

## Chapter 6

### Age and grade of shop thieves

#### 6.1 *Introduction*

This chapter focuses particularly on the age and grade variables with regard to shop thieves. Significant differences exist between the various age groups and grades as far as perceptions regarding serious crime, the view of a particular society concerning crime, the taking of clothing, opportunity and theft from stores are concerned. The views regarding crime in a particular society, burglary, personal theft, theft of less than R20, theft of more than R100, and the taking of clothing will be statistically analysed and compared with the various grades. The perception that stores make a profit at the customers' expense, the serious consequences of shop theft, the perception that stores seldom prosecute shoplifters, friends that dare each other to steal, the excitement of an escape and the sentences recommended for stealing from stores will also be discussed. The discussion starts with an exploration of the age variable.

#### 6.2 *The age variable*

Significant statistical differences were discovered between the age variable and the respondents' perceptions regarding behaviour which is viewed as serious crimes worldwide, they are: murder, rape, hijacking and assault resulting in serious injury.

A total of four hundred and ninety seven (497) responded to the above statement, out of the total four hundred and seventy-eight (478) the overwhelming majority of respondents regard the above mentioned behaviour as serious crimes. Three hundred and seven (307) respondents are between the age of 14 and 17 and agree with the statement, whilst one hundred and seventy one (171) who fall in the age group of 18 to 21 and older agree. These high figures indicate that adolescents in the age group 14 to 17 can clearly recognise the severity of these crimes. They live in a society characterised by extreme

violent acts that result in serious bodily injury or loss of human lives. They are in a transitional stage, moving from adolescence to young adulthood, which imply that, as they grow up, their perceptions still coincide with conventional perspectives. Another reason may be that they have been exposed to these crimes as direct or indirect victims.

Those in the age group 18 to 21 and older also view violent crimes as serious, since they can differentiate between wrong and right. They belong to an age group that is in the process of moving away from an adolescent stage to an adulthood phase, a human developmental phase associated with both physiological as well as psychological maturity with regard to the level of responsibility that is expected and displayed.

A total of nineteen (19) when all the age group are combined as far as table 12 is concerned did not view the crimes of murder, rape and assault as serious whereas 478 regarded the said behaviour as serious crimes. The highest number of those who said yes were the seventeen years (149) and lowest who agreed with the 17 years were the 14 years. This indicates a total lack of respect for human life and dignity, and constitute a small number of individuals who will be more likely to commit crimes of violence against other people, justifying their acts to suit their own interests. Irrespective of how small the number of these people may be, the harm they pose to societies might be huge. It is true that in every society criminals comprises a small group of individuals who create their own sub-cultural norms and values, and act contrary to the conventional society. These respondents identified these aspects as a way of life, and see nothing wrong with this kind of behaviour, as life is characterised by survival of the strongest. These people are more likely to commit acts of a violent nature because they lack moral consciousness and elements of remorse. They must be seen as individuals who are capable of conduct that violates the law. Individuals are partly defined by what they do and partly by what others do to them. People are criminals, not simply because they break the law, but because those who make formal judgements about their behaviour decide to treat them as criminals and act on that decision.

The next table below illustrates these figures.

6.2.1 Table 12: Age versus Serious crime

Age	Serious crime		Total
	Yes	No	
14	3(0.06%)	2(10.52%)	5(1.006%)
15	54(11.29%)	-	54(11.29%)
16	101(21.12%)	2(10.52%)	103(20.75%)
17	149(31.17%)	5(1.006%)	154(30.98%)
18	96(20.08%)	6(31.5%)	102(20.52%)
19	42(8.78%)	2(10.52%)	44(8.84%)
20	20(4.18%)	-	20(4.18%)
21+	13(2.7%)	2(10.52%)	15(3.01%)
Total	478(96.17%)	19(3.82%)	497(100.0%)

Chi-Square 26,799; DF 7; Prob 0.000

The following questions were posed to the respondents: Do you regard any of the following as crimes? Behaviour, which is only regarded as a crime in a particular society, eg. in some Muslim countries adultery is regarded as a crime for which the death penalty is enforced. To this statement, they responded as follows:

6.2.2 Table 13: Age versus Particular society's view on crimes

Age	Particular society views as illegal		Total
	Yes	No	
14	-	5(1.006%)	5(1.006%)
15	31(14.69%)	23(8.30%)	54(11.06%)
16	46(21.80%)	56(20.21%)	102(20.90%)
17	48(22.74%)	99(35.74%)	147(30.12%)
18	45(21.32%)	56(20.21%)	101(20.69%)
19	22(10.42%)	22(7.94%)	44(9.01%)
20	11(5.21%)	9(3.24%)	20(4.09%)
21+	8(3.79%)	7(2.52%)	15(3.07%)
Total	211(43.23%)	277(56.76%)	488(100.0%)

Chi-Square 17,722; DF 7; Prob 0.013

The following findings may be reported with regards to the age factor and a particular society: four hundred and eighty eight (488) of those who responded, more than half, two hundred and seventy seven (277) do not view the above mentioned behaviour that a particular society perceive illegal, as crime. Two hundred and eleven (211) regard such behaviour as a crime. Of the 277 respondents who disregard this type of behaviour as a crime, one hundred and eighty three (183) are between the age of 14 and 17 years, while ninety four (94) of this group are 18 to 21+ years. Exposure to different cultural beliefs help people to distinguish right from wrong - given diverse ethnic settings people are in the position to decide what is suitable behaviour from their point of view. Of the two hundred

and eleven (211) who agree with the perception, one hundred and twenty five (125) are between 14 and 17 years, whilst the other eighty six (86) are 18 to 21 and older. This cross-tabulation shows that the 17 years more than any age group (nearly 100) disagreed to this statement whereas nearly fifty (48) of the 17 years showed some agreement. The differences pertaining to the 17 years and other age groups may not be easily explained as more research in this regard needed.

6.2.3 Table 14: Age versus Taking Clothing

Age	All right to take clothing				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
14	2(10.52%)	-	1(0.54%)	2(0.73%)	5(1.01%)
15	-	2(9.52%)	21(11.53%)	30(11.07%)	53(10.75%)
16	4(21.05%)	2(9.52%)	41(22.52%)	54(19.92%)	101(20.48%)
17	4(21.05%)	9(42.85%)	64(35.16%)	78(28.78%)	155(31.44%)
18	5(26.31%)	3(14.28%)	32(17.58%)	62(22.87%)	102(20.68%)
19	2(10.52%)	4(19.04%)	16(8.79%)	20(7.38%)	42(8.51%)
20	1(5.26%)	1(4.76%)	6(3.29%)	12(4.42%)	20(4.05%)
21+	1(5.26%)	-	1(0.54%)	13(4.79%)	15(3.04%)
Total	19(3.85%)	21(4.25%)	182(36.91%)	271(54.96%)	493(100.0%)

Chi-Square 37,825; DF 21; Prob 0.014

Significant statistical differences were found with regard to the age variable and the statement: It is all right to take clothing from a store if you or your family cannot afford to pay for such goods.

The following findings are recorded: four hundred and ninety three (493) responded to this sub-statement. The vast majority of the respondents (271) strongly disagree with the statement that it is acceptable to take clothing if you are unable to afford it, while one hundred and eighty two (182) disagree. Only a few participants strongly agree, that is nineteen, and twenty-one approved the taking of clothing from shops when a person or their family cannot afford to buy clothing.

One hundred and sixty four (164) of the total of two hundred and seventy one (271) who indicate absolute disapproval are between the ages of 14 and 17 years. One hundred and seven (107) who belong to the age group of 18 to 21 and older agree with the 14 to 17 years and strongly condemned the taking of clothing as a result of individuals= or family inability to afford such merchandise. Of the one hundred and eighty two (182) who object, the highest number (127) are between 14 and 17 years old, while fifty five (55) who agree are 17 to 21 and older.

The large number of respondents (164) who feel so strongly about this statement are between 14 and 17, because they believe that when these people are caught they have money to pay for the stolen items. They only take the merchandise illegally for the sole reason that they want to get something for nothing. Just because they are not prepared to spend money in order to acquire the desired items, the acts in themselves constitute shoplifting and must be punished with an appropriate penalty.

A high number, nearly eighty (80) out of the one hundred and fifty five are seventeen (17) years old, because they are in a transitional phase of human development. They are about to become young adults who are accountable for their own actions and must take responsibility in all situations, and will always have different views as far as the age factors

are concerned. It is interesting to note that there is an increase in the disagreement with the statement per age group and that it pitches at age 17. From age 18-24+ the disagreements diminishes. More of the 17 years showed (disagreement and strongly disagreed) to this statement, only 13 of the 17 years (strongly agree and agree) with the statement. They are of the view that stealing clothing cannot be justified because it a serious crime before the law.

6.2.4 Table 15: Age versus Opportunity

Age	Opportunity to take goods				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
14	3(7.31%)	1(1.44%)	-	1(0.43%)	5(1.05%)
15	5(12.19%)	2(2.89%)	14(9.58%)	32(13.79%)	53(10.86%)
16	8(19.51%)	10(14.49%)	33(22.60%)	48(20.68%)	99(20.28%)
17	10(24.39%)	23(33.33%)	52(35.61%)	68(29.31%)	153(31.35%)
18	9(21.95%)	19(27.53%)	22(15.06%)	51(21.95%)	101(20.69%)
19	4(9.75%)	8(11.59%)	13(8.90%)	18(7.75%)	43(8.81%)
20	1(2.43%)	5(7.24%)	5(3.42%)	8(3.44%)	19(3.89%)
21+	1(2.42%)	1(1.44%)	7(4.79%)	6(2.58%)	15(3.07%)
Total	41(8.40%)	69(14.13%)	146(29.91%)	232(47.54%)	488(100.0%)

Chi-Square 37,442; DF 21; Prob 0.015

When the age variable and the statement: It is all right to take goods from shops if the opportunity is there and no one will catch you are subjected to a chi-square testing, significant statistical differences are discovered.

The following findings have been revealed: a total of four hundred and eighty eight (488) responded to this question, two hundred and thirty two (232) strongly disagree and one hundred and forty six (146) also show some disagreements. Forty one (41) strongly agree and nearly seventy (69) indicate that they agree that it is acceptable to take merchandise from a shop if they are not going to be caught.

Of the two hundred and thirty two (232) who strongly oppose the stealing of merchandise if opportunities are there, one hundred and forty nine (149) are between the ages of 14 and 17. Nearly seventy (68) of them are seventeen years old, while eighty three (83) belong to the 18 to 21+ years age group (fifty of the 18 years are strongly against this statement, they are the most). It is not a question of capitalising on an opportunity that has presented itself, but a result of offenders who are motivated by an anticipating benefit. Very few, one hundred and ten (110), rely on the opportunity to present itself before they will shoplift, thus they may be considered as opportunistic shoplifters. The 17 years seemed to be more in disagreement with other age group with regard to this statement, maintaining the view that shop theft is not an opportunistic act, as opposed to the (33) of 17 years who agreed with the statement that when an opportunity has availed itself one is likely to succumb to the temptation of stealing from stores, further investigation with regard to opportunity is required.

6.2.5 Table 16: Age versus Theft from Shop

Age	Theft from shop					Total
	Fine	Prison sentence	Community service	Suspended sentence	Any other sentence	
14	-	5(1.52%)	-	-	-	5(1.03%)
15	6(14.63%)	37(11.31%)	1(1.53%)	5(13.15%)	2(18.18%)	51(10.58%)
16	9(21.95%)	76(23.24%)	9(13.84%)	4(10.52%)	2(18.18%)	100(20.74%)
17	7(17.07%)	97(29.66%)	29(44.61%)	15(39.47%)	3(27.27%)	151(31.32%)
18	5(12.19%)	65(19.87%)	19(29.23%)	10(26.31%)	-	99(20.53%)



19	8(19.5%)	28(8.56%)	3(4.61%)	2(5.26%)	2(18.18%)	43(.92%)
20	3(7.31%)	10(3.05%)	3(4.61%)	1(2.63%)	1(9.09%)	18(3.73%)
21+	3(7.31%)	9(2.75%)	1(1.53%)	1(2.63%)	1(9.09%)	15(3.11%)
Total	41(8.50%)	327(67.84%)	65(13.48%)	38(7.88%)	11(2.28%)	482(100.0%)

Chi-square 43,055; DF= 28; Prob=0,034

There are significant statistical differences with regard to the age variable and the sub-statement What sentence would you regard as appropriate for a first offender of 21 years who has stolen a television set from a shop?

The findings are reported as follows: the highest number (215) of those who prefer a prison sentence are between the ages of 14 and 17, of them, nearly a hundred (97) are in the 17 year old age group. One hundred and twelve (112) share similar views, totalling three hundred and twenty seven (327) of whom choose imprisonment. Thirty nine (39) of the respondents were between the age of 14 and 17 and twenty six (26) choose community service as an appropriate penalty for shop theft.

Twenty four (24) between the ages of 14 and 17 years regard a suspended sentence as a penalty that fit the crime of shop theft, while fourteen (14) of those who are 18 to 21 years and older agree. A total of thirty eight (38) respondents agree with this specific sentence, twenty-two (22) in the 14 and 17 years age group consider a fine (a monetary penalty) as a relevant punitive measure, whilst out of a total of forty one (41), nineteen (19) are 18 to 21 and older. Seven (7) out of a total of eleven (11) are between 14 and 17, and four (4) others opt for Any other sentence as an appropriate punishment.

The highest number of respondents, two hundred and fifteen (215) as this table indicates, are between the ages of (14) fourteen and (17) seventeen and indicate that shop theft is a serious crime, punishable by the authorities. This age group favours formal sanctions, because they are raised in a conventional society, and if social expectations are

transgressed, a particular penalty is administered. When offenders are subjected to punitive measures a uniform message of deterrence is sent to all members of the community, including potential shoplifters, to prohibit criminal behaviour. The perceptions that shop theft is viewed as a petty, less and insignificant crime are contested, because the findings indicate otherwise. Shop theft is regarded as a serious crime, punishable with imprisonment, because it has negative and serious consequences on the broader society and business. The 17 years (97) more than any age group seemed convinced that prison sentence is the most appropriate penalty for stealing from shops, 29 went for community service, followed by suspended sentence(15), 7 (fine) and 3 Any other sentence. They advocated prison sentence more than other age group since they are of the view that it is a serious crime and will differ significantly with other age group because they are the seventeen years old.

Finally, our attention will be directed towards the grade variable.

### 6.3 *Grade variable*

6.3.1 Table 17: Grade versus Particular society's views on crime

Grade	Particular society		Total
	Yes	No	
Grade 10	85(40.09%)	74(26.71%)	159(32.51%)
Grade 11	57(26.88%)	84(30.32%)	141(28.83%)
Grade 12	70(33.01%)	119(42.96%)	189(38.65%)
Total	212(43.35%)	277(56.54%)	489(100.0%)

Chi-Square 10,175; DF 2; Prob 0.006

Significant statistical differences are apparent in table 17, pertaining to respondents= grade versus a particular society's view of crime. A total of four hundred and eighty nine (489)

responded to this question, the majority of respondents, two hundred and seventy seven (277), do not perceive the above mentioned behaviour as a crime, whereas two hundred and twelve (212) regard the behaviour as a crime. Of those who responded no, one hundred and nineteen (119) were in grade twelve (12), followed by eighty-four (84) in grade eleven (11) and seventy four (74) in grade ten (10).

The high figures apparent in grade 12 (119) indicate that respondents in this grade are in a position to agree that people subscribe to different cultural issues. Because they are in grade 12, they will always rationalise certain aspects of behaviour differently from others.

6.3.2 Table 18: Grade versus Burglary

Grade	Burglary		Total
	Yes	No	
Grade 10	126(29.37%)	32(48.48%)	158(31.91%)
Grade 11	127(29.60%)	16(24.24%)	143(28.88%)
Grade 12	176(41.02%)	18(27.27%)	194(39.19%)
Total	429(86.66%)	66(13.33%)	495(100.0%)

Chi-Square 9,877; DF 2; Prob 0.007

This research discovered significant dissimilarities with regards to the grade variable versus burglary. A total of four hundred and ninety five (495) participants responded to this question. Four hundred and twenty nine (429) agree, 126 are in grade 10, 127 in grade 11 and 176 in grade 12 and they regard burglary as a crime. The grade with the larger number of responses does not come as a surprise, since the reasons that applied to the previous question are still appropriate. The differences as far as grades versus burglary are concerned are indicated in table 18. The higher the grade, the more they agree that burglary is a crime.

6.3.3 Table 19: Grade versus Personal Theft

Grade	Personal theft		Total
	Yes	No	
Grade 10	106(28.72%)	50(41.66%)	156(31.90%)
Grade 11	108(29.26%)	33(27.5%)	141(28.83%)
Grade 12	155(42.00%)	37(30.83%)	192(39.26%)
Total	369(75.45%)	120(24.53%)	489(100.0%)

Chi-Square 7,730; DF 2; Prob 0.021

Significant statistical differences were noted with regard to table 19, pertaining to grade and personal theft. Three hundred and sixty nine (369) regard personal theft as a crime, one hundred and fifty five (155) are in grade 12, one hundred and eight (108) in grade 11 and one hundred and six (106) in grade 10.

One hundred and twenty (120) of all the grades do not view housebreaking behaviour as a crime (50 are found in grade 10, followed by 37 in grade 12 and 33 in grade 11). The high figures (155) in grade 12 indicate that, because they are in grade 12 they may have first-hand experience of such victimisation, their school stationery may have been stolen by fellow learners. The higher the grade, the more they agreed with the statement.

6.3.4 Table 20: Grade versus Less R20

Grade	Less R20		Total
	Yes	No	
Grade 10	83(26.26%)	74(41.80%)	157(31.84%)
Grade 11	87(27.53%)	55(31.07%)	142(28.80%)
Grade 12	146(46.20%)	48(27.11%)	194(39.35%)
Total	316(64.09%)	177(35.90%)	493(100.0%)

Chi-Square 19,600; DF 2; Prob 0.000

Significant statistical differences are discovered regarding to the taking of goods from a shop if the value is less than twenty rand (R20,00) when cross tabbed with the grade variable. The majority of the respondents, nearly one hundred and fifty (146) are in grade twelve (12), followed by grade eleven (11) with eighty seven (87) and eighty three (83) in grade ten (10). The high figures prevalent in grade 12 indicate that, irrespective of how little the amount for a given merchandise, if the item is taken without permission, it constitutes a crime. Out of a total of four hundred and ninety three (493) who responded to this question, three hundred and sixteen (316) view the behaviour as criminal, whereas one hundred and seventy seven (177) do not see anything unlawful about this behaviour. Seventy four (74) are in grade ten, fifty five are in grade 11 and forty eight (48) in grade twelve. The higher the grade, the more they agree with the statement.

6.3.5 Table 21: Grade versus More Than R100

Grade	More R100		Total
	Yes	No	
Grade 10	113(29.05%)	45(43.69%)	158(32.11%)
Grade 11	104(26.74%)	36(34.95%)	140(28.45%)
Grade 12	172(44.22%)	22(21.36%)	194(39.43%)
Total	389(80.89%)	103(20.93%)	492(100.0%)

Chi-Square 18,157; DF 2; Prob 0.000

There are highly significant statistical differences between the grade variable and the statement Taking goods from a shop if the value is more than R100.00. Four hundred and ninety two (492) responded to this question, out of that number the overwhelming majority, nearly three hundred and ninety (389), consider the taking of merchandise with a value of more than one hundred (R100,00) as a serious crime, whereas the remaining one hundred and three (103) have a view that differed from the overwhelming majority. One hundred and seventy two (172) are in grade twelve (12), followed by one hundred and thirteen (113) in grade ten (10) and one hundred and four (104) in grade eleven (11) who regard the taking of items worth more than the stipulated amount as a crime. The majority of those who regard this behaviour as a crime are in grade 12. Grades 10's and 12's seemed more convinced than the grade 11's with regard to this statement.

6.3.6 Table 22: Grade versus Taking Clothing

Grade	Allright to take clothing				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Grade	5(26.32%)	6(28.57%)	65(35.71%)	79(29.04%)	155(31.38%)

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Grade 11	3(15.79%)	3(14.29%)	60(32.97%)	78(28.68%)	144(29.15%)
Grade 12	11(57.89%)	12(57.14%)	57(31.32%)	115(42.28%)	195 (39.47%)
Total	19(3.85%)	21(4.25%)	182(36.84%)	272(55.06%)	494(100.0%)

Chi-Square 12,360;DF 6; Prob 0.054

With regard to whether it is all right to take clothing from stores and the variable grade, significant statistical differences occur. A total of four hundred and four (494) responded, and the vast majority (272) strongly disagree and one hundred and eighty two disagree. Four hundred and fifty four (454) view the taking of clothing as a crime. Of the 272 strongly against such behaviour, one hundred and fifteen (115) are in grade 12. This indicates that their perceptions regarding behaviour differ from other learners in other grades. About forty (40) do not view the cited behaviour as criminal, one out of ten strongly (19) agree, while twenty one (21) agree. The number of respondents who do not view this type of behaviour as criminal appears to be minimal. They may be individuals who are more likely to steal clothing and then justify their deeds by referring to socio-economic disparities in society, especially the difficulties their families are confronted with. Grade 11's agreed the least with this statement, followed by the grade 10's and the grade 12's agreed the strongest.

#### 6.3.7 Table 23: Grade versus Shops make profit

Grade	Shops make profit				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Grade 10	10(50.00%)	21(63.64%)	61(30.20%)	61(25.96%)	153(31.22%)
Grade 11	2(10%)	8(24.24%)	61(30.20%)	73(31.06%)	144(29.38%)

Grade 12	8(40%)	4(12.12%)	80(39.60%)	101(42.98%)	193(39.38%)
Total	20(4.08%)	33(6.73%)	202(41.22%)	235(47.96%)	490(100.0%)

Chi-Square 25,644; DF 6; Prob 0.000

Highly significant statistical differences occur with regard to the grade variable and shops that make a lot of profit. Four hundred and ninety (490) in total responded to this sub-statement. Fifty three (53) respondents in all the grades view shops as entities that make more money, and thus justify their shoplifting acts. Of the 53 mentioned, twenty (20) strongly agree, while thirty three (33) agree. Two hundred and two (202) disapprove of stealing from shops if they generate a lot of money, while most of the respondents 235 out of 490 strongly disagree with the notion that it is all right to take from shops because shops can afford such losses. One hundred and one (101) are in grade 12, and because of that their opinions will differ significantly from other learners in other grades. Grade 11's agreed the least followed by grade 12's and grade 10's agreed the most.

#### 6.3.8 Table 24: Grade versus Serious Consequences

Grade	Serious consequences				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Grade 10	19(20.65%)	29(23.97%)	63(38.89%)	41(35.96%)	152(31.08%)
Grade 11	28(30.43%)	39(32.23%)	49(30.25%)	28(24.56%)	144(29.44%)
Grade 12	45(48.91%)	53(43.80%)	50(30.86%)	45(39.47%)	193(39.46%)
Total	92(18.18%)	121(24.74%)	162(33.13%)	114(23.31%)	489(100.0%)

Chi-Square 16,243; DF 6; Prob 0.013

There have been important statistical differences between the various grades and their



perceptions regarding the serious consequences of shoplifting. One hundred and sixty two (162) respondents believe that shop theft has serious repercussions for all members of the society, as shops have to increase their prices to compensate for losses incurred, and as a result customers have to pay more. Sixty three (63) are in grade ten, while fifty (50) and forty nine (49) are in grade 12 and 11, respectively.

A disturbing finding is that a total of two hundred and thirteen (213 agree and strongly agree) do not realise the serious implications of shop theft, purely based on their ignorance, because, as customers they suffer the consequences directly and indirectly. They are part of the broader society and is caught in the same web. They are, unfortunately, more likely to take items from shops as a result of I don't care attitude.

These high figures indicate that shop theft must be viewed as a serious problem, with serious consequences, and everybody suffers because of it, irrespective if you are committed to or conform to the conventional norms and values of the society. Serious consequences associated with shop theft do not only include price increases but to an extent, if shoplifters face criminal prosecution, they will also have to face stigmatisation and embarrassment. Grade 10's agreed the least, followed by the grade 11's and grade 12's agreed the most strongly with this statement

6.3.9 Table 25: Grade versus Seldom Prosecute

Grade	Stores seldom prosecute				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Grade 10	8(40%)	24(44.44%)	65(31.65%)	54(27.14%)	151(31.39%)
Grade 11	-	12(22.22%)	66(31.73%)	60(30.15%)	138(28.69%)
Grade 12	12(60%)	18(33.33%)	77(37.02%)	85(42.71%)	192(39.91%)
Total	20(4.16%)	54(11.23%)	208(43.24%)	199(41.37%)	481(100.0%)

Chi-Square 15,331; DF 6; Prob 0.018

With regard to the grade variable and the statement It is all right to take goods from stores because they seldom prosecute you even if they do catch you significant statistical differences were discovered.

The following findings may be reported: two hundred and eight (208) of the respondents disagree, seventy seven (77) of them are in grade twelve (12), and sixty six (66) in grade 11. Research respondents in grade 10 agree, while one hundred and ninety nine (199) strongly oppose such views. Eighty five (85) of them are in grade 12, sixty in grade 11 and fifty four (54) have similar opinions, whereas only twenty (20) strongly agree and fifty-four (54) agree that stores seldom prosecute shop theft offenders. These high figures differ from the perception that stores seldom prosecute which indicates that stores often prosecute shoplifters, and that shop theft is a serious crime, punishable by the authorities.

This cross-tabulation shows that the grade 10's and 12's were much more convinced than the grade 11's that the stores seldom prosecute shoplifters.

6.3.10 Table 26: Grade versus Friends dare you

Grade	Friends dare you				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Grade 10	6(46.15%)	11(61.1%)	48(39.66%)	83(25.07%)	148(30.64%)
Grade 11	3(23.07%)	3(16.66%)	37(30.57%)	100(30.21%)	143(29.60%)
Grade 12	4(30.76%)	4(22.22%)	36(29.75%)	148(44.71%)	192(39.75%)
Total	13(2.69%)	18(3.72%)	121(25.05%)	331(68.53%)	483(100.0%)

Chi-Square 21,073; DF 6; Prob 0.002

Significant statistical differences are recorded between the variable grade and the sub-statement It is all right to take goods from stores if your friends dare you to do so. Three

hundred and thirty one (331) of the research respondents strongly disagree with that view; one hundred and forty eight (148) are in grade 12, one hundred (100) in grade 11 and eighty three (83) in grade 10. One hundred and twenty one (121) of all the grades display some disagreement, whereas a small figure strongly agrees (13) and eighteen (18) agree.

The high figures, 331 (148 in grade 12, 100 in grade 11 and 83 in grade 10), that appear in table 26, indicate that they would not take merchandise, even if friends attempt to influence them to do so. This indicates that they would not succumb to negative peer pressure in order to be accepted in a group, or to obtain recognition or status, as they know how to choose between right and wrong, and view the taking of goods when friends dare one to do so as wrong. Those who disagree are in grade 12, and because they are more responsible if they are in this grade, they are able to make sound judgements regarding whom they relate to.

Only a small number of those who condone and promote the discussed behaviour cannot do things their own way, but have to rely on their friends to decide for them. It is a small fraction of individuals who are more likely to steal or behave illegally in a group context, purely in order to be recognised by the group they associate with. Another reason may be that they follow the appeasement principles and other unknown reasons may also account for this behaviour. The grade 10's are more convinced than the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12's about this statement; showing they are more prone to peer pressure.

6.3.11 Table 27: Grade versus To Get Away, Excitement

Grade	To see get away, excitement				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Grade 10	10(52.63%)	10(43.47%)	58(36.02%)	73(25.34%)	151(30.75%)
Grade 11	2(10.52%)	3(13.04%)	51(31.67%)	88(30.55%)	144(29.32%)
Grade	7(36.84%)	10(43.47%)	52(32.29%)	127(44.09%)	196(39.91%)

12					
Total	19(3.86%)	23(4.68%)	161(32.79%)	288(58.65%)	491(100.0%)

Chi-Square Tests 16,901; DF 6; Prob 0.010

Table 27 discloses that significant statistical differences exist with regard to the relationship between the grade variable and the question that relate to whether one can get away with stealing and therefore derive excitement from the act.

The findings may be reported as follows: nineteen (19) of all the respondents strongly agree while twenty three (23) agree with the fact that it is all right to take goods from stores to see whether you can get away with it as it gives one a feeling of excitement. More than half of the research respondents, two hundred and eighty eight (288) strongly oppose the statement, one hundred and twenty seven (127) are in grade 12, eighty eight (88) in grade 11 and seventy three (73) in grade 10. They are supported by one hundred and sixty one (161) who also show some disagreement. Fifty eight (58) are in grade 10, fifty two (52) in grade 12 and fifty one (51) in grade 11.

As indicated in table 27, the vast majority of the research respondents are not so adventurous that they get a thrill if they take something from shops, unlawfully. They do not rationalise that the act of shoplifting brings them the exact opposite outcomes of getting caught, and the embarrassments that may result in facing criminal prosecution. It is not surprising that there is only a small fraction of respondents who are more inclined to steal in order to see if they can remain undetected, since this results in immediate gratification.

This is supported by the views depicted in table 26, when friends dare them to steal from shops in order to experience the euphoria of being accepted as a member of a group. Grade 11's agreed more with this statement than the grade 10's and grade 12's.

6.3.12 Table 28: Grade versus Recommended Sentences Shop

Grade	Recommended sentences SHOP														Total
	1 month or less	2-6 months	6 months to a year	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	more than 25 years	life sentence	
Grade 10	4(22.22%)	8(20.51%)	12(22.22%)	14(26.41%)	12(33.33%)	4(14.81%)	4(30.76%)	7(35%)	6(50%)	4(40%)	1(33.33%)	4(66.66%)	5(83.33%)	15(75%)	100(31.1%)
Grade 11	7(38.88%)	16(41.02%)	18(33.33%)	18(33.96%)	10(27.77%)	10(37.03%)	5(38.46%)	7(35%)	2(16.66%)	5(50%)	13(33.33%)	2(33.33%)	-	-	101(31.1%)
Grade 12	7(38.88%)	15(38.46%)	24(44.44%)	21(39.62%)	14(38.88%)	13(48.14%)	4(30.76%)	6(30%)	4(33.33%)	1(10%)	1(33.33%)	-	1(16.66%)	5(25%)	116(36.1%)
Total	18(5.67%)	39(12.30%)	54(17.03%)	53(16.71%)	36(11.35%)	27(8.51%)	13(4.10%)	20(6.30%)	12(3.78%)	10(3.15%)	3(0.94%)	6(19.35%)	6(19.35%)	20(6.30%)	317(100%)

Chi-Square 47,708; DF 26; Prob 0.006



Finally the respondents were asked how long a youthful offender of twenty one (21 years), who has stolen a television set from a shop should spent in prison. Significant statistical differences between the grade variable and the above aspect were discovered. A total of three hundred and seventeen (317) responded to this question, one hundred (100) were in grade 10, one hundred and one (101) were in grade 11 and one hundred and sixteen (116) in grade 12. Fifty five (45) in grade 12 recommended a sentence ranging between 6 to 1 year, while 36 in grade 11 and 26 in grade 10 said the same. Other respondents choose other types of sentences, the grade 12's acknowledge that shop theft is a serious crime that deserves the recommended penalty. This reinforces the view that anyone stealing from shops, irrespective of their age, has to realise that there are serious implications involved for stealing from stores. Punishment is relative, that what is a deprivation for one person or group may not be for another, and people differ with regards to which deprivations are regarded as more or less serious. Shop theft is conceived as a public wrong, to be punished by formal sanctions, as prescribed by the criminal law of a particular country. Advocates of prison sentences are perhaps of the opinion that punitive measures are justifiable with regard to capacity, in order to deter and reform offenders. In societies where members show non-compliance with expectations, they are more likely to be punished, to ensure that they behave according to the prescribed rules. This cross-tabulation shows that the grade 11's and 12's agreed more on 1 month or less prison sentence for stealing from shop, the grade 11's and grade 12's agreed more on 2-6 months period followed by the grade 10's, the grade 12's agreed most with 6 months to a year, followed by the grade 11's and grade 10's, on 1 year prison sentence the grade 12's agreed most, followed by the grade 11's and the grade 10's, on 2 years, the grade 12's agreed more, followed by the grade 10's and the grade 11's, the grade 12's agreed more, followed by the grade 11's and the grade 10's, on 4 and 5 years all the grades shared the same views, the grade 10's agreed more, followed by the grade 12's and the grade 11, on 11-15 years, the grade 11's agreed more followed by the grade 10's and the grade 12's, on 16-20 years all the grades shared same point of view, to 21-25 years, the grade 10's agreed more, followed by the grade 11's, as far as more than 25 years prison penalty is concerned, the grade 10 agreed more, followed by the grade 12's and lastly, with regard

to life sentence, the grade 10 agreed most, followed by the grade 12's.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

Significant statistical differences occur as far as the age and grade variables of shoplifters are concerned. Age plays a significant part in the presentation of various views held by the different age group of young people between the ages of 14 - 17 and 18 -21+. They perceive shop theft differently, simply because they are not in the same age category they will have diverse views about shop theft.

It can also be reported that significant statistical dissimilarities were registered as far as the grade variable is concerned. Respondents from the three selected grades perceived shop theft related issues differently, thus it can be concluded that, because of the different grades they belong to, their perceptions will vary significantly.