Apart from these, cognitive and nervous deficits, or low intelligence quotient and hyperactivity, are also said to be influential as individual risk factors to youth offending behaviour (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). Marsh et al, 2006 explain the relationship between level of intellect and offending behavior as closely linked. The link is proven by the fact that majority of youngsters of low intellectual ability are more likely to be caught when committing offences. The way they evaluate and select unlawfulness is said to be unsuccessful most of the time. They also readily tend to admit to committing crime during interrogations, individual self-report measures and police self-evaluation reports. This is because they do not understand the charges pressed against them (Marsh et al, 2006). The low level of intelligence, especially nonverbal intelligence is typically characterized by the recidivism in young offenders (Souden, 2007). It is however not the only risk factor associated with youth offending

behaviour, it combines with other risk factors like the home, peer, school and community factors which shall be discussed below.

2.5.2 The family

It is worth describing how the family inspires unlawfulness in young people because children learn and value what they live. The family is also the first agent of socialization; hence the attitudes, values and aspirations in the family are reflected in children (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). The households of the young offenders, therefore, constitute the risk factors to offending behaviour. Youth offenders are often reported to have witnessed a violent interpersonal dispute in their homes, by of their siblings or parents and care-givers (Holtzhausen, 2012). Also, unlawfulness among the youth is learned and adopted from households where family members engage in illicit activities that get them into trouble with the law (Shader, 2000). In addition, families where parents are not close to children and are too strict, often view punishment, instead of guidance, as a means to correct ill-manners (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). In the absence of protective factors such as warm and supportive family relationships with parents and siblings, children can easily develop aggression and later offending behavior (Shader, 2000). Low economic status in families leads to poverty and lack of basic needs among the children (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). Lack of provision and access to basic needs of children is perceived as encouraging youth offending, because children will seek survival strategies outside the acceptable social standards if some of their needs are not met.

2.5.3 School factors

One objective of this study seeks to understand how school factors are associated with unlawfulness among the youth, because the majority of youth offenders are school drop outs, at primary or high school level. There are also a few who quit at tertiary level. Dropping out of school, frequent school transitions, negative labeling by educators and truancy often lead to low academic achievement aspirations and negative attitudes toward school among the children affected (Shader, 2000). These factors lead to lack of educational attainment and skills shortage, and eventually to personal disorder and unemployment (Holtzhausen, 2012). The school risk factors are related to others such as poverty, social disorganization, family factors and absent

care givers. Young people become vulnerable to unlawfulness due to the absence of their commitment to school and the involvement in conventional activities (Shader, 2000). Parents who do not introduce incentives and support at home to make their children love school and develop ambitions in education are also perceived as perpetuating the school risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour.

2.5.4 Peer factors

It is important to discuss how peer pressure influences young people to engage in unlawfulness because their choices are dominated by friendship relations. Association with delinquent and, or aggressive peers, involvement and membership in anti-social peer groups, substance abuse and peer rejection predisposes the youth to unlawfulness (Shader, 2000). Moreover, association with friends who prove to be disrespectful and immodest in behaviour is also a risk factor to youth offending behaviour. To address the problem of peer influence and in order to diminish offending behaviour, there is need for children to be encouraged to avoid anti-social peer groups and friends who do not show interest in school and have no dreams in education (Shader, 2000).

2.5.5 Community factors

It is vital to elucidate how the community factors incline young people to unlawfulness so as to understand the causes of deprivations in the socio-economic backgrounds of the youth. The community is an agent of socialization of children, and therefore has direct association with influencing youth behaviour (Huang et al, 2001). Community insights, characteristics and social practices set the trails of influence for the youth's insights. Community disorganization is also a risk factor. Availability of alcohol and other substance abuse items, firearms and anti-social groups in the community influence offending behaviour among the youth (Holtzhausen, 2012). With regard to economic deprivations, poverty and social exclusion among the youth are resultant in offending behaviour. These are deprivations which show that the governments are failing the people with regard to service delivery. Unlawfulness also increases when the social control that operates through formal institutions (such as the police and judicial systems) and informal institutions, including civil society organizations breaks down or is weakened (Shader, 2000). Inequality also causes unlawfulness among the youth, especially when it coincides with other social factors.

This thinking is based on the notion that individuals or groups are more likely to be harsh and engage in violence, if they perceive a gap between what they have and what they believe they deserve (United Nations, 2006).

2.5.6 Absence of the primary care giver

In answering the objective of this study that seeks to discover the family related risk factors that associated with youth unlawfulness it is important to explain how the absence of primary care givers impact on the lives of children. The care givers in this context refer to the fathers, some of who are absent in the lives of their children. Johnson, (1996) argues that children from families that have no father figure are more likely to experience emotional disorders and depression as compared to father-present households. Such children experience a reduction in comfort, borne by shifting from single parent to two-parent families that have step-fathers and divorced parent (Baydar, 1988 in Johnson, 1996). Moreover, children whose biological fathers are absent have been identified with aggression, emotional, behavioural and academic difficulties, as a reaction to obstructive circumstances in their families (Johnson, 1996). The living conditions of children as mentioned above are traumatic. Children from such conditions are bound to experience poverty and lack of support, and this can hinder the capabilities of children, and make them vulnerable to offending behaviour. The said conditions call for strategizing and preventive measures as shall outlined below.

2.6 PREVENTION OF YOUTH OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR

Prevention of youth offending behaviour is understood by the researcher as comprising of policy interventions actions and programmes that stop young people from committing illegal activities. Since it is one of the main assumptions of this study that preventive measures may be inadequate and failing to diminish youth offending, it is important to explain prevention of youth offending through policy recommendations and programmes, so as to realize the gaps and failures in such interventions. The focus of such interventions is on addressing the social and personal factors that may influence unlawfulness (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). These comprise strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of offending, and potential harmful effects on individuals and society (UNODC, 2012). Prevention of offending behaviour should, therefore, be multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary, and holistic,

because the development of such conducts among the youth is associated with varied factors (UNODC, 2012). Prevention services may include activities such as substance abuse education and treatment, family counseling, youth mentoring, parenting education, educational support, and youth sheltering (Bartol and Bartol, 2009). Such programmes are helpful as they provide parents with facts about their children's development, and guide them on how to support young people in their own development and in pursuit of opportunities. Below are the synopses of policy frameworks which guide the prevention of youth offending behaviour.

2.7 POLICY INTERVENTIONS

While youth offending behaviour is on the rise, the government of the Republic of South Africa has adopted the international frameworks, and designed interventions aimed at diminishing offending behaviour among the youth. These policies are a reflection of collective approaches in preventing youth offending behaviour, at the international, continental, regional, national, provincial and municipal levels. They are functional as guidelines in preventing the said problem and they are outlined below.

2.7.1 International Guidelines

The most recent UN guidelines, the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime -1990, outline four types of approaches to crime prevention. These include; crime prevention through social development, locally based crime prevention, situational crime prevention, and reduction of recidivism (UN, 2008). The prevention of youth crime has been addressed by the United Nations through a set of sixty five recommendations, as a strategy of early deterrence. The recommendations are also known as the Riyardh guidelines, and they were adopted in 1990 (UN, 2008). The Riyardh guidelines emphasize enhancement of the capabilities of young people as a strategy in diminishing youth offending behaviour: *“The successful prevention of juvenile delinquency requires efforts on the part of the entire society to ensure the harmonious development of adolescents, with respect for and promotion of their personality from early childhood”* (UN, 2008: 1). The framework suggests strategies to prevent youth crime with emphasis on the observation that most pathways leading youngsters to offending conduct manifest from as early as the pre-school age in the life of a child. The focus of prevention in this policy is on early risk factors that are

related to youth offending behaviour and chronic behavioral disorders in children. The policy is a broad practical strategy that encompasses varied approaches to prevention of juvenile delinquency for member countries to adopt and device programmes and strategies (UN, 2008). However, member countries like South Africa struggle to diminish youth offending behaviour because of following a more rights based and jurisdiction approach, than early prevention through capability enhancement.

2.7.2 Continental prevention strategies

The African Union (AU) has been excluding children in its obligations and frameworks which address issues of crime prevention and safety in member countries. The only relevant policy in relation to crime prevention is the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention Enforcement Mechanism 2007 – 2012, which was adopted in 2007. Under this strategy, regional bodies like SADC are mandated to create goals and objectives for substance abuse control and crime prevention approaches. The regions are also expected to coordinate and support programmes, conventions and follow up bodies for member states to adopt the AU policy (The African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention Enforcement Mechanism 2007).

2.7.3 National Guidelines

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa articulates rights based approaches in the prevention of youth offending. The constitution speaks of the enjoyment of rights for citizens including children. The fulfillment of the rights spelled out in the constitution is the best preventive strategy against youth offences. Additionally, the White Paper on Safety and Security (1998), states that there are several ways in which prevention of law-breaking can be achieved in South Africa. These include; designing out crime education, promoting social cohesion, supporting youth, families and groups at risk, breaking cycles of violence, promoting individual responsibility, socio-economic interventions to demean causes of crime strategies (Samara, 2011). The strategies outlined above can apply are relevant in primary intervention as they target early age, but they would be effective if their implementation was practical, and not only spelled on paper.

2.7.4 Provincial Guidelines

The Western Cape government constitution (Act 1 of 1998, section 66), contributes to secondary crime prevention through monitoring and evaluation of the police conduct in order to ensure efficiency to promote good relations between the police and the communities (Constitution of the Western Cape, 1998). The provincial government also acts as coordinator with the national cabinet member responsible for policing with respect to crime and policing in the crime prevention programmes and strategies targeting young people who are at risk of offending behaviour (Constitution of the Western Cape, 1998). The Department of Social Development together with non-profit organizations, run a number of prevention programmes that aim to keep young people from committing offending by keeping them out of antisocial peer groups, and substance abuse. One of the programmes offered are the Community Action towards a Safer Environment (CASE), which offers social prevention programmes aimed at reducing anti-social attitudes for school pupils in the communities adjacent to the city (Constitution of the Western Cape, 1998). The provincial measures of prevention measures are only at secondary level. They do not address youth offending behavior before it begins.

2.7.5 Municipality interventions

In preventing the unlawfulness by the youngsters, research and preventive measures, have been prepared at all levels, but South Africa steadily continues to face different types of juvenile offences, each year (Samara, 2011). There are interventions in Cape Town which are aimed at preventing anti-social conducts in the city. Such interventions include: neighbourhood watches, policing forums and law enforcement (City of Cape Town, 2009; Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2010). However, such measures play no significant role in the prevention of risk factors associated with offending behavior among the youth, because offending behaviour among the youth continues to rise. Collective policing forums, guarding and law enforcement are ineffective interventions because they do not enhance capabilities of young people. Thus, they stimulate unlawfulness as their concentration is on incarceration. Moreover, they do not combat the origins of offending behaviour such as poverty, disparities, joblessness, social breakdown and poor educational achievements (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2010). Furthermore, community police

relations are meager (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2010). The corruption of the SAPS has dominated media sites over time. As a result, community-Police relations have become irrelevant preventive interventions. The consequences have the opposite effect, or the offenders become worse after the said correction and restorative strategies (Samara, 2011).

In view of the interventions mentioned above, the strategies targeted towards preventing youth offending in Cape Town, and in South Africa are valid, but they are inadequate especially because youthful offending is escalating in the country. Furthermore, attention is given more on curative than prevention. The prevention of youth offending behaviour in Cape Town, and in the rest of South Africa, has been addressed mostly at the curative level; that is, after offenders have come into conflict with the law, while preventive or primary interventions, through enhancing the children's capabilities, have been overlooked (Samara, 2011). Such interventions usually seek to remediate disruptive behavior only after such behaviors have emerged.

2.8 CONCLUSION

The literature review chapter has discussed the risk factors that are associated with youth offending behavior. The three theories of learning interacting in the Social Development Model were highlighted to explain how interaction, involvement and opportunities in communities can incline anti-social behavior in children, with a likelihood of criminal conduct. The focus was also on youth offending behaviour and its correlates, substantiating that it is not an isolated problem. The chapter also reviewed the perceived risk factors together with the corresponding support factors. The discussion included a summary of the missing concepts and related approaches in the existing scholarly articles and debates on offending behaviour by young people. There was also creativity involved in a model representing theoretical frameworks to describe the risks associated with youth offending behaviour.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Following the literature review, the focus shall be on the methodology. Babbie and Mouton (2001) refer to methodology as the actual research procedures that the researcher uses, as well as their underlying principles and assumptions. The methodology chapter, therefore, helps readers understand the research process, in order for them to evaluate the quality of the research. It also helps them understand the limitations of the study. Hennink, et al, (2011). Accordingly, the methodology of this study presents the procedures undertaken by the researcher to explore the risk factors associated with offending behaviour among the youth in Cape Town. The sections below comprise the methodology and they include: the research design, research purpose, research context, gaining entry, sampling, data collection approach, data analysis, as well as data verification. The limitations of the study conclude the discussion for this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Dos Vos et al (2011) argue that the research design serves as a detailed plan of how one would conduct a research. The design of this study was qualitative in nature, as it investigated the risk factors associated with offending behavior among the youth. Since the subjective social realities and opinions of the reforming young offenders were central to this study, the qualitative approach was important as emphasized on the respondents' meanings. As argued by Tutty et al, 1996, in Thyer (2010), qualitative research is that research that strives to understand the meaning people attach to their lives. This was, therefore, an applicable approach for this study as it.

3.3 RESEARCH PURPOSE

This study was exploratory of the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour and, therefore, sought innovation in early preventive strategies, through enabling capabilities and enhancing resilience. This was because it was noted that the

measures taken to prevent youth offending behavior in Cape Town and in the entire South Africa were inefficient.

3.4 RESEARCH CONTEXT

The research context, in this chapter, refers to the environment in which the research was conducted; that is, the location that was used as a venue for recruitment of, and interviewing the respondents. The meeting place was the Rebuilding and Life Skills Training Centre (REALISTIC). REALISTIC is an emerging Community Based Organization (CBO) in Gugulethu, a township in the Cape Flats. The organization was chosen because it is a restorative center for reforming youth offenders; hence it would be advantageous for the researcher to meet and recruit the participants at one place. The recruitment process was done by contacting the administrators of REALISTIC for admittance, who suggested participants who can be interviewed in relation to the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour.

3.5 GAINING ENTRY

The researcher obtained permission to interview the participants with a letter of entry that she submitted to the Director and his colleagues. She visited the centre and the research topic and the purpose of the study were explained to the administrators. This was done because the administrators are in charge of all the undertakings in the organization. The administrators also studied the interview questions and gave the researcher approval to conduct the interviews. When the permission was granted, the researcher engaged with the tutor at the centre to distribute consent forms, through the participants, to their parents and guardians. The consent forms were returned with approval of the parents that their children could be interviewed.

3.6 SAMPLING

A sample is a subset - or a handy segment that is used in research to represent a larger group or population (DeVos et al, 2011). Accordingly, the sample of this research comprised of Xhosa youth aged between 16 and 24 years. The said youth were receiving restoration from offending behaviour at REALISTIC. Note must be taken that at the time of the interviews, there were no other races registered at the organization, although the researcher had intended to interview the youth of all races.

The sample included the youth who were identified, with the help of parents and social workers, as socially disruptive and therefore, considered as being at risk of offending. There were also some youths who were brought to REALISTIC, after they were accused of having committed offences, as well as those who were liberated from custody. The sample of this study, therefore, consisted of fifteen male and five female youth offenders undergoing restoration. This allowed for diverse realities to emerge, as the sample was not gender-biased on the risk factors associated with youth offending behavior. The participants were only those youngsters who were willing to participate, not because they were chosen and therefore felt compelled to contribute, nor because they wanted to impress the administrative authorities. They participated because they were willing to share their experiences as a part of opening up and healing towards reforming their lives.

3.6.1 Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy that was used was the non-random sampling technique or non-probability sampling. The researcher chose to use this type because it allows for purposive sampling, which targets a specific group of people (DeVos et al, 2011). According to De Vos et al (2011), non-probability sampling is selected on ease of access, and is based on the judgment of the researcher. The choice is based on the fact that the sample has some special knowledge of the study topic; hence, it contributes significantly in answering the research question (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). In this regard, only youth offenders were interviewed because they had relevant knowledge, due to their direct involvement and past interactions, in offending and at risk behavior.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION APPROACH

The data collection approach in this study was semi-structured one-to-one interviews, bearing in mind that, for ethical considerations, the face to face interviews were more appropriate in exploring a topic of high sensitivity like the risk factors associated with youth offending behavior. DeVos et al (2011) believe that interviews are the predominant mode of data collection in qualitative research, as they give insights into the participant's belief about, or perceptions or accounts of a particular topic. Here, the researcher and participants were flexible. The latter were viewed as experts on the

subject. The researcher chose this method because it allowed for deeper understanding of the risk factors that are associated with youth offending.

3.7.1 Testing the research instrument

Testing the research instrument is described by Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2001), as using a small sample to test a specific research tool, in preparation of the main study. Taking this description into consideration, the researcher went into testing the interview schedule, to see if the questions could be understood and yield the desired outcomes. She first gave the tutor at the centre the schedule to read through, and see if the questions could be understood. The tutor approved the questions and their phrasing. As an experiment, the researcher initially interviewed five participants, who were not part of the main group of participants. The outcome of the testing of interview questions was positive; hence the researcher was encouraged to conduct full interviews with the main participants.

3.7.2 Data collection tool

A semi-structured interview schedule was drawn by the researcher, and piloted before the beginning of the interviews. The researcher chose to use an interview schedule because it provides a guideline, as well as themes for the research (De Vos et al, 2011). Also, the researcher used some interviewing techniques where sensitive questions (like those that may reawaken experiences of emotional harm) were avoided; hence, participants were allowed to do most of the talking.

3.7.3 Data collection apparatus

A tape recorder was used to record the interview sessions. Before each session of the interviews the researcher agreed with the participants that a tape recorder would be used. The tape recorder facilitated the collection of precise data and analysis (De Vos et al, 2011). In this way, the researcher was able to concentrate on exploring the topic, and to note the non-verbal expressions of the participants. Later, the data was easily transcribed with all the details available.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Babbie and Mouton (2007) describe data analysis as the breaking down and structuring of collected data, in order to give meaning to it. It should be noted that there are various approaches to qualitative data analysis. In this study, data was analyzed in line with Tesch's method of data analysis, where the researcher started by reading thoroughly through the transcripts and making notes (Tesch, 1990). This approach mainly follows the steps below.

- The researcher first read through each transcription cautiously, to understand all the responses.
- The researcher selected one transcription at a time to understand how the responses relate to the objectives of the study.
- The researcher identified the main themes which were reflected by the objectives.
- The researcher wrote down the topics in the margins of the transcripts, to capture the meaning of the responses.
- The researcher then compared similar topics and grouped them under the colour coded labels. Different colour codes were used for different topics.
- The researcher looked for themes as well as categories of those themes, and finally decided on broader themes and categories, in line with the objectives of the study. These were checked all over again to ensure that all the themes are reflected in the objectives to cover the findings of the study.
- An analysis table was developed with the themes and categories as headings (See Table 1: page 52).
- The researcher refined the table so that it followed logically and coherently.
- The researcher wrote down the findings of the study guided by the codes that

reflect the themes and the objectives of the study in the table.

- The findings were compared to the theories, research assumptions, as well as the existing literature, to confirm or dispute the result of the interviews.
- The researcher introduced the issues linked to the themes with the actual quotes of the participants
- Data was verified, to validate the findings and check for errors and biases in confirming the findings of the study.

3.9 DATA VERIFICATION

Data verification refers to an approach that ensures the validity, accuracy and the reliability of data in qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba 1985; in Babbie and Mouton 2007). In the process of data verification factors such as: credibility, transferability, conformity and dependability have to be considered. These factors ensure accountability to rid errors and biases in analyzing the results of a qualitative study (Babbie and Mouton 2007, De Vos et al, 2011). Credibility is to demonstrate that the study is conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the phenomenon is accurately described. Transferability, according to De Vos (2001) is the burden of demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings to another context. Dependability is any attempt to account for reliability of the study. Lastly, conformability focuses on whether the results of the study could be confirmed by another (De Vos, 2001).

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations of study are understood by the researcher as the challenges, setbacks, or odds that a researcher encounters in the course of a study. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) describe them as those emerging factors that, when not properly handled, are capable of compromising the outcome of a study. The following limitations were highlighted in this study:

3.10.1 Research Design

The approach of qualitative research design, and the smaller sample it uses, depends on the subjectivity of the participants. The risk factors of youth offending, therefore, differ from one participant to the next; thus, the subjectivity nature of this research design makes it difficult to analyze data statistically and use gathered information to predict future results with similar populations. Furthermore, data collected cannot be generalized to the entire population under the study. Moreover, in qualitative research the researcher may put more emphasis on certain issues than others and this would constitute bias.

3.10.2 Sampling

The study adopted a non-probability purposive sampling; whereby the administrators of the Centre were responsible for selecting suitable reforming youth offenders to participate. This is seen as a limitation because the principals and tutors might have chosen a sample that they know is more communicative and knowing enough to hide some facts about the risk factors. Moreover, the chosen sample was a cluster of reforming youth offenders, whilst there were other relapsing youth offenders outside the center relapsing into offending; reflecting the true picture of the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour.

3.10.3 Data Collection Approach

The sample size of twenty respondents that the researcher interviewed was too small for generalizations and, therefore, not representative enough for her to get evidence about the research topic. Concerning this limitation, De Vos et al, (2011) observe that qualitative research has limited generalizations. The results of the study, therefore, may not be sufficiently used to reflect all the risk factors of youth offending in the province and in the country.

3.10.4 Data Collection Instrument

The interviews were conducted using semi-structured interviewing method, and a schedule was written down to guide interviews, asking one question at a time. The interview schedule may be too inflexible to allow for additional information. Furthermore, the researcher may have given out unconscious signals or clues that

guided respondents to give the expected answers when she was probing. Moreover, the focused interviews are time consuming as they involved further probing when an expected answer was not given. However, the researcher was experienced and, therefore, aware of the nature of semi-structured interviews and she allowed for the flow of information.

3.10.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study followed an adaptation of Tesch 1990, which required the researcher to identify themes categories and sub-categories. The quantity of data collected from the interviews made the analysis and interpretation time consuming. The depth of qualitative data also made it difficult to analyze, especially when deciding what is, and what is not relevant. This was seen as a limitation because it might call for biases where the researchers could analyze only the expected findings and over-emphasize others.

3.10.6 Generalizations

A sample of only twenty participants is too small to represent the entire population of youth offenders in Cape Town. Moreover, the sample was made up of only Xhosas; hence this cannot be used to generalize the findings of the study.

3.11 CONCLUSION

The chapter has presented the methodology of the study. It covered the research design or framework, the sampling techniques, data collection method, as well as testing of instruments of the research. The next chapter will present and discuss the findings which came up during the interviews, in accordance with the themes, categories and sub-categories, which were developed in relation to the overall objectives of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the risk factors associated with offending behaviour among the youth. To achieve this aim, this chapter presents the findings, discussion and analysis of the findings. The chapter combines theories and parts of the literature with the outcome of the interviews to answer the research questions. The first section summarizes the profile of REALISTIC, the organization which was used as a venue for the recruitment and interviewing of the participants. The profile of the agency has been presented, since it complements the contextual aspect of the study. The organization's profile is followed by the profiles of the participants, and then the framework of analysis and discussion of the findings. The analysis table mirrors the major themes, the categories and the sub-categories derived from the objectives of the study. The objectives include: to explore individual, peer, family, community, academic risk factors that are associated with offending behaviour amongst youth, to identify the support systems that are available to help the youth become resilient, and to examine the youth's perceptions of the preventive measures that are put in place to diminish the risk factors associated with youth offending behaviour.

4.2 Profile of the Organization

The participants of this study were found in Gugulethu, at Rebuilding and Life Skills Training Centre (REALISTIC), a youth offender restoration Community-Based Organization (CBO). The organization was founded in 2004, by a former member of staff of the South African Department of Correctional Services (DCS). REALISTIC incorporates youth offenders diverted through child justice Act 78; 2005, the youth at risk and the youth released from custody, into the mainstream society. The organization enhances capabilities of young people, to improve their lives which were formerly hooked on law-breaking and substance abuse, so that they become productive and law-abiding citizens. REALISTIC offers holistic support to the youth, through programmes such as therapy as well as vocational training. They are also supported emotionally through encouraging them to air out their feelings regarding their past experiences, as part of the

therapy. The agency has cases of success in which their graduates obtain jobs and lead independent and prolific lives.

REALISTIC is a partner in social development. It is a secondary intervention with regard to prevention of youth offending. The organization enhances preventive strategies and builds resilience among the youth. This has implications for social capital and social policy. The agency enhances sustenance and mentoring for better social relations in families and communities. It unlocks opportunities of independence and capability enhancement for young people. This functionality can help improve micro-macro government relations. It means the activities at grassroots level can inform the policy making processes in the mezzo and the central government levels, for improvement of the risky socio-economic backgrounds of young people, reflected by their profiles below.

4.3. Participants' profiles

The table below displays the profiles of the participants in terms of their socio-economic backgrounds. The backgrounds reveal deficiencies which make the youth vulnerable to unlawfulness. They are outline in this study because they constitute their social environments, as risk factors, with regard to their involvement, interaction, opportunities and exposure to offending behavior.

Table 1: Participants' Profiles

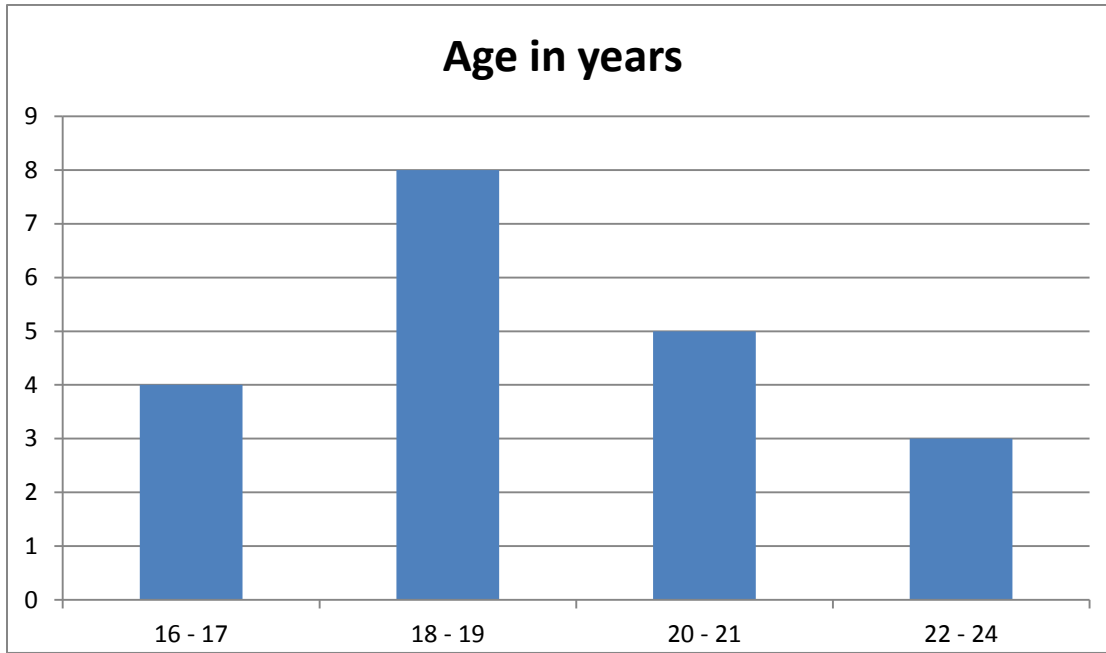
Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Race	Residential area	Origins	Housing	Primary caregiver
1. Zamilé	Male	24	Xhosa	Nyanga	*EC	Shack	Father absent
2. Andile	Male	17	Xhosa	Nyanga	*EC	Shack	Parents absent
3. Xolile	Male	20	Xhosa	Gugulethu	*NC	Shack	Father absent
4.Thami	Male	18	Xhosa	Nyanga	Nyanga	House	Father absent
5. Nditha	Male	19	Xhosa	Gugulethu	*EC	Shack	Parents absent
6. Mandla	Male	18	Xhosa	Khayelitsha	*EC	House	Father absent
7. Phindi	Male	18	Xhosa	Gugulethu	*EC	House	Father absent
8. Sibusiso	Male	20	Xhosa	Langa	*EC	Shack	Father absent
9. Thapelo	Male	24	Xhosa	Philippi	*EC	House	Parents present
10. Phike	Male	23	Xhosa	Nyanga	*EC	Shack	Parents absent
11.Thabile	Male	18	Xhosa	Langa	*EC	House	Parents absent
12. Sindiso	Male	19	Xhosa	Gugulethu	*NC	House	Parents present
13. Sipho	Male	17	Xhosa	Nyanga	Nyanga	House	Father absent
14. Xhelo	Male	19	Xhosa	Nyanga	*EC	Shack	Father absent
15.Thethani	Male	21	Xhosa	Gugulethu	Nyanga	Shack	Father absent
16. Ntombi	Female	21	Xhosa	Nyanga	*EC	Shack	Father absent
17. Mbali	Female	17	Xhosa	Khayelitsha	Nyanga	Shack	Parents present
18.Thuli	Female	20	Xhosa	Khayelitsha	*EC	House	Father absent
19.Thandi	Female	16	Xhosa	Gugulethu	Gugulethu	Shack	Father absent
20.Vuyo	Female	18	Xhosa	Nyanga	Nyanga	Shack	Father absent

* EC: Easter Cape Province, NC: Northern Cape Province

4.4 Age

The profiles of the participants reflect the ages of the participants as ranging from 16 – 24 years, and within the legally defined age group of youth in South Africa. The table below reflects the information about the ages of participants.

Figure 2. Age in years

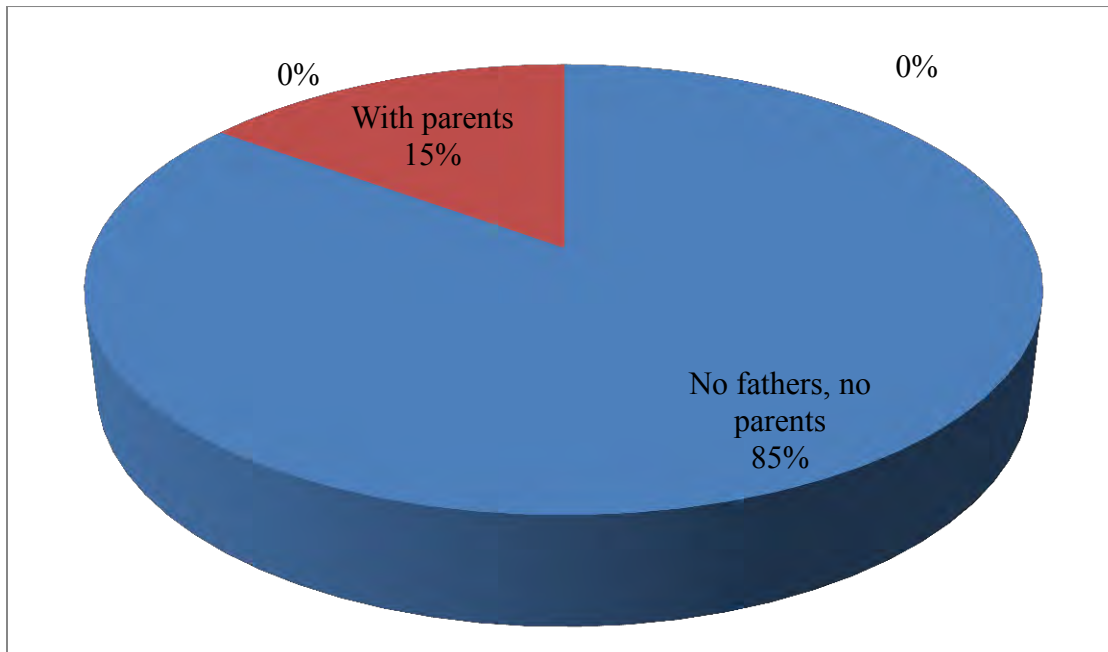


The information displayed above shows that the youth engage in law-breaking at an early age. To confirm this interpretation, the highest number of arrests in the country comes from the same age group of 15-24 (Child Justice Act 75, 2008). This age group is said to be at risk of offending, as it is predominantly susceptible to all challenges of development (Holtzhausen, 2012). This suggests that young people do not develop to their full potential because of the support structures' failure to address children's needs. This can be associated with lack of safety and neglect during childhood and adolescent years – which is the time when children mostly need supervision. It also means that the majority of South African children are excluded; they live with significant deprivations on account of neglect by all the support structures including the presence of the parents. Parent figures are revealed below as primary care givers.

4.5 Primary caregivers

The profiles of the participants reveal that 17 out of the 20 participants live either without both parents or without a father. Some participants knew their fathers but claimed that such parents had abandoned them, while others had never met their fathers before. The pie chart below shows percentages of participants who live without either two parents or fathers, and those who live with their parents.

Figure 1. Availability of Primary Care givers



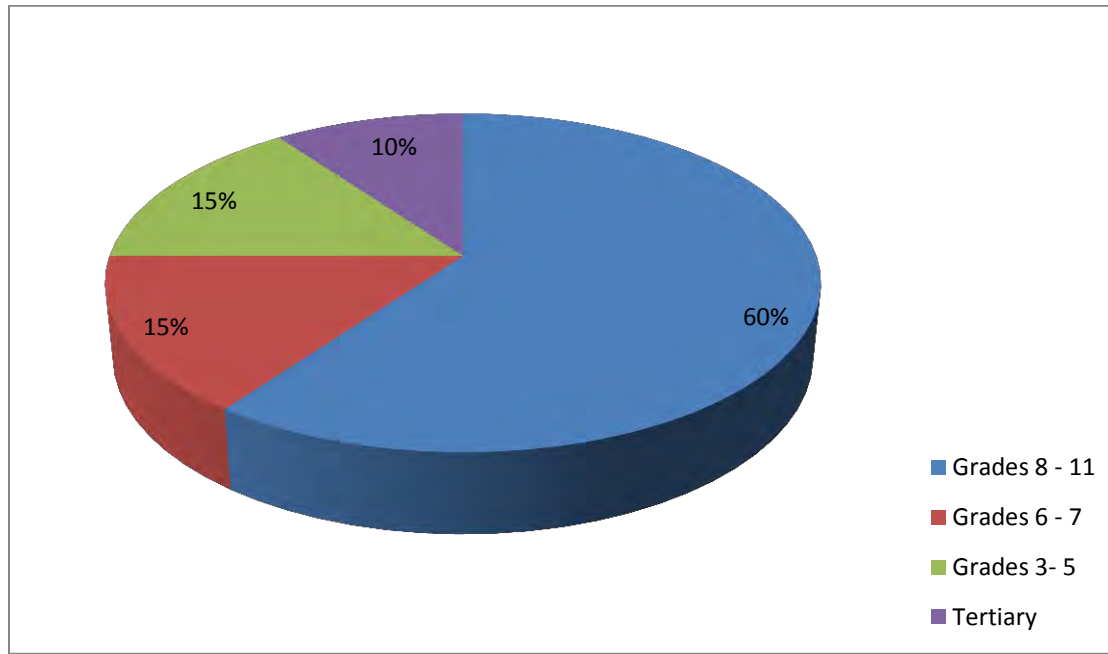
The information shown in the pie chart above reveals that the absence of a father can be a risk factor that to youth offending behavior because it combines with factors such as absolute poverty and substance abuse to trigger illegal conduct. Studies on father absence explain that children's behavioral, academic, and social problems are linked to the absence of a care giver (Johnson, 1996). This affects educational capabilities in children, especially in gender-specific issues associated with psychological and sexual identity development and behavioural changes and aggression in males (Johnson, 1996).

4.6 Educational Profiles of participants

The pie chart below summarizes educational accomplishments of the participants. 12 of the respondents were high school dropouts, and 6 were primary school dropouts. The smallest sector

represents two respondents who managed to reach tertiary level, even though they quit before their programmes were completed on account of substance abuse.

Figure 2. Educational Profiles of participants



The information above shows that majority of youth offenders are school drop outs, and therefore, vulnerable to offending because they lack educational attainments (Holtzhausen 2012). This in turn reveals the absence of achievements, which could otherwise work as protective factors to make young people resilient to offending behaviour. The conditions mentioned above have implications for deprivation in terms of opportunities that enhance children's abilities. Policies that make school compulsory are thus essential to oblige young people to finish high school education and follow their desired careers through tertiary education.

4.7 Framework of analysis

The framework of analysis below reflects five major themes, nineteen categories and their immediate sub-categories. The researcher adapted Tesch's (1990) data analysis (refer to Chapter Three for this approach). The objectives of the study guided the schedule of the interviews, hence directed the outcomes of the interviews and the themes for analysis.

Table 2. Framework of analysis

THEMES	CATEGORIES
1. Individual risk factors	1.1 Substance abuse 1.2 Masculinity 1.3 Victimization
2. Peers	2.1 Peer pressure
3. Family risk factors	3.1 Low socio-economic status 3.2 Depraved Values 3.3 Anti-social family 3.4 Parental Neglect 3.5 Absent fathers
4. Community risk factors	4.1 Poorly resourced communities 4.2 Social disorganization 4.3 Substance abuse
5. School risk factors	5.1 Academic failure 5.2 Lack of commitment
6. Prevention	6.1 Provincial 6.2 Municipality
7. Resilience	7.1 Femininity 7.2 Intolerant attitude towards violence and crime 7.1 Parental monitoring, values 7.1 Pro-social peers 7.1 Good academic performance 7.1 Well-resourced communities

4.8 Discussion of findings

The section below presents the discussion of the results of the interviews. The major themes, categories and sub-categories are outlined and the working assumptions and the theoretical frameworks are incorporated. Direct and substantial quotes from the transcriptions will be used to illustrate the participants' responses.

4.8.1 The risk factors

The first objective of the study sought to explore the risk factors that trigger offending behavior among the youth. The main categories under this theme included the influence from individual, family, school, peers and community factors. These risk factors are outlined below.

4.8.1.1 Individual risk factors

Objective: To explore the individual and peer risk factors which are associated with offending behaviour amongst the youth.

The individual factors related to offending behavior are perceived by the researcher as personal conditions which leave young people with no choice but to fall into conflict with the law because of the absence of protective factors. They include victimization, substance abuse, aggression, masculinity, and they are presented as follows:

- **Victimization**

The results of the interviews revealed that the majority of participants have had emotional wreckage on account of witnessing or becoming victims of abuse and law-breaking, either in childhood or adolescence. The participants were willing to share such experiences because they felt it dismissed stresses from their previous traumatic experiences. On the issue of victimization, the participants were asked if they had once suffered emotionally when they were growing up. The following were some of their responses:

“If there is a person who hurt me it is my stepfather . . . he used to beat us, me and my mom, and he raped my sister. I wanted to go to my father but I don't know him and I think he is also cruel like my stepfather, so I went to live with

my friends, their parents are dead and we were living with their brother, they are poor . . . we had no money, no food, nothing”(Thabile).

“I really didn’t like it . . . the way her boyfriends used to beat her when she was drunk. My mother didn’t have one boyfriend . . . she didn’t understand, it was painful, there was always fighting at our place, and she died . . . she was sick”(Mbali).

“My parents separated, they divorced, my mother left us with her sister and she didn’t come back, we had no food, my aunt was not working. My father was working but he didn’t give us anything, he disappeared”(Xhelo).

“When you don’t have parents people think you are not a person, my aunt and my uncle didn’t treat us like children because we had no one, they were cruel on us, the way they treated us”(Thandazani).

The responses above reveal that the participants became susceptible to victimization, in the form of physical abuse and sexual harassment. The finding of the study, in this regard, is that victimization is an individual risk factor to offending behavior of the youth. The trauma and pain from victimization impact negatively on the children. The suffering leaves them with shock, nervousness, vulnerability and difficulties in concentrating, hence they seek revenge. Under the said circumstances, Siegfried et al (2004) state that past experiences can be retained as fear; pain and renunciation of the normal life, and consequently inspire negative reaction such as illegal conduct. The above view is in line with the first assumption of the study that environmental risks stemming from social experiences contribute as risk factors to youth offending. The aforesaid conditions are confirmed by the theory of Social learning which stipulates that offending behavior is learnt from interaction and involvement with the social environment, which means learning through observation and experience. People become insensitive to risks and engage in risky behaviours and participate in dangerous activities. This can destroy their capabilities (Ford, 2002, in Siegfried et al, 2004). Substance abuse can also be chosen as a resolution by the victims of abuse, and this is explained in the next section.

The aforesaid circumstances call for collective action by all role-players to look into the lives of children. The focus should shift to prevention strategies that prioritize protection and child

development in order to unleash the capabilities of children. Legal institutions should also revise existing child justice strategies to protect the children.

- **Substance abuse**

Substance abuse is widespread in Cape Town, and is believed to distinguish the city from the rest of the metropolises in the country (City of Cape Town, 2009; Samara, 2011). The observation above reveals that the majority of the youth in Cape Town grow up in environments which are challenged by substance abuse. When the participants were asked to talk about the reasons that compelled them to engage in law-breaking, all them responded that substance abuse is the major influence. Four of their responses are outlined below.

“Because I wanted something that I can sell so that I can help myself to drugs. When you do “tik” you do a lot of things to get money and buy stuff”(Sindiso).

“In those days I used to go with friends who do drugs, and I used to find myself doing crime because it is like I have to steal to get the next smoke and share with our friends. . . I got arrested many times by the police after maybe robbery, but when I come out I wanted money again to buy drugs” (Phike).

“When I used to smoke it made feel better, I didn’t want stress. I am actually a moody person . . . I used to fight . . .”(Thembi).

Substance abuse has a direct relationship with anger and aggression which in turn influences unlawful behavior among youths:

“My problem was fighting, I was a gangster, it was terrible, everything we solve with hands. . . I felt I want to kill somebody, we used to fight, I sometimes get angry now but . . . but I know how to control my anger now I am different” (Andile).

The answers above reveal that the majority of young people are trapped by substance abuse. They become addicts; hence, they fall into conflict with the law. Substance abuse stimulates aggression and disruptive behaviour and exposes young people to the risk of breaking the law (Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2003). The finding above is supporting the researcher’s first assumption that the youth fall into conflict with the law by the influence of social problems that

stem from their backgrounds. The adoption of illegal behavior in this case is confirmed by the Social Development Model (SDM) that through interaction, involvement and opportunities the youth are socialized to go through either anti-social or pro-social paths that predict offending behavior later in their lives. The vulnerabilities tend to attract other social problems like HIV and AIDS to form a cycle of poverty, thereby depriving young people of their capabilities. Prevention strategies therefore have to be mindful that social ills are not isolated; hence solutions have to be holistic. Connections can be made between the above said risk factors and masculinity, as shall be outlined below.

- **Masculinity**

The ratio of male youth offenders usually outstrips that of the female ones, as statistics indicate more arrests for male than for female offenders. Thus males typically become perpetrators and rarely victims in most crime scenes (Shader, 2000). Furthermore, the researcher observed that the enrollment of male participants is higher compared to that of females at REALISTIC. This distribution is an implication that gender and law-breaking are interrelated. Concerning gender and youth offending, the participants were asked which sex group is prone to law-breaking and why. The participants of this study answered that it is the male group. The following are some of their opinions:

“Hai! It is the males; boys think they have power and they are like the bosses mos” (Mbali).

“Honestly girls are better than us males, crime is done by boys and sometimes few girls. . . I don’t know why, but maybe because of other guys, they think they are tough”(Thami).

“Males do crime more than females, ok females can do crime but not like males, they can kill you see . . . Males are more involved in crime . . . that is how they are; they are rough man”(Thandazani).

“It is the boys, they are always in trouble, but girls also do crime. . . I think boys are born like that, they are criminals but some guys are ok, they don’t do crime”(Thandie).

Taking the above information into consideration, the participants reveal that male youth engage in illegal activities more than their female counterparts; hence offending among the youth is predominantly a male enterprise and it can be a portrayal of masculinity. In explaining this condition, the Differential Association Theory would link masculinity to the socialization of a boy because they pick up beliefs and attitudes through interaction with older peers and men. They become anxious for a reputation of being tough. It could also be a way of protecting oneself in places like Cape Town where there is continuing tension between anti-peer groups. Anderson, (2008) also pointed out that being powerful, aggressive, heroic and competitive become manners in which young males emphasize on and express their masculinity. The implications of the above conditions result from insufficiency in the implementation of prevention strategies, so much that the strategies do not target specific and risky groups like young men. The individual risk factors above are connected to the family influences because socialization of children starts at the family level. This is explained below.

4.8.1.2 Family risk factors

The family can also be a risk factor to offending behaviour among the youths. At the family level, factors that interact to make the youth vulnerable to offending include non-standard values, history of law-breaking and substance abuse, poor parenting skills, low economic status, and the absence of a primary care giver.

- **Depraved values**

Below here is an outline of how family deprived values are influential in youth offending behaviour. The participants were asked to describe values in their family lives, and their answers were as follows:

“It was my mother who liked going to church, she liked praying and church, but now she is tired, we didn’t like going to church, it is only me now who goes to church, these days I must change after REALISTIC”(Mbali).

“I like education, but it takes a long time before you work, I like to work for myself and my mother also wants money, I want money, my own money you know . . . when I have money my life will be better”(Ntombi).

“I don’t know really what kind of things are important, um . . . you mean things like respect maybe? Working hard for your own money maybe . . . yah”(Thethani).

“I don’t know what to say because, I have my own values, like you said what things are really important to me, my brother and my mother also have their own values, we like different things” (Zamile).

The participants explained that they live in families where values like religion, education and respect do not matter. Their explanations show that the absence of virtuous values in a family is a risk factor in stimulating offending behaviour; because education and religion instill modesty which can prevent such practices in children. With regard to the absence of values and morals, the Social Control Theory states that illegal behaviour is the result of the weakness, breakdown, or absence of those social controls that encourage law-abiding conduct. This implies that it will be difficult to facilitate social capital among the youth because a person who fails to have virtuous morals will not have relations with other people. Networking will also be difficult. The absence of control and decline in moral standards usually emanates from history of substance abuse and illegal behavior in families. These are discussed below.

- **History of law-breaking and substance abuse**

Youth offending can be influenced by a history of wrongful conduct by family members. The respondents were asked if any of their family members had a history of offending. They agreed and some of their answers were as follows:

“Yo! All of us in the house, all of them commit crimes, like my brothers, the thing that they like to do is house breaking, all of them, we all did it. No one is working; we are always looking how we can get money and other things” (Sindiso).

“Eish! My father went to Pollsmor when I was young, like he used to steal from other people, but he didn’t like me and my brother to know the things he was doing”(Thami).

“We all do crime, even my younger sister, we go out to see how we can get money because no one is working, but I have changed because they help us to come clean here . . . My mother didn’t like it and she is happy that I have changed”(Sindiso).

A history of offending in families can combine with substance abuse to influence youth offending behaviour. In relation to this, the participants explained the situation of substance abuse in their families as follows:

*“Ok, my father, but I don’t know which drugs he was using, my mother’s sister was terrible, she is mentally disturbed now, she was with *XX, they were friends and they were doing drugs”*(Ntombi).

“We don’t do drugs from our house but I know we all do it. I don’t know about my father if he also smokes because he doesn’t stay with us”(Thabile).

“It was my brother who started using drugs, yah...my mother sometimes drinks, I was also using tik but I am clean now because of Realistic”(Thuli).

**XX (Participant mentions the name of a late popular singer).*

The replies above show that children learn the behavior of their role models. They model the conduct that they copied from their families as exemplary and normal. The information confirms the researcher’s assumption that risky social backgrounds inspire offending behavior among the children. The conclusion made by the researcher was that juvenile offenders usually come from families which have a history of offending combined with substance abuse. The theory of social learning confirms this since it asserts that young people learn the behavior of those people who make meaning to them. They retain the offending conduct and later get involved in similar deeds. Usually, a history of offending and substance abuse is not isolated from negligence as shall be discussed below.

- **Parental absence and neglect**

Parental absence and neglect are understood by the researcher as lack of parental care and love among their children. Neglectful and absent parents can be described as lacking necessary skills like monitoring of and knowledge of the child's feelings, needs and activities. Taking this view into consideration, the participants were asked to mention the people who take care of them at home. The answers are given below.

“I live with my two sisters, they are older than me, my mother lives in Nordhoek, she works for white people there, and she comes only once when is month end, . . .Ehh!, my father I don’t know him really, but my sisters have their father, and he doesn’t care about us because he has his own family in Langa” (Xolile).

“I live with my brother; our parents are at home . . . in the Eastern Cape. My brother sometimes goes to live with his girlfriend, sometimes he lives with me at our shack . . . My parents don’t visit us, we go to see them, but we didn’t go home this year, I didn’t have money”(Phindi).

“I used to stay with my friends because my mother didn’t like me but I’m now with my mother. Realistic helped me to live with my mother”(Thapelo).

Negligence of children leads to poor relations between the youths and their families. The participants were asked to describe their relations with their care givers and other family members. The replies were as follows:

“Um . . . I can say it’s not good between me and my mother, but realistic is trying to make thing better, with my father, he is not staying with, he doesn’t like us, he is not talking to me, yah . . . others like my sisters we sometimes have our own problem which make us fight a lot”(Mbali).

“Eish! My family has no peace I don’t know what to do about them because they don’t understand . . . we, we, we, always fight . . . no I want to talk . . . my mother likes drinking, she goes around like . . . you know . . . I, I don’t know” (Thuli).

The answers above show that youth offenders were neglected children. Most of them lived without proper care or parental monitoring. The finding made by the researcher was that lack of proper parenting skills such as monitoring, lack of warm relations with children and lack of responsiveness, can influence offending behaviour among children. This finding affirms the theory of Social Control which explains that prevention of wrongful conduct among the youth is possible in terms of early supervision, control and setting of social standards of the children’s behaviour, by social support structures like the immediate family. The absence of parental supervision and care means young people live without guidance and they can easily adhere to

peers of wrongful behaviour; hence, they end up committing offences. The abovementioned conditions of negligence are typical in families with low economic status, as the conditions weaken parental ability for support and involvement in the lives of children (Bartol and Bartol, 2009).

- **Low economic status in the family**

The majority of the participants of this study came from families which are struck by unemployment; hence the families developed desperate means of survival. The participants were asked to state the reasons that they think influence the youth to commit offences. The answers below are some of their views.

“. . . they have many reasons to steal, say because of their poor background you see, because some of us we have to stand up for ourselves to get something that we need, to have maybe food”(Thethani).

“We all come from poor families that have nothing, our families are poor . . . some of us have parents who are not working”(Phindi).

“Most of the people here in the township are not working. There is no money for food and sometimes people have to pay rent”(Mandla).

“I had no choice, the way we used to suffer at home, um . . . I was hungry and I knew there was no food at home. My mother was also very sick and I was supposed to look for food for us”(Zamile).

The information above reveals that the low economic status of families compels the youth to engage in offending activities. The majority of participants stated that if it were not for poverty, they would not have stolen or robbed other people. The finding here was that circumstances of poverty, combined with other social problems easily trigger people to offending behavior for survival. Accordingly, the youth copy offending behaviour, as a survival strategy from poverty, from their elders. The relevant theory that confirms the above circumstances is the Social learning theory. The theory maintains that offending behavior is learned from the people who are models (Marsh et al, 2006). This shows that poverty is a risk factor because it leaves young people with no alternative but to achieve their goals through illegal means. Poverty also deprived the capabilities of children because it hinders them from accessing opportunities that can release

their potential to achieve their goals. The situation described above calls for poverty reduction strategies that prioritize the needs of children.

4.8.1.3 Peer risk factors

Offending behaviour among the youth can also be influenced by association with anti-social friends. This was revealed when the participants were asked who used to be with them during the times when they broke the law, and whether they value such relations. Their answers are given below.

“With my friends, sometimes I was with my boyfriends, most of the times I was with one of my close friends.” Sometimes you don’t want, and because of friends then you can do it”(Thapelo).

“Sometimes friends are good because they help you, but there are times when they can put you in trouble, like we know that doing drugs is bad, people die and we are watching, but we do the same thing that put them in trouble because of friends” (Mandla).

“I don’t know, but when you do crime you only think of what you want to do, and you are doing it, sometimes you don’t even think because you are with friends”(Phindi).

“Eish! It all about how we can get money and drugs, we don’t talk about serious things, now when I tell them about realistic some of them hate me”(Xolile).

The information above indicates that association with friends, particularly those with felonious attitudes influence offending behaviour among the youth. The answers confirm the researcher’s assumption that peer pressure is a risk factor of illegal practices among the youth. The researcher concluded, therefore, that antisocial peer pressure compels young people to engage in unlawful activities. The Differential Association theory confirms this view since it asserts that offending behavior is learned from interaction with people of anti-social conduct, predominantly the closest people for example friends. The association with antisocial peers can be linked to substance abuse and high levels of truancy and poor academic performance. This is because education and school are not part of the issue anti-social peers discuss as they have negative attitudes towards education.

4.8.1.4 School risk factors

The researcher found out that academic failure make youngsters feel worthless; hence their tendency to resort to illegal conduct. The interview schedule required the participants to talk about their educational backgrounds, achievements and academic performances. The following are replies from five participants:

“I can say I was not good at school but I was trying, I left school because now I was bored . . . um . . . I quit in 2006, when I was starting like . . . to do things . . . yah drugs”(Ntombi).

“Yoh! I was not doing well, (laughs) . . . I used to fail tests and I was old in class, I didn’t achieve what I wanted”(Thapelo).

“My performance was bad, and it didn’t make me happy, but . . . I was not dom . . . I was playing”(Phike).

“Yo! Yo! Yo! I was always the lowest in class . . . I was dom man. These girls you know, yah . . . they used to laugh at me man, I tried and tried to read but . . . yah, I wasn’t good at all, I failed every class”(Andile).

The information above prove that majority of offenders did not have good academic performance. The participants added on to say that they had negative attitudes towards school and this worsened their academic performance.

“Yah, we used to dodge with my friends . . . many times, sometimes we come in the morning and go at break time”(Vuyo).

“Yoh! Many times . . . I used to bunk school many times and we used to go and smoke with my friends, boys and girls . . . we were always late for school”(Phindi).

“My sister was called to come to school to see the principal and my class teacher because I was not attending school. I bunked school every week. I don’t remember how many times”(Nditha).

The answers above reveal that academic failure can be a risk factor to offending behavior since it is closely linked to peer pressure and substance abuse. The respondents explained that they had to quit school because they were not doing well.

The conclusion here is that students' lack of commitment and parental support to learning contributes to their academic failure, hence their vulnerability to social challenges. This is in line with the Social Control theory which stipulates that lack of commitment to social values and norms to help youngsters build resilience can encourage antisocial conduct, especially if it happens earlier in childhood (Marsh et al, 2006). Commitment to education can sometimes be discouraged by the antisocial community ideals, especially in disadvantaged societies.

4.8.1.5 Community risk factors

The participants of this study reside in townships which are disadvantaged in terms of provision of basic services. The researcher could observe conditions of scarcity of basic services in the communities, which are seen as poorly resourced environments and social disorganizations.

- **Poorly resourced communities**

During the interviews the participants were asked to describe their communities in terms of development. The majority of them indicated that they live in temporary shabby and skewed dwellings. Their answers are given below:

“There is no development in my community; we don't even have toilets, and it is very dirty community. . . It's not easy to stay there” (Thabile).

“I think my community likes development but they are careless people, we don't have much but they destroy good things, they steal good things, like some of our trains do not have windows because people steal them and put them in their houses” (Andile).

“Many people are poor in my community, many people are not working, we don't have house we live in our shacks we don't have a lot of things you see, sometimes we live without water for a long time” (Thandie).

The answers above show a decline in social service accessibility among the youth in Cape Town. The major problem is shortage of dwellings. Housing problems have close association with absolute poverty, social disorganization and substance abuse. The conditions under which the majority of the youth live are underprivileged. This observation confirms the researcher's

assumption that young people end up breaking the law because of the conditions of deprivation surrounding their lives. The literature used in this study also indicate that children of poor households often receive minimal education, resulting in difficulty in obtaining gainful employment because of a lack of the appropriate skills and little or no work experience. This in turn increases their rate of vulnerability towards offending (Barto and Bartol, 2009). Any strategies that are geared towards redeeming the youth from offending behavior need to be holistic to cover various needs in a broad manner. Less resourced communities usually experience social disorganization since deficiencies put pressure on the little that the communities have.

- **Social disorganization**

The social environments in which the participants of this study lived can be described as disorderly and full of antisocial tendencies. Taking this observation into consideration, the participants were asked to describe life in their communities, including whether they were happy in such environments. The participants expressed resentment to life in their home environments:

“It is not a good life, yah. . . You know township life, the community is not good. People don’t like good things, they kill you for what you buy, there are gangsters, it is not safe . . . there are too many problems . . . yah”(Xhelo).

“There are too many problems you know, yah . . . people can fight, especially children, there is a lot of jealousy, people don’t see good things, they steal water pipes and other people’s taps, yah . . . people don’t like you when you buy nice things” (Vuyo).

“Ah, ah, I don’t like that community, nothing makes people happy. There are bad people where I live. I think I will be happy if I go to other communities” (Sipho).

“My community doesn’t teach people good things, we learn only things that put us in trouble, I . . . I don’t like this community really”(Sibusiso).

The answers above corroborate the researcher’s assumption that youth offending behaviour is inspired by depraved social environments in which young people reside. The finding is that social disorganization is a risk factor to youth offending behaviour, because it destroys existing

control mechanisms in societies. The above finding is affirmed by theories of learning which are combined in the Social Development model. The model explains social conditions and involvements that influence offending behaviour, together with people's abilities and experiences which prevent behaviour through the pro-social and anti-social path ways (Huang et al, 2001).The model states that social disorganization is a breakdown of the structure of the relationship between peoples and their environment due to the loss of the process that regulates a society's behaviour. This attributes youth offending to the disorganization by social isolation, job loss, social change, poverty, alienation, and conflict through intimidation or influence of a particular group (Bartol and Bartol, 2009).It was also discovered from the outcomes of the interviews that migration triggers a lack of social cohesion, and prolongs the list of risk factors of crime among the youth.

- **Access to financial security**

The researcher had not assumed that the pursuit of financial security might possibly contribute to community risk factors that influence offending behaviour among the youth. The consideration of financial security only arose during the interviews when the participants were asked to talk about their personal values. All the participants revealed that money matters more than any other assets in their lives as a guarantee of social prestige:

"If I have money now my life will be starting, I can be respected here because people know that I can do better things for my family"(Xhelo).

"If I can only do something that will make work and get money it will be fine. I don't even need long stories I just want to work and get my own money"(Ntombi).

"I have always been looking for money because you can't live in the township without money; I wanted my life to be better. The only problem is when you use your money to buy drugs or beer now your life will be backward again"(Thapelo).

"Yah! . . . Education is good but it takes a long time before you get money. If you go to UCT you can't even finish quickly, at the same time you are getting old before you start to buy good things to show that you are a man. I must work and get my own money"(Thethani).

The information above reveals that the youth consider money as the most important asset in their lives. This often gets them into trouble with the law because they would do anything to get money and keep up with the 'standard' in their communities. The conclusion is that the youth fall into conflict with the law because of antisocial ways of socialization. The Social Development Model confirms this interpretation since young people perceive rewards for antisocial behavior, and interact with persons, groups, or institutions that participate in antisocial behaviour. The more a child is bonded to antisocial units, the more that child becomes antisocial in behaviour. The child with an orientation internalizes and normalizes an antisocial standard of behaviour. They often know that this standard varies from society's normative rules of conduct, and rationalizes this difference by thinking of the antisocial standard as either an alternative to society's rules or as a code that supersedes society's rules (Catalano et al., 1996 in Cohen, 2006). These have implications for high rates of robbery and other types of offences related to obsession with money.

4.8.2 Prevention

Knowledge and understanding of youth offending prevention strategies by the youth informs relevant strategies of prevention. There is an assumption that the country has insufficient strategies with regard to prevention of youth offending behaviour. When questioned about their perceptions about the prevention of youth offending behavior, five respondents provided the following answers:

"Crime is a serious problem, it is becoming worse every day, I don't think the government can do anything, it will be better if criminals die, but at least Realistic is helping them to turn away from crime, I wish they could come here and fight for their future"(Zamile).

"Yah, the police go out and teach people all over Cape Town. They tell us what crime is, and they tell us we should stop crime and help them, Yah"(Mandla).

"No, even if there are measures they don't work, there is lot of crime done by the youth and the police are not doing anything, they can even become friends to the criminals. The best thing to do is to take your children out to the suburbs, life here is full of drugs, it's easy to get drugs"(Thandi).

“I don't know how because every day new criminals are born and they grow up see what we do, and they do same things we do, . . . they should also come and see that we are busy here and stop doing crime”(Nditha).

“I think the criminals must go to prison for a long time, that is the only way because after they commit crime we see them every day walking free and they continue with what they always do, Yah”(Vuyo).

The views expressed above reflect inadequacies of the existing measures of prevention. Children live under conditions of neglect and marginalization. Educational institutions, curricula and prospectuses create barriers for the majority of South African youths to live up to their choices and capabilities. The conclusion is that prevention of youth offending is inadequate in South Africa. Existing programmes and interventions are more rehabilitative in nature, and implementation is slow. The lives of the children are continuously vulnerable, and the government and stakeholders wait for the youth to be in trouble first and attempt, in vain, to transform the condition. Priority is given to diversion and child justice after damage has been done.

4.8.3 Structural conditions

Initially, the researcher did not include structural conditions among the objectives of the study. The replies on structural conditions only came when the participants were probed on the community risk factors. The participants were asked to give details of how they perceive the increase in the rate of youth offending in Cape Town. The following answers are noteworthy in this regard:

“If you look at crime here, it is the poor people who commit crime, there is nothing good for us and that's why people do crime like robbery. The whites have no problems, they were born to be rich, their places are clean, they have everything”(Sipho).

“Life is not easy in the township; I believe if we stay in town we cannot do crime. Life is better there, you have everything you need, and here we grow up not knowing what is nice and good”(Phike).

Inequalities combine with social correlates like anti-social peer groups to youth aggregate offending. The participants stated their views as follows:

“The problem in Cape Town is the gangsters; they are always there, fighting every time” (Xolile).

“Yoh! Gangsters increase crime. They are bad, they kill people, my family has no peace now because I was with them, the police come to trouble my mother and ask for my friends even if I didn’t do that”(Mandla).

“There are too many gangs here in the township and crime will always be high because of gangsters”(Mbali).

The problem of substance abuse was also cited as closely associated with youth offending. The respondents noted that young people are compelled by substance abuse to engage in illegal conduct.

“There is too much drugs here, and it puts the youth in trouble of doing crime, even in schools those kids are not passing because of drugs, the next thing they steal to buy more drug”(Mbali).

“If they can help us with drugs crime can be reduced. All the youth do drugs that’s why crime is so high”(Thapelo).

The participants also complained that immigrants bring anti-social conducts and attitudes to the city:

“Now that everybody comes to live in Cape Town crime will always be high, these . . . leave their countries and they sell drugs here, they are found everywhere in the township, we don’t know why they don’t stay in their countries”(Thandazani).*

“ . . . are full everywhere, there is too much confusion here. They also commit crimes; they make everything worse”(Mandla).*

*Omitted names of some African countries.

The opinions above reveal that youth offending is associated with migration, inequalities, antisocial peer groups and substance abuse. The finding here is that the aforesaid links have a causal factor relationship and they form a web to perpetuate exclusion and marginalization of the

disadvantaged groups, especially children. The Social Development Model confirms the above finding by way of combining social conditions and involvements that influence criminal behaviour, together with people's abilities and experiences which prevent behaviour through interaction and opportunities (Huang et al, 2001). The conditions under which the disadvantaged communities of Cape Town live make them subordinate, and their children inherit the vulnerabilities. These are calls to the government and other stake holders to address socioeconomic disparities with collective action and social cohesion. Policies should focus on improving socio-economic conditions, providing opportunities to young men, and improving trust in law enforcement.

4.8.4 Support systems

The protective factors are connected to the risk factors, because, in the absence of protective factors, the behaviour of young people can result in distractions of the socio-economic systems affecting the whole society. The conclusion made is that there are personal, family, school, peer and societal factors which help the youth to survive conditions of deprivation. The said factors include: femininity, continuous parental monitoring, and family values that are pro-social, supportive relations with parents, intolerant attitudes towards non-standard behaviour, good academic performance and association with peers who conform to standard conduct within societies. The participants were asked to explain why other young people, who live in socio-economic backgrounds similar to those of offenders, do not engage in offending and substance abuse. The explanations are listed below.

“The girls don't do much crime because they are girls; they are not as brave as boys; when they are about to do anything bad they start by getting scared of the results” (Mbali).

“The girls are better because . . . because of being girls they know that something is not acceptable and they become easily scared of many things”(Xolile).

It is noteworthy, from the foregoing, that the feminine gender, as opposed to masculinity, can be a protective factor to help the youth to survive the influences to be involved in illegal activities.

The participants also cited intolerant attitudes towards substance abuse and offending as enhancing individual strength and resilience among the youth.

“I don’t know, but some boys are tough, they tell you they cannot do drugs because they want to live for a long time . . . you know some of them finished school now they go to college and they are living in town . . . they have good life, we are still here because we don’t understand, I sometimes wish I can be like them, they are strict . . . their parents are happy now”(Sibusiso).

“Other guys don’t want even to see drugs. If you are their friend and you use drugs, they hate you and run away from you”(Phike).

The individual protective factors need to be supplemented by family protective factors; so as to help young people to survive offending behaviour. The participants explained that parental monitoring was essential. The following were their responses:

“Some parents are strict, they make sure that you don’t go out with friends and sometimes they expel your friends” (Xhelo).

“Some parents like good things for their children they make sure that follow them; they can even go to school to ask the teacher about your marks, and they check your school books” (Nditha).

Another survival aspect is association with pro-social peers. The respondents revealed that joining social groups helps by keeping young people busy, and out of the way of friends who engage in substance abuse.

“Ok, ok, because of drugs I didn’t have time to go to those groups, some of my friends were playing drama but they just stopped going there because of tik” (Mbali)

“No, but I was volunteering there at Makhaya, helping old people with cleaning”(Thandaza).

“Yah, I was doing drama with the theater group but I stopped, I didn’t have time because of friends and we were smoking always”(Thulie).

The information above suggests that there are protective factors within the individuals and their immediate communities. The factors help young people to be resilient to youth offending and substance abuse. The finding of the study was that youth who adopt positive manners in societies survive the risk factors to offending behaviour, but such influences are outweighed by the prevalence of substance abuse. The Theory of Social Control confirms that prevention of offending conduct among youths requires early supervision, control and setting of social standards of the children's behavior, by social support structures like the immediate family, personal control and the society (Huang et al, 2001). The youth alone cannot be strong enough to resist pressures that are found in the disadvantaged social environments, that are challenged by substance abuse and the culture of offending. Encouraging a child or youth to volunteer promotes civic-mindedness, which is also a protective factor, and it puts them in a position to associate with other positive people. These observations call for collective action from all support structures to deliver services and continuous support for the youth to prevent offending behaviour.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the results of the interviews, based on the themes, categories and sub-categories borne by the objectives of the study. The risk factors found in this study mark the social environment of the youth. There are also protective factors which make other youth resist the temptation of offending. It has been observed that because of exclusion by the effects of poverty, risky home environments, poor education, lack of appropriate skills and unemployment, the youth cannot develop their potential abilities to access mainstream economic development. Social risk factors combined with scarcity of protective factors and exclusion by institutional failures compel young people to engage in offending behaviour. The findings of the study raise cognizance about capabilities of the youth and their development as productive citizens, and not as offenders to be disciplined. The findings align with the working assumptions of the study and the theoretical frameworks adopted in the earlier chapters. They, however, have a limitation in that they cannot be used to generalize the research problem as the participants constituted a small sample constituting of only one race. The next chapter will present the conclusion and the recommendations based on the findings of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study explored the risk factors that are associated with youth offending behaviour in Cape Town. The findings of the study prepared the foundation for the summary, conclusions and recommendations. The summary will incorporate the findings and the writings from different scholarly perspectives. The conclusions will be presented in relation to the assumptions and the main objectives of the study. The recommendations will be made to the schools, communities, NGOs and government institutions, with emphasis on developing children's capabilities.

5.2 Summary of the findings of the study

It has been observed by the researcher that exclusion by the effects of poverty, risky home environments, lack of parental care, poor education, lack of appropriate skills and unemployment; constrain the youth from developing their potential abilities to access mainstream economic development. Social risk factors, combined with scarcity of protective factors and exclusion by institutional failures, compel young people to engage in offending behaviour. The findings of the study raise awareness about capabilities of the youth and their development as productive citizens, and not as offenders to be disciplined. The findings align with the working assumptions of the study and the theoretical frameworks adopted in the earlier chapters.

5.3 Conclusions on research questions

The main conclusions of this study will be presented in line with the research objectives given earlier in this report, and they are outlined below.

5.3.1 Individual and peer risk factors

The findings of the study reveal that individual risk factors which are associated with offending behaviour include substance abuse, masculinity, in the case of males, and victimization. Peer pressure also inspires offending behaviour among the youth, especially in males. The conclusion, therefore, is that in the absence of support systems like educational attainment and

other factors, the youth develop attitudes which can result in offending behaviour. The individual and peer risk factors are linked to the family factors because children acquire manners and attitudes from their families.

5.3.2 Family risk factors

Regarding the family risk factors that inspire youth offending, the findings of the study revealed that the difficulties found in the socio-economic backgrounds of children make them vulnerable to poverty, hence they develop offending behaviour. The youth from difficult socio-economic backgrounds become destitute and disadvantaged. Destitution deprives them of their abilities and their freedom to pursue opportunities for good livelihoods. The conclusion, therefore, is that the failure of support structures, such as the family, marginalizes young people; hence they engage in law-breaking as a survival strategy. Moreover, the absence of parents in the lives of their children also affects them. Accordingly, responsiveness to youth offending needs to be revised to involve families. This will assist role players to enhance existing prevention programs, which are frequently reported to have limited staffing and funding as reported by City of Cape Town report, (2009).

5.3.3 Community factors

Youth offending has connections with underprivileged social economic and structural conditions (Holtzhausen, 2012). The conditions include poor social service delivery and marginalization, which pose prospects of deprivations in disadvantaged communities. Moreover, the findings of the study show that youth offending is predominantly associated with Africans in Cape Town. Additionally, the legacy of apartheid through inequalities, as well as anti-social peer groups and migration are connected to youth offending. The conclusion is that these conditions combine to expose young people to poverty and exclude them from enjoying the distribution of wealth in the country. This calls for relevant approaches in addressing vulnerabilities and exclusions among the youth, especially the African youth. There is the need for government policies on child and youth development to be revised. Policies that address social cohesion and the underlying causes of lack of trust in the police can prevent youth offending. Accordingly, policies which improve the transparency of the police to reduce corruption and make the Service more accountable and accessible to citizens need to be taken into consideration.

5.3.4 School factors

Exploring school factors that are associated with youth offending behaviour is important in understanding the barriers to educational attainment, which could function as protective factors amongst the youth. With regard to academic risk factors, the findings of the study reveal that low academic achievement, learners' lack of commitment to education and lack of parental support contribute to academic failure. The conclusion is that the youth are deprived of their capabilities by academic failure; and this makes them vulnerable to offending behaviour. Accordingly, there is the need for more parental involvement in children's education, to ensure their commitment to academic work. Commitment to education can act as a protective factor and reduce the youth's vulnerability to substance abuse and antisocial peer groups.

5.3.5 Support systems that enhance resilience

Identifying support factors that build resilience among the youth is essential in understanding why some of the youth are susceptible to offending behavior, while others are not. Concerning this, the findings of the study show that the females are more resilient to offending behavior than males. In addition, intolerant individual attitudes to socially unacceptable behaviour and substance abuse have been confirmed to build resilience among the youth. Other factors include positive family values and parental monitoring which help the youth survive the risk factors. Academic achievement, association with pro-social peers and well serviced social environments also contribute to building resilience among the youth. Taking these findings into consideration the conclusion is that support factors act as counterweight to children's exposure to social risks. The knowledge and enhancement of protective factors will assist stakeholders in identifying relevant strategies that can strengthen the youth against law-breaking.

5.3.6 Perceptions on prevention

Identifying the youth's perceptions on programmes and strategies taken by the government, communities and NGOs to prevent offending is essential. This can help the said stakeholders to find ways of improving, as well as bridging the gaps in the existing measures. With regard to preventive measures, the findings of the study revealed that the existing strategies are secondary prevention strategies which are more curative than preventive. The conclusion, therefore, is that

preventive measures are ineffective because they happen only when damage has occurred; thus government and development role players need to nurture and protect the capabilities of young people at earlier stages of child development. This has implications for policy formulation and practice in the country. It shows that the existing interventions advocate more for the rights of children and early prevention. Conversely; the children's needs center more on the development of their capabilities if offending behavior is to be prevented. There is need for more localized research and debates on prevention of offending behavior of young people.

5.4 Summary of the conclusions

Youth offending and violence are inspired by conditions of deprivation, where young people fail to develop to their full potential, due to scarcity of resources coupled with weak social support structures. Moreover, youth offending behaviour increases in South African cities when the social control that operates through the police and justice structures and informal institutions, such as civil society organizations, are weak. Furthermore, inequity does appear to exacerbate the likelihood of youth offending behaviour, especially when it combines with other social ills like substance abuse and social disorganization. The recommendations emanating from this study are therefore as follows:

5.5 Recommendations

The prevention of youth offending keeps changing. New contributions to knowledge, on the subject are, therefore, necessary for stakeholders to advance prevention strategies. The recommendations below represent the contribution of the study to advancing prevention of youth offending in South Africa. The recommendations are related to development of children's capabilities. Thus, the study is lobbying for prevention of youth offending through creation of opportunities, for young people to attain their desired goals.

5.5.1 Recommendations to the government

The findings of this study reveal that factors in the social backgrounds of young people influence them to participate in offending behavior. The conclusions made are that youths live with socio-economic deprivations that interact to make them vulnerable, and leave them with no choice except to engage in illegal activities as a survival strategy. Moreover, they have been excluded

from the mainstream social and economic activities. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the government and other stake holders to provide the communities with needed resources to liberate people from deprived conditions of living. The measures have to be introduced early, at pre-school level. It is therefore, recommended that:

- The Department of Education should implement a policy of profiling children by their demographic, social and economic details upon their first entry into schools. The schools need to assist by taking the profiles of children to detect early risk factors that are linked to disruptive behaviour among the learners.
- The Department of Social Development needs to increase the numbers of social workers, and provide them with sufficient equipment to help schools in addressing the outset of wrongful conduct among the children. Social workers should be based permanently at individual schools to address the risk factors of offending behaviour early. This will also reduce unemployment among professional social workers.
- Local government should create programmes that assemble children at specific venues when they are not at schools. To achieve this, municipality should first of all create a council that is answerable to children's out of school activities. The council needs to be staffed with experts in sporting activities, life skills and reading clubs. Their existing public facilities like parks and public halls need to be used to offer children free personal development programmes.
- The Department of Social Development should convene and formalize youth volunteering through a policy framework that offers guidelines to volunteering.
- The South African Police Services (SAPS), through its community outreach programmes, ought to form partnerships with schools, whereby police officers do routine school visits. The SAPS assigns officers who work full time with schools and the school officers have to be equipped with adequate resources. This can help to spread crime awareness, and also, assist children to develop intolerant attitudes to crime.

- The SAPS should conduct research in communities to identify specific demands in specific areas, so as to provide security services that match the needs of the people. This should be done in partnership with the Department of Social Development so as to combine security with social service delivery.
- SAPS should increase its personnel, as well as devote more resources to target high risk areas of specific and recurrent youth misconducts.
- SAPS should devise new strategies to detect and prevent the formation of anti-social peer groups, by starting with research.
- SAPS should devise and implement policies that place police officers under continuous investigation in order to improve the transparency of the police, reduce corruption and make the police more accountable. This will evacuate some frolic companionships between the youth and police officers.
- The portfolio committee associated with social development ought to establish a subdivision that will be an overseer of child development and capability enhancement. This should be accompanied by the amendment and the devising of laws and advocacy for children and food security, child safety and child happiness.
- Crime prevention interventions should be targeted at young men as high risk groups. There should be amendment of laws, regulations of child maintenance and parent-child relations. This should be the responsibility of the Department of Social Development, through its new subdivision on child development.
- Decentralized care and change at grassroots should be made for social policy, advocacy and lobbying of children's capabilities.

The best thing for juveniles bound for law-breaking is a community and people who care about them and their future. Investing in community centers and drop-in centers for youth is a great

start in involving them in the community. Creating attachments and involvements for children is a way to prevent them from even reaching out to law-breaking as a way to belong.

5.5.2 Recommendations to schools

The findings of the study reflect that the youth have protective factors that are challenged by substance abuse. There is, therefore, a need to enhance the existing protective factors to help young people develop to their full capabilities. This needs to be looked at from the human development perspective coupled with early intervention. It is therefore recommended that:

- The Department of Education should expand the life skills curriculum to include strategies of independent decision making, building self-motivation and problem solving. This will inspire resilience to children as early as pre-school phase.
- The Department of Education should establish alternative education programs for children with disruptive behaviour, at preschool level. This can be offered by social workers who are based at schools.
- There should be awareness of the type of offences that are common among the youth. This can be helpful in that it gives a hint about the needs of children. It is, therefore suggested that:
- Schools seek permission from the Department of Education, to organize law-breaking prevention programs with Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), to reinforce and strengthen existing community institutions that help children become intolerant to types of offending behaviour.
- Schools should encourage children to report crime through confidential means like writing pieces of paper and throwing them in boxes within the school compound.
- Crime prevention interventions should be targeted at young men as high risk groups. There should be amendment of laws, regulations of child maintenance, parent-

child relations. This should be the responsibility of the Department of Social Development, through its new subdivision on child development.

- Decentralized care and change at grassroots should be made for social policy, advocacy and lobbying of children's capabilities.

5.5.3 Recommendations to NGOs

The youth and children have been excluded and marginalized from the mainstream social and economic activities. Policies of child and of youth development should be inclusive holistic and early in action. It is suggested that:

- NGOs and CBOs of youth development should involve primary school children in their programmes. Philanthropic agencies should extend their giving and caring programs or activities to pre-school and primary school children. Accordingly, certificates and prizes should be awarded to outstanding young philanthropists.
- Cultural organisations should incorporate and use youth forums as frontrunners in their agendas to enhance the implementation of social cohesion structures.
- Youth development organizations and civil society should involve the youth from as early as pre-school, by working on a regular basis with pre-schools to provide role models for the children. Parents should be involved in the ties between their children and their role models. This will inspire healthy family relationships; improve parenting skills at high risk families and harmonious living conditions in communities.

5.6 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The results of the interviews revealed concerns which extend beyond the scope of this study, but such areas still need to be addressed to improve the conditions of children and prevent youth offending in the country. The concerns are outlined below.

5.6.1 Ambitions of reforming youth offenders

The results of the interviews portrayed that young offenders are people with dreams and aspirations to acquire properties and economic independence. With regard to this viewpoint, the respondents expressed regret over their failures, and wish to claim their lives back. It is, therefore, suggested that further research be carried out on diverse skills development that does not lead to exclusion and marginalization of young people. The research should be based on broader themes like the cost, accessibility and entry requirements into training institutions. Admission policies of institutions should be investigated and assessed, to remove barriers and sources of deprivations for the youth.

5.6.2 Institutional support for children

The outcome of the interviews revealed that the youth understand issues of justice and accountability. The respondents shared with the researcher that they used to go through traumatic events, and most of such experiences were left unaddressed. The researcher believes the sufferings will erupt later in life as risk factors and render preventive interventions invalid. Siegfried and Kelley, (2004) argue that strains left unattended may alter the way young people think about the world and their beliefs in safety, protection, as well as social bonds. It is, therefore, suggested that further research be carried out on the institutional barriers which stop children from holding their care givers responsible for failure of support and abuse. Such studies are needed to offer recommendations that will help children to take independent legal action in cases where they have to claim particular rights.

5.6.3 Primary care givers

Research is further needed with regard to absence of biological father figures in the lives of children. The outcome of such studies can help identify the reasons why some fathers abdicate paternal responsibilities to their children. The causal factors can inform the relevant institutions to come into effect with strategies that work on the ground, to help save children from trauma of negligence.

5.6.4 Anti-social peer groups

Offending behavior in Cape Town is predominantly linked to the existence of groups of anti-social peers. Currently the media is dominated by reports of disruptions and murders by the said groups. The groups can in the long run fuel rebellion and defeat the ends of justice in the country. There is a need for further research into the existence of the gangs. It is believed that the finding of the studies in this area will bring about relevant solutions.

5.7 Conclusion

The study has explored the risk factors that can lead to youth offending behavior. The risk factors are difficulties found in the socio-economic backgrounds, predominantly poverty and substance abuse. The conditions of poverty are largely the responsibility of the government and NGOs. The strategies that are put in place to address the risk factors need to cover the social vulnerabilities in the lives of young people and communities. The recommendations are focused on collective and holistic child development strategies to improve the lives of the youth and their safety, in an attempt to ensure good health; thus leading to their positive contribution to economic development. These strategies need, therefore, be a major part of a coordinated approach to supporting young people in their personal and social development. There is need for further research on the areas which were seen to be closely associated with barriers to developing abilities of young people, and these include: desertion by primary care givers or parents, poor institutional and legal support, anti-social peer groups and the aspirations that young people have to improve their lives.

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University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 1

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

1. Profiles:

- What is your name?
- How old are you?
- Tell me about yourself, your family and your community?
- What are your achievements so far as one of the youth?
- Have you ever worked before?
- What things do you like about yourself?
- What do you think people think about you?
- Is there anything you would like other people to know about yourself?
- Did you know of anyone who committed crime before you did crime?

2. To explore the risk factors that are associated with offending behavior amongst adolescent youth in the Cape Town

Individual

- What kind of character best describes you, or what kind of a person are you?
- What crime did you commit?
- What reasons did you have to commit the crime?
- With whom were you when you got involved in the act?
- How did you start?
- What do other youngsters usually say are the reasons why they engage in criminal activities?
- How many time times have you been in conflict with the law?
- How old were you when you first committed crime and what did you do?

- What are your values?
- What are your fears?
- Have you ever been hurt or suffered emotional breakage- and what was the cause?
- What reasons do you think compel young people to commit crimes several times, maybe the same type of crime?
- What do you think are the differences between your community and other communities and other races in Cape Town?

Family:

- Tell me about the relationship between you and your family members?
- Has anyone in your family ever been involved in crime?
- If yes, what did you think of the whole scene and the people involved?
- Does your family have a history of substance abuse, mental health problems or violence?
- If yes, has there ever been any form of counseling for you as an individual or for the family?
- What values and what things are important in your family?

Peers

- Do you have any friends or peers who are close to you, and are they known by your family members?
- If yes, how many are they and how old are they?
- What do you usually do with them?
- Do you value their friendship?
- Has anyone of them ever been involved in crime, and what did they do?
- What do you think are the good things or the bad things about having friends?

School:

- How far did you go with school?
- How was your performance at school?
- Did you ever miss classes?

- Have you ever been suspended or expelled at school?
- Have you ever been convicted of any lawful offences while you were still at school?
- Do you think school is important?

Community:

- What things make you happy or unhappy in your community?
- Have you ever had an involvement in community activities or volunteering?
- Have you got an involvement in any social groups?
- What do you think of development in our community?
- What do you think is the role of your community in your personal development?
- What do you think is meant by crime?
- What types of crime occur in Cape Town?
- Which ones are most common among the youth?
- Which crimes are usually committed by females and which ones are done by males?

4. To identify support systems that help the youth to become resilient to the socio-economic risk factors associated with offending behavior

- What do you think are the effects of crime in general?
- Which groups of people in communities are most likely to perpetrate crime and why?
- Who do you think is more vulnerable to crime?
- Where and when do you think most criminal activities by the youth occur?
- Do you think there are people, either victims or eyewitnesses, who do not report crime, and if yes why?

5. To identify the youth's perceptions of the measures that are put in place to diminish the risk factors associated with offending behavior amongst the youth

- Do you know of any measures that are put in place to prevent crime among the children in the country?
- What do you think should be done to address crime in Cape Town?
- Who do you think should be the role players in fighting crime by youngsters?

- What do you think is your responsibility the war against crime in general?

6. Others

- Is there anything you would like to ask or share about the discussion that we just had, or anything that you would like to share about concerning the risk factors associated with offending behaviour among the youth?
- In which way do you think the discussion we just had has been beneficial to you?

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TAKING PART IN THIS
STUDY.**

University of Cape Town



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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter serves to introduce Ms Lintle Mohajana, a student pursuing a Masters degree in the postgraduate Social Development Programme at the University of Cape Town.

Besides four courses she's required to complete in her current year of study, Ms Mohajana is required to submit a minor dissertation based on a research project which she's undertaken during the year. Ms. Mohajana has completed the necessary research ethics procedures and processes prescribed by the University of Cape Town and are now ready to commence her field work.

Ms Mohajana has approached you as somebody who might contribute to her research. Please allow her to outline her objectives to you and to describe how you might be able to assist her.

Your co-operation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Leon Hölzhausen
Research Supervisor
Department Social Development

APPENDIX 3



CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH
(By interview, focus group, experiment)

Ithe parent/ guardian
of.....

being under the age of 18 years, hereby consent on his/her behalf to participate as requested in the interviews for the research project on: “EXPLORATION OF THE RISK FACTORS THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH YOUTH OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR IN CAPE TOWN”

1. Details of procedures and any risks have been explained to my satisfaction.
2. I agree to audio/video recording of my child's information and participation.
4. I am aware that I should retain a copy of the Information Sheet and Consent Form for future reference.
5. I understand that:
 - He/she may not directly benefit from allowing my child take part in this research.
 - He/she is free to withdraw my child from the project at any time and am free to ask him /her to decline to answer particular questions.
 - While the information gained in this study will be published as explained, my child will not be identified, and individual information will remain confidential.
 - Whether he/she participates or not, or withdraw after participating, will have no effect on any treatment or service that is being provided to my child.
 - Whether he/she participates or not, or withdraw after participating, will have no effect on his/her progress in the course of study, or results gained.
 - He/she may ask that the recording/observation be stopped at any time, and that he/she may withdraw at any time from the session or the research without disadvantage.
6. He/she has had the opportunity to discuss taking part in this research with a family member or friend.

Parent's signature.....Date.....

I certify that I have explained the study to the volunteer and consider that she/he understands what is involved and freely consents to participation.

Researcher's name.....

Researcher's signature.....Date.....

NB: *Two signed copies should be obtained. The copy retained by the researcher may then be used for authorisation of Items 7 and 8, as appropriate.*

7. I, the participant whose signature appears below, have read a transcript of my participation and agree to its use by the researcher as explained.

Parent's signature.....**Date**.....

8. I, the participant whose signature appears below, have read the researcher's report and agree to the publication of my information as reported.

Parent's signature.....**Date**.....

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 4

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the Harvard referencing convention for citation and referencing. Each contribution to, and quotation in, this essay/report/project/EXPLORING THE RISK FACTORSTHAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE YOUTH IN CAPE TOWN from the work(s) of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.
3. This essay /report/project/ is my own work.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
5. I acknowledge that copying someone else's assignment or essay, or part of it, is wrong, and declare that this is my own work.

Date: 24th April 2013

Signature: