A study of juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools in Gauteng

by

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DECLARATION

Student No: 3993396

I declare that A STUDY OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AMONGST ADOLESCENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

M. P. Ntshangase
Date: 5 April 2016
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dearest husband, Ezekiel, my late beloved parents and brother, Lucas and Elizabeth Nguse and Lucas Nguse (Jr), and all my siblings. My heartfelt thanks go especially to my husband for his unconditional love, long suffering and unwavering support during my studies. I am especially grateful also to my late parents, especially my father, for encouraging and nurturing my love for reading and studying.
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SUMMARY

Juvenile delinquency amongst school-going adolescents is a growing concern in South Africa. Initiatives by policy-makers, educationists and school authorities, amongst others, have not yielded the desired changes in learner behaviour. This dissertation focuses on adolescent delinquency amongst learners in Gauteng secondary schools, with the precise aim of making recommendations to address the problem.

An extensive literature review was conducted. An interpretive-constructivist paradigm with a mainly qualitative design was followed. A questionnaire and focus group interviews were administered to teachers. The findings confirmed the researcher’s view that juvenile delinquency in schools is escalating and warrants attention and intervention from all stakeholders.

The main conclusion drawn from this research was that current policies and interventions on learner behaviour had no impact because policy-makers lacked the necessary will to ensure that interventions were implemented, reviewed and monitored.

This study argues for a multi-pronged approach to address the problem. The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) should review its policies and approach to the problem, and support teachers to ensure that teaching and learning remain the main priority of schooling. Future research could explore the role of social ills in the South African context on the development of learners’ antisocial behaviour.

Key terms

Juvenile; adolescent; youth; juvenile delinquency; status offence; antisocial behaviour; risk factors; protective factors; retributive justice; interventions.
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CHAPTER ONE
ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Today, more than ever, the problem of juvenile delinquency pricks at the conscience of many societies, and South Africa is not an exception. In this study, the researcher discusses the experiences and views of teachers of secondary schools regarding juvenile delinquency and the apparent moral decline among their learners. The problem was investigated from the perspective of socio-education, a field of research which, amongst others, studies the role of social factors that feature in the development of children and youth during their growth to adulthood.

In his epigraph as well as other parts of his book, David Brandt (2006: 134) revives the musical, “West Side Story”, in which the lyrics of the song, “Gee, Officer Krupke”, are sung by a group of gangsters. This renewed the interest of the researcher in the well-being of post-apartheid youth in township schools in particular. The dilemma of “What ... to do” about juvenile delinquency that Officer Krupke, the psychiatrist and social worker face, is the same dilemma teachers, principals, education specialists and authorities face today in South Africa in particular, and internationally. Over the years, research on the problem enlightened and continues to enlighten societies and provides much-needed knowledge and information about the phenomenon. However, juvenile delinquency remains a problem and major challenge in the home and school, despite numerous studies undertaken to understand it. The following paragraphs are an exposition of the problem that many South Africans and other societies reflect on and grapple with daily.

In South African schools, the problem of juvenile delinquency is a topical issue. In his article on discipline in the Free State township schools, Masitsa (2008: 234- 236), cites a number of newspaper reports of juvenile delinquency among school children. This problem is not unique to South Africa, but affects many industrialised countries today (Rossouw, 2003: 416). De Wet’s study (2004: 206) on school vandalism, which is an example of antisocial behaviour, reveals that the problem also affects Britain, USA, Canada, France, the Netherlands and Australia, amongst others.

The report above states that the problem is serious and is escalating because many offences are committed by children younger than thirteen years old. Mendenhall (2008: 71 – 76) concurs and echoes the concerns of many researchers globally and in South Africa, that societies bear the financial burden caused by juvenile delinquency. These and other studies indicate that there’s a need for ongoing research on the problem.

The following discussion is an exposition of the nature and extent of the problem in South Africa, in particular.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Juvenile delinquency is a global challenge which many countries are attempting to curb. The following discussion is a brief overview of the problem in some countries in recent times.

1.2.1 International status of juvenile delinquency

According to Schmalleger and Bartollas (2008: 26), a report in the “Japanese Times” (2006), states that the Japanese public reportedly supports capital punishment for the growing number of juvenile criminals there. In the United Kingdom, the “knife carrying culture” of adolescent delinquents has caused more injuries and deaths than gunshot incidents (2008: 39). In South Korea, cigarette smoking, alcohol abuse, bullying and mostly cyber-crime are reportedly increasing among adolescents, and thus pose a serious challenge to the deeply conservative nation (Kim & Kim, 2008: 1–15). Lastly, America, which is one of the most industrialised countries in the world, is “alarmed and baffled” by the ferociousness with which juvenile delinquents carry out antisocial acts (Heilbrun, Goldstein & Redding, 2005: 6). They reportedly attack their teachers, shoot
people, commit rape, engage in gang activity, terrorise neighbourhoods and are
remorseless when caught. Thus, today, the delinquent population in the USA “poses
a great threat to public safety” as compared to the rest of the citizenry (2005: 6).

The foregoing studies are among numerous studies that highlight the problem of
juvenile delinquency. This challenge begs the question: What is being done to address
juvenile delinquency at its onset before it escalates into serious crime and possible
persistent misbehaviour? Marte (2008: 2-4) also concurs with other researchers that
early childhood delinquency has the likelihood of persisting throughout adolescence
and adulthood. He urges further that the aetiology of antisocial behaviour is crucial to
understanding problem behaviour so that appropriate interventions can be developed.
In concurrence with Marte, Brandt (2006: 134) used the lyrics, “Gee, officer Krupke”,
alluded to earlier on, not only as his epigraph to his book, but also to highlight the
numerous psychological and social origins of adolescent problem behaviour. He
asserts that the fight against antisocial behaviour lies in tracing the origin of the various
forms of behaviour that affect adolescents.

The researcher’s concern is that antisocial behaviour in whatever form has the
tendency to lead to seriously maladjusted youth and adults, if not addressed early. In
order to curb the problem, the Geneva Convention for the Rights of The Child (2007:
26) made recommendations to the United Nation’s member states to develop
operational interventions to curb this scourge. Its recommendations support the
historical social research findings which suggest that juvenile delinquency is a social
problem that calls for collective effort if it is to be effectively addressed. The following
discussion points to a distinctly South African problem which is the focus of the present
study.

1.2.2 South African society and juvenile delinquency in perspective

In South Africa, a longitudinal study conducted by Barbarin and Richter (2001: 4) found
that the impact of the culture of violence in the apartheid era on the general
development of children can be experienced today. For example, the death of Hector
Peterson and other school children in 1976 personify this culture. Consequently,
children and youth in post-apartheid South Africa live this culture. Gray (1999: 376)
describes the problem of violence and crime in South Africa as particularly severe compared to other countries. Adding to this view, Groenewald (2005: 225 – 227) cites the extreme trauma South African children have been exposed to historically, which paints a grim picture of the general well-being of the youth. According to Pelser (2008: 1), this state of the youth is a consequence of crime and violence since 1976, which has since pervaded the home and school. This has become a way of socialising the youth and developing their identities.

In a parallel study conducted in New Crossroads Township by Ramphela (2002: 13), political violence has reportedly had an undesirable effect on the morality of black youth there and across the country. The perceptions of teenagers in the study indicate that South Africa ignores them as an entity, one which constitutes the highest number of the total population in the country; 43% of which are children under 18 years (Bray, 2002: 12). Odhiambo (2007: 134) also states that the adolescent population in the continent is estimated to be 80% of the continent’s total population. For example, in their study entitled: ‘Black boys with bad reputations’, Pattman and Bhana (2006: 267 – 271) concluded that the boys’ bad behaviour was more the result of societal factors than their psychological make-up, and that society disregarded their needs.

According to Madernather (2005: 2), the youth reportedly make up 43% of prison inmates nationally, and of this number, Gauteng has the highest number of offenders in prison. These statistics are disturbing. A media report concurs with these findings and adds that currently there are 13 prisons housing juveniles, of which a great percentage is between 14 and 18 years old (Slamdien, 2010: 13). A case in point is that of Sebokeng Township where, according to Dhlamini (2009: 49 – 52), statistics gathered by the Department of Social Services indicate that in January 2006 alone, 66 youths were charged with various criminal offenses ranging from rape, assault, robbery, shoplifting, being in possession of marijuana and posing as police officers. In her research on juvenile delinquency in this township, she concluded that adolescent offending could be a form of communication, an unconscious cry for help from families and society.
1.2.2.1 Juvenile delinquency in schools

Although research on juvenile delinquency in South African schools is not extensive, it is important to comment on the findings of some national surveys on examples of the problem. Research by scholars such as Parry (1998: 6-24), Bureau of Market Research (2012: 2-3) and Slabbert (2012: n.p), for example, harped on alcohol abuse among secondary school learners. This latter conduct is not the focus of this study, but is one of the examples of antisocial behaviour that has manifested itself among school-going juveniles. Alcohol abuse is sometimes the precursor of antisocial behaviour or the result of other general delinquent acts and can therefore not be ignored. The ensuing discussion seeks to quantify the problem that has become a normal feature in schools.

1.2.2.2 Media reports on the nature and extent of the problem

Media reports on the problem are becoming more frequent and are cause for concern for society in general and the researcher in particular, and cannot be ignored:

- A Johannesburg-based researcher, Izabella Little, made comments after media reports about a group of Gauteng learners who had reportedly engaged in alcohol and drug binging, including group sex. She asserts that such behaviour is condoned by the permissive attitude of most parents who tend to ignore it (Serrao, 2008:n.p.);
- In 2005 alone, Mqikela School in the Eastern Cape reportedly recorded 144 teen pregnancies, while Gauteng Province recorded the highest number of pregnancies, with 14 784 cases (Makwabe, 2007: 6). In an investigative programme on SABC 2, research by the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) concurred and indicated that teenage pregnancy was escalating (“Leihlo la Setshaba”, 2012, SABC 2, February 23, 18:00);
- In 2007 alone, no less than three violent murders of school learners by other children were reported in South Africa. Gilford, Eliseev and Serrao (2007: n.p) reported the gruesome murder of Mfundo Ntshangase. In another incident, Thabang Nthite was also murdered (Mbanjwa, 2007: n.p). In yet
another sensational news report, a Western Cape 8 year old boy was murdered (Du Plessis, 2007: n.d, n.p);

• The widely reported gang-rape of a Grade 10 girl learner in Jules High School premises in Johannesburg, in full view of other learners, and filmed by the perpetrators, which was later described by the victim as consensual (Sapa, 2010: pars 5 & 6);

• The verbal abuse and threats directed at teachers at Silverton High School that was reported in the Pretoria News of 30 May (Anon, Looking for harmony at school from hell, 2007: n.p);

• In another incident in Limpopo, a teacher was held hostage by learners who demanded a ransom of R200 for his release (Rampedi, 2011: 14);

• Nohiya (Cutting Edge, 2011, SABC 2) pointed out that the use of Kuber was escalating amongst school children. The aforementioned Indian product is packaged as tobacco and known to cause drug-related effects such as sexual arousal. An undisclosed number of children in Grade 9 in Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape were reportedly using the drug in 2011;

• Maphumulo (2010: 10) cited a report by the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU) released in 2010, which indicated that alcohol abuse and alcoholism amongst teenagers aged below 20 years was increasing at an alarming rate. Furthermore, the report revealed that in the Western Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo, ‘tik’ and cannabis were the drugs of choice for teenagers. In most instances, parents were reportedly condoning the behaviour;

• Bailey (2012: 3) contended that cyber-bullying was rising and the case of a 15 year old Krugersdorp High School girl bullied by a group of girls in January of the same year was a case in point;

• On 6 February, New Age (Anon, Gangs in high school stabbings, 2012: 7) reported allegations by the principal of Makhaya Sizimisele High School in Khayelitsha that gang warfare in his school was rife. In an incident in January 2012, five gang members were stabbed, with one victim in a coma in Tygerberg Hospital;

• According to Seale (2012: 3), the former MEC of Education in Gauteng, Barbara Creecy, made an unannounced visit to Lavela Secondary School in Soweto, and found approximately 700 learners and seven teachers late for
school. Yusuf Abramjee, spokesman for LEADSA Initiative, who was also at
the school, was shocked by one of the teachers who arrived late with music
blaring from his car;

• In yet another incident, four Grade 10 learners allegedly bullied and attacked
their classmate, David Hlongwane. The victim, who attended school at
Lethabong Secondary School, later committed suicide. When interviewed,
learners at the school told a Tshwane North District Psychologist that they
were afraid of being bullied next (Mazibuko, 2012: 6); and

• A tip-off led LEADSA official, Yusuf Abramjee, to another Gauteng school
evidencing the declining morality among learners and teachers. The Star
(Anon, Back to basics: 2012: 16) reported that in one case, a principal was
cought arriving to school drunk, and in another a Grade 10 girl stripped off
her pants for the entire day.

It is unfortunate that such media reports are often described as less important,
because the offences are commonly labelled “status offences”, which are illegal only
because they are committed by underage children (Siegel & Welsh, 2009: 19). In
addition, Bynum and Thompson (2007: 6) contend that status offences are less
sensationally reported, and thus receive little public notice. In addition, few instances
of juvenile antisocial behaviour are reported to or get the attention of school
authorities, the police and other social structures such as the church, health and social
workers. This prevailing attitude in many societies is discouraged by most studies
which describe juvenile delinquency as a social problem that needs collective effort to
effectively address it.

According to De Wet (2004: 207), 50% of criminal activity in South Africa is committed
by youth aged between 14 and 18. Tyson and Stones (2002: 1) concur and state that
in comparison to the United Kingdom and Australia, South Africa’s crime levels are
very high, thus making the country a very unsafe place to live in. Adding to the gloom
is Crosnoe’s (2006: 56) suggestion that academic failure could be positively correlated
with later adolescent drinking, thus exacerbating the long-term effects of failure at
school. It is this and other factors, including the brief overview above, which prompted
the researcher’s enquiry into the problem in South African secondary schools, in
particular, Gauteng Province.
1.2.2.3 Reaction of society to the problem

In post-apartheid South Africa, to quote educationist Ramphela (2011: 5), South Africans are “pre-occupied with celebrating past glory rather than focusing on investing in [their] future”.

Consequently, the well-being of young people is relegated to the background. Mary Metcalfe (2008: 10) refers to the lack of discipline in secondary schools as one of the causes of despondency amongst teachers. Juvenile delinquency in schools is an indictment of South African society as the breeder of antisocial behaviour amongst the youth. This is the reason why De Wet (2004: 207 - 211), in her study on learner vandalism in schools, blames the school environment itself as a factor in the escalation of deviant behaviour because it is an extension of society.

The ensuing paragraphs are the formulation of the problem the researcher wanted to address.

1.3 PROBLEM FORMULATION

The extent of juvenile delinquency and crime in South African schools, as alluded to earlier on, and the apparent permissiveness of society, were cause for concern for the present researcher, hence this study.

According to Horne (2004: 340), adolescence is a normal, albeit frustrating, but inevitable process of development from puberty to adolescence. Steyn (2008: 209) concurs and states that it is a temporary state normally discontinued in adulthood. This latter statement notwithstanding, there is a need to refocus on the problem in South Africa, where the youth consistently misbehave due to numerous factors, some of which are beyond their control, but which have the consequences of undermining the socialising role of the home, in particular, and the school, especially in black township schools.
Based on this background, the study intended to explore juvenile delinquency in South African schools by answering the following primary research question:

**What is the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools?**

The secondary research questions were as follows:

- What are the opinions of teachers on juvenile delinquency in secondary schools and their experiences thereof?
- What are the most prominent social and geographical features of adolescents in whom antisocial behaviour manifests?
- How has juvenile offending affected discipline in schools?
- What role does the family play in causing, preventing and dealing with juvenile delinquency?

A discussion of the aim and motivation of the study follows in the next section.

### 1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to make recommendations to deal with antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents, and contribute to educational research and the development of policies in dealing with the problem in future.

#### 1.4.1 Objectives of the study

- describe the opinions and experiences of teachers on juvenile delinquency in secondary schools;
- describe the nature, extent and causes of the problem in secondary schools; and
- describe the extent to which parents, teachers, wider society and policies have caused, prevented and dealt with the problem in secondary schools.
1.4.2 Rationale for the study

Socio-educational studies in South Africa and media reports suggest that juvenile delinquency is the result of a decline in morality in the society (Madernather, 2005; Ramphela, 2002; Tyson & Stones, 2002; Masitsa, 2008). These sources, amongst others, played a major role in developing the researcher’s interest in investigating the problem. Quite often, initiatives to curb the problem consist of awareness campaigns which are not accompanied by effective interventions to fight the problem. However, such an approach will not address it, especially if it is ignored at its onset, usually in the home and school environments.

The study was conducted for the following reasons:

- South African society is bombarded with media reports of juvenile offending, some of which are disturbing;
- The socialising roles of the home and school leave much to be desired;
- South African society is complacent and apparently permissive, thus inadvertently allowing juvenile offending to escalate;
- Coherence of the family unit has been weakened further in the new political dispensation. The family and society in general have to constantly adjust to new lifestyle demands; and
- The present researcher has had first-hand experience of juvenile delinquency previously as an educator at secondary school level. As a Subject Facilitator before and a Performance Management and Development official currently at Tshwane North District, the researcher continues to experience the problem during school visits. Delinquent acts such as truancy, fights, use of obscene language, vandalism, disrespect of authority and substance and alcohol abuse, featured and continue to feature in the researcher’s experiences and have become increasingly difficult to ignore. Thus, the aforementioned acts and the daily reports of the problem in the media, which pointed to its escalation, prompted this study.
- There are few intervention programmes that help to curb juvenile delinquency. Slamdien (2010: 13) posits that there is a dearth of juvenile reform and programmes in schools in South Africa, thus exacerbating the problem. To cite
an example; a 15 year old boy with special behavioural needs could not be placed because there appeared to be no special facilities that could deal with teenagers like him (Venter, 2010: 6). Lastly, government-initiated programmes lack the necessary political will to drive and sustain them.

The researcher believes the findings of the study could suggest that teachers’ perceptions and experiences of the problem could influence policy-makers to intervene in addressing the problem.

1.4.3 Significance of the study

The findings of this study could lead to fresh debate among researchers, parents, teachers, socialising agents such as the church, health and social workers, as well as policy-makers in South Africa, about the factors that cause the problem and its escalation. In addition, the aforesaid stakeholders could find common ground in developing intervention strategies to effectively address the problem. Finally, the research could contribute to further research on juvenile delinquency.

A description of the research paradigm and method of investigation will be discussed next.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Research paradigm

This study focused on the problem of juvenile delinquency from a socio-educative perspective. It focused on the role of the school in the socialisation of adolescents in post-1994 South Africa.

1.5.2 Research design

The proposed research design for this study was a combination of quantitative and mainly qualitative, descriptive and interpretive enquiry, thus a mixed method research
(MMR) approach. The research was structured as explained in the ensuing paragraphs.

1.5.3 Data collection

1.5.3.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was administered to a sample of teachers at a pre-arranged meeting. The purpose of the questionnaire was to contextualise the study and enable the researcher to select a group of participants for the main data collection phase using the focus group interviews.

1.5.3.2 Focus group interviews

Based on the responses from the questionnaire, participants for the focus group were selected for unstructured, in-depth, interviews. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews.

1.5.4 Selection of participants

The study consisted of teachers who taught in secondary schools in Tshwane North (TN) District 3 (D3). The focus group interviews consisted of 12 educators from the population. The sample initially consisted of 30 teachers to enable the research to continue even when other participants dropped out during the research.

1.5.5 Ethical measures

Scientific research is characterised by those principles that guide scientific morality with regard to conduct that is scientifically wrong or right. The most fundamental ethical principle for any scientific study is to protect participants and those who may be affected by the research. Participants need to be protected, for an example, from legal prosecution for past criminal activities or invasion of their privacy.
The study gave due consideration to general research ethics. Permission to conduct the research with the population and focus group interviews was sought from and granted by the relevant institutions and individual participants.

1.5.6 Data analysis

A reliable statistician analysed the questionnaire responses. For the focus group interviews, the methods of analyses, such as coding of responses, were applied by the researcher who then interpreted the data and narrated the findings in the research report.

1.5.7 Trustworthiness

The concept was used interchangeably with the concepts “reliability” and “validity” in the study and steps were taken to determine the reliability and validity of the study as expected. Collectively, the concepts refer to high quality research which is “plausible, credible, trustworthy and therefore defensible”. Wisker (2008: 322 – 323) adds that a study must accurately measure the issues under discussion.

1.5.8 Limitations

The study was conducted only amongst a limited number of TN secondary school teachers. Therefore, the findings would not be generalizable to other parts of the country. The key concepts are discussed below and henceforth used thus throughout the study.

1.6 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The concepts described below are universal and together describe the developmental phase; its challenges as well as the needs of young people in transition from childhood to adulthood. Thus, they suit the purpose of the present study on juvenile delinquency in Gauteng Province.
The concepts are, namely: adolescence and adolescent/youth; juvenile and delinquency; status offence; and risk factors.

• **Adolescence and adolescent/youth**

According to Macmillan English Dictionary For Advanced Learners (MED) (2002), the concept “adolescence” refers to a stage of development from childhood to adulthood, while in the Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Digital Dictionary (MWCDD) (2003), it refers to a period of development “from puberty to maturity terminating legally at the age of majority”, in which the adolescent is in search of his/her own identity. The concept “adolescent” thus refers to one who is in the stage of adolescence (See MWCDD, 2003). The concept “youth” refers to a period in one’s life when one is young (See MED, 2002).

• **Juvenile and delinquency**

The concept “juvenile” refers to children or young people. However, when they display conduct that is discordant with social norms or the law, they are described as juvenile delinquents. The concept “delinquency” thus refers to the delinquent behaviour (See MWCDD, 2003). Marte (2008: 2) and Gottfredson (2001: 4) concur with this definition and add that it can also be a component of problem behaviour.

For purposes of this study, the aforementioned definitions of the concept were used throughout the study. Examples of the problem include lying, truancy, sexual licentiousness, teenage pregnancy, bad-mouthing others, cheating, lack of respect, involvement in fights, vandalism, substance abuse, arson, rape, bullying, aggression, theft, violence and gangsterism. This study focused on both the general adolescent antisocial conduct that is characteristic of this stage of development as well as criminal acts that border on the illegal. Numerous media reports have alluded to alarming juvenile criminal acts amongst secondary school learners which the researcher could not ignore.

• **Status offence**

According to Siegel *et al* (2009: 19), the concept “status offence” refers to conduct that is illegal if committed by a child – it is commonly used in reference to a child whose
behaviour indicates that he/she needs care and supervision because of poor parental upbringing.

- **Risk factors**
The concept refers to factors within society that have the likelihood of leading to juvenile delinquency, such as family structure, poverty, the economy, population growth and racism (Schmalleger *et al.*, 2008: 6 – 9).

Due to the various operational definitions of the key concepts in this study, the concept “juvenile”, “adolescent”, and “youth”, on the one hand, and “delinquency”, “misconduct”, “offending” and “antisocial behaviour” on the other, were used interchangeably throughout the study.

The outline of the study follows next.

### 1.7 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One presented an overview of the problem of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools. The nature and extent of the problem in the province presented in the media in recent years had elevated the researcher’s awareness of the problem. Thus, it became apparent that the problem warranted more research. The problem was delimitated. The aim of the study and its objectives were stated and clarified. The rationale, significance, research design and methodology were discussed and key concepts were explained.

Chapter Two will present a review of literature on the problem. It will focus on the historical perspective of the problem, its nature and manifestation, as well as an overview of the theoretical background for the investigation.

Chapter Three will discuss the interpretive-constructivist paradigm chosen for the study, the mixed method design followed and which consisted of data collection, population, sampling and ethical considerations.
In Chapter Four research data will be presented and analysed. This chapter will provide a description of qualitative methodology applied in this study. The selection of data collection tools were determined by the objectives of the study, namely: to describe the opinions and experiences of teachers on juvenile delinquency in secondary schools, the nature, extent and causes of the problem in secondary schools and the extent to which parents, teachers, wider society and policies have caused, prevented and dealt with the problem in secondary schools. The questionnaire and focus group interviews selected as data collection instruments for this study will be discussed. The criteria for authenticating the findings were considered during the analysis.

In Chapter Five, recommendations for possible interventions in addressing the problem as well as possible future research will be made.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave an overview of the study and a broad outline of the problem, namely, the extent of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools. Adolescents in many black township schools in Gauteng manifest offending behaviour which is enforced by negative societal influences, some of which they have no control of.

The apparent laissez-faire attitude of society toward juvenile delinquency compounds the problem. Moreover, the responsibilities that go together with the numerous freedoms apportioned to the youth were inadequately, if at all, mediated to the vast majority of the youth. Thus they are left to their own devices to chart their behaviour, hence the escalation of the problem.

In the next chapter, a historical background of the problem through literature studied will be discussed at length.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A plethora of studies has found that juvenile delinquency is a serious global problem that troubles many societies (Hoge, 2001: 1; Du Preez & Luyt, 2011: 33; Ladokun, 2010: 1; Shoemaker, 2000: 3-5; Maseko, 2009, Chapter 1: 1; Barberet et al, 2004: 96-99; World Youth Report (WYR), 2003: 189; Juvenile Justice Around the World (JJAW) (2013: 329). The problem is not a new phenomenon at all. In his work on youth and gangs entitled: “Youth in Crisis”, Goldson (2011: 34-35) states that the problem is “as old as ‘problem families’ and the paranoiac discovery of alcohol beverages”. Goldson’s study asserts that juvenile delinquency is widespread, albeit at variable levels.

Stephens (2010: 45) lists scores of violent deaths in schools between 1992 and 2010 that were perpetrated by youth in the United States of America (USA). In one incident in Madison, a learner was shot in the school hallway during class change. In Indianapolis and California, an art technical director and a school resource officer respectively, were murdered within the school premises by learners. Barberet et al (2004:14-21) concur. They found that England, Wales, the Netherlands and Spain, for example, share similar rates of youth offending. Although delinquency rates in Japan and India are reportedly low, there are concerns that the problem needs to be addressed (Friday & Ren, 2006: 214-225). Other studies in other contexts tend to corroborate these findings (Dunkel et al, 2011: 23-26). Shoemaker (2000:3) supports these assertions and points to the existence of numerous historical records on human behaviour, in particular juvenile misconduct.

The literature review was structured in such a way as to gain insight into the problem globally and in South Africa in particular, where it manifests itself and is seen to be escalating. The latter then became the main purpose of the review.

The historical development of juvenile delinquency as a distinct area of socio-educational research will be discussed in the next section.
2.2 JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AS A GLOBAL PROBLEM

The maxim “history repeats itself” befits a description of juvenile misconduct as a persistent international problem. Comprehensive research conducted to date, indicates that societies grappled with the problem through different historical periods. Hill et al (2001: 1) support this view and state that people have always agonised about what some call “out-of-control” children. A brief historical overview of the problem as experienced in various contexts follows.

2.2.1 Juvenile delinquency in classical times

The fear of youth crime is central to major socio-educational and criminological discourses in addition to other concerns. Various studies have made reference to the perpetual fear of and anxiety over juvenile misconduct, which escalated since the 1890s and 1900s due to changing social contexts (Hoge, 2001: 115).

Shoemaker (2009: 2-16) provides an overview of the history of the problem. According to him, juvenile delinquency is purported to have begun in Europe in the 7th Century. Puritanism was one of the major ideologies of the time. This ideology advocated strict and acceptable individual and collective behaviour, especially in matters related to religion.

As early as the 17th Century, children were treated as adults and, likewise, were held accountable for their actions. Children are said to have been deliberately exposed to sexual activity, hardships and adult behaviours with the express purpose of initiating them into adulthood. They were also harshly punished for any misdemeanours because it was believed that corporal punishment was good for discipline. Some antisocial children who failed to comply with social and religious rules in particular, reportedly faced the death penalty. Du Preez et al (2011: 3) concur, and state that the concepts “punishment” and “deterrence” characterised the justice practices of the time in the treatment of both adults and children.
Gradually, it dawned on society that children are naturally innocent and that their spiritual growth is dependent on adult guidance. This change in attitude resulted in new practices, and these principles were made into law. It became mandatory for parents to supervise and discipline their children. In addition, it was expected of parents to model good behaviour and children to imitate it. They were also to be protected from nudity and rude and inappropriate sexual references, and trained to use civil language and follow appropriate dress code and etiquette. Thus, an obligation was placed on the family in particular and society in general, for the socialisation of children and youth.

Although the family had to take full responsibility for the rearing of children, it was realised that raising good citizens was a collective responsibility. According to Hill et al. (2001: 2), society began to seriously reflect on the problem and asked questions, amongst which, were the following:

- Whose accountability was it if children misbehaved – was it the family’s, the state’s, religious elders’, educational or social agents’ responsibility?
- What role, if any, should the aforementioned play – was their role to be prevention, restitution, deterrence or reform?

The global society today still grapples with the aforesaid questions. The latter laid the early foundations of juvenile justice as it is known today. Juvenile delinquency as a problem of the developed and developing world is discussed next.

### 2.2.2 Juvenile delinquency in the modern world

The Puritan principles used in the upbringing of children left a mark on the subsequent Anglo-American tradition in particular, and other pre-modern societies. As already alluded to, children were obliged to behave in a respectable, dignified and upright manner or face harsh treatment similar to that faced by their predecessors. However, such harsh attitudes towards delinquents evolved with time and child-rearing practices became more humane.
The World Youth Report (WYR) of 2003 gives guidance in understanding the nature and extent of the problem of juvenile delinquency and subsequent reaction to it.

### 2.2.2.1 The World Youth Report 2003

The WYR by the Secretary General of the United Nations Organisation (2003:189-199), asserts that youth are facing new challenges, hence the escalation of juvenile misconduct. According to the report, the challenges cited below are amongst those that are a constant source of concern for modern society:

- Unemployment and under-employment of youth;
- A decline in the authority of local communities;
- The disintegration of the family structure;
- Ineffective education systems;
- Rapid population growth; and
- Over-crowding in poor areas and juvenile delinquency

These challenges are considered fertile ground for the development of adolescent problem behaviour. The USA, which is one of the most developed countries in the world, is dogged by juvenile crime caused by the aforementioned factors. However, developing nations are reportedly most affected by the problem (2003: 189). In an effort to quantify the problem, a global report entitled: JJAW, (Chapter 13: 329), which is based on the WYR (2003: 189), indicates that between the 1980s and 1990s, delinquency among underage children rose by 50%, except in the USA. Countries in transition, in particular, have experienced an increase of 30% since 1995 in offences such as substance abuse, which is the most common offence. The WYR has identified some salient factors in describing the current state of juvenile delinquency internationally, which are discussed next.
2.2.2.2 Universal views on juvenile delinquency

According to the WYR (2003: 189-196), the following are current reflections and the attendant features of the problem globally:

- Delinquent behaviour encompasses all public misdemeanours by youth aged between 12 and 20;
- Adolescents are both delinquents and victims of juvenile delinquency – they are the victims of more than 80% of all violent acts which they do not report;
- There are more male than female delinquents. For example, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (Delinquency, n.d, n.p.), in America alone, 80% of the delinquent population is boys – a rate similar to that of other countries globally;
- Between 1992 and 2000, 80 million to 150 million children living in poverty were at risk of offending;
- Delinquency is largely a group activity involving mostly 14 year-olds;
- Social, economic and cultural conditions tend to cause the problem to escalate; and
- There is no systematic global action to address the problem.

Despite the above-mentioned factors, there are some attempts to address the problem. The United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency view juvenile antisocial conduct as a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood and should be regarded as normal (WYR, 2003: 191). A brief synopsis of juvenile delinquency in South Africa follows.

2.2.2.3 Juvenile delinquency in South Africa

According to Altbeker (2007: 12: 41), scores of data indicate that South Africa is a very violent country - “reputedly the most murderous country in the developed world” as compared to countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan and the USA. Altbeker cites as an example from a report in which, in 2006 alone, South Africa had 41 victims of murder per 100 000 people – an “astonishingly high” number of murders.
Secondly, rates of robbery were ranked the highest in South Africa as compared to the most crime-prone countries of Latin America (2007: 47). Thirdly, South Africa has the highest rates of alcohol consumption per drinker in the world, including a tendency to binge (2007:107). The aforementioned beverage is often found to be a common factor in most criminal acts. Harvard criminologist, Chris Stone, cited by Altbeker (2007: 48) concurs, and states that “the distinctive feature of crime in South Africa is “not its volume, but its violence”. In addition, children and youth are at risk of offending due to easy access to guns and a culture of binge drinking. Pelser (2008: 1) supports the findings and laments the negative impact of a normalised “culture of violence” and crime over the past thirty years. According to him, it is mostly the socially excluded youth, who constitute a significant portion of the population, who are affected. Zenzile (2008: 22) argues that South Africans have an unhealthy disrespect for the rule of law and youth crime has become a normal feature of South African life.

The school, in particular, has become the site where juvenile delinquency, a product of the aforementioned culture, is mostly manifested. A significant number of scholars attest to the disturbing picture of problem behaviour among school-going youth (Masitsa, 2011: 163-165; Masitsa, 2008: 236-240; Cindi, 2006: 2-5).

The following factors are a grave source of concern as they tend to exacerbate juvenile delinquency: poor and lack of implementation of prevention programmes; lack of political will to drive reform programmes; the increasing youth population; and the concurrent rise in social challenges such as poverty, unemployment, HIV/AIDS and high teenage pregnancy.

Masitsa (2008: 236 – 237) provides a taxonomy of adolescent misconduct in schools gleaned from the media and other research findings. The list is endless and includes the following:

- Truancy;
- Substance abuse;
- Carrying of weapons to school;
- Aggression and violence;
- Theft;
- Bullying;
- Challenging the teachers’ authority;
- Inappropriate sexual conduct;
- Breaking of school rules with impunity; and
- Rape.

Various scholars attest to some of the antisocial behaviours of adolescents listed in the aforementioned taxonomy (Thabethe (2010: 13-16). Jones (2003: 5) mentions poor school attendance, confrontational behaviour and the deliberate flouting of school rules by individual learners with deviant tendencies. Govender (2006:1) asserts that school safety is compromised by crime within and without the school environment, which turns schools into ‘war zones’, as depicted in scores of media reports. Masuku (2012: 1) cites statistics released in *A General Household Survey* by Statistics South Africa. The survey indicates that nationally, between July 2008 and July 2010, 160 754 learners fell pregnant due to various social factors including juvenile delinquency. Kwa-Zulu Natal Province featured the highest number of pregnancies. Allen (1997: 12-13), on the other hand, refers to status offences such as truancy as some of the forms of misconduct affecting schools in South Africa.

Research on *Learner discipline in South African public schools* conducted by Rossouw (2003: 416) asserts that the abovementioned taxonomy could be extended. Related causes of delinquency within schools that are not normally cited include, amongst others, the following:
- Lack of transformation;
- Lack of counselling services;
- Intolerance of school management towards some groups;
- Parental apathy;
- Corruption; and
- Bribery.
In the same vein, teachers are also cited in the same research as the internal causes of learner misconduct. They are reported to be: poorly qualified and incompetent; prone to misconduct; and harbour work-to-rule attitudes (Rossouw, 2003: 417).

The foregoing factors point to the need for the education system to be overhauled, to ensure that it corrects the social ills that have dogged the society, especially young children and the youth, since the previous political era.

Madernather (2005: 2-5) supports the statements above, and adds that South African prisons are populated by many young offenders and she is concerned that their delinquent behaviour may become chronic and persist into adulthood.

Matsoga (2003: 26) states that in Botswana, learners commit misdeeds such as lying, peddling drugs and cheating in tests. Although juvenile records do not indicate the extent of juvenile misconduct there, the Botswana National Youth Policy is concerned that it is escalating, as indicated by its records. More boys than girls are reportedly involved in criminal activities and the society is the source of youth misconduct by role-modelling antisocial behaviour, which the youth imitate.

Moeding Secondary School is the focus of Matsoga’s study (2003: 19) because of it being one of the few remaining schools with boarding and commuting facilities. According to the researcher (2003: 110-119), the school was affected by numerous acts of learner misconduct, violence being a common denominator in most of them. Learners engaged in the following acts:

- Violence through threats, bullying, fights between individuals or groups with sharp objects, slapping, punching and choking directed at learners and teachers;
- Alcohol and substance abuse;
- Verbal abuse and sexual harassment of girls;
- Disrespect of school authorities; and
- Vandalism and theft of school property and that of other learners.
Factors cited as the causes of problem behaviour in Botswana schools include harsh economic conditions and the influx of foreigners with socially unacceptable behaviours (2003: 161).

The example of Moeding Secondary School only serves to model juvenile delinquency and its manifestation in other countries in the continent as well. Thus, depicting a disturbing picture of the status of adolescents’ behaviour in general, and South Africa, in particular.

The foregoing discussion depicts a worrying picture of delinquent behaviour among children and adolescents. Such behaviour is bound to impact negatively on their well-being and appropriate socialisation.

The ensuing discussion focuses on some underlying theories underpinning juvenile delinquency, which social science researchers and others generated over time in order to understand the undesirable conduct of young people.

2.3 THEORIES UNDERPINNING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Over time, theory formulation has been identified as a sound basis for understanding human existence and nature by determining the relationship between concepts and explaining their relationship. In addition, theories in a scientific study provide a common scientific base for a particular field such as the social sciences. Thus, the application of theory to scientific research is an attempt to prevent the distortion of knowledge since research on phenomena can be tested against known theories (De Vos et al, 2005: 36-43). Based on the aforesaid views, it is important to provide a synopsis of theoretical foundations which explain adolescence as a distinct phase of human development.

There is a link between juvenile delinquency and adolescence. Any scientific study of the former, as evidenced by scores of studies on the problem, traces it to the development of children during the latter phase. Consequently, a discussion of adolescence will precede an overview of theoretical foundations that underpin youth
problem behaviour. Insight drawn from the following discussion could enhance understanding of the problem.

### 2.3.1 Adolescence as a developmental phase

Adolescence is a human developmental phase commonly described as difficult for learners. They undergo physiological, psychological and emotional changes which require them to attach meaning to these changes in relation to the social contexts in which they find themselves. While attempting to make sense of their transformation, they commit antisocial acts which the wider society condemns. Hence, it is important to consider pronouncements of various theories in order to understand the adolescence stage.

Muus (1996:1-3), amongst scores of scholars, considers Stanley Hall to be the pioneer of a scientific reflection on adolescence. The latter scholar linked adolescence to several variables amongst which are the following:

- Psychology
- Physiology
- Anthropology
- Sociology
- Religion
- Crime
- Glory
- Sex
- Education.

It is stated in the Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society on *Adolescence and youth* (Anon, 2008: 3) that Hall, Siegmund Freud and Erik Erikson are considered the champions of adolescence research. The aforesaid encyclopaedia asserts that Siegmund Freud focused on the psychosexual development of adolescents – genital changes in puberty that tend to alter psychological functioning. Freud’s contention was that an adolescent’s often emotional instability, mood swings,
vulnerability, inconsistent and antisocial behaviour was caused by psychosexual conflicts within the individual. Such behaviour is intended to assert the individual’s independence from others.

Erik Erikson based his argument on Freud’s work and further referred to several developmental stages which an adolescent undergoes to develop identity. Each successfully completed phase serves as the basis for the next phase. Thus, the individual is faced with the decision to either rebel or submit to prevailing cultural institutions. In Erikson’s view, ‘experimentation’ and ‘identity crises’ characterise adolescence.

The 1960s and 1970s saw many young people identifying with prominent athletes, movie stars and musicians, whom they regarded as their role-models. They wanted to conform to the prevailing values of those times. This scenario suggests that such conformity was an attempt at resolving the identity crisis experienced by adolescents.

Despite the work done by the foregoing scholars, there is no common definition of adolescence. Firstly, individuals have different experiences regarding physical, emotional and cognitive maturation. It is estimated that the global population numbers approximately 7 billion, of which more than 1.8 billion are 10-24 year olds, a number which includes adolescents. It is suggested in some quarters that the media hype around adolescence, describing it as a dangerous phase, is not supported by empirical evidence (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2013: n.p). Mathye (2004: 20) supports the latter view and asserts that adolescent misbehaviour is exaggerated and that rebelliousness among the youth is just an extreme and not the norm. Therefore, it is contended that the phase should be treated as a normal phase culminating in adulthood.

Arnett (2006: 186-189) also credits Hall, whose work presages modern theory, with the description of adolescence as a period of “storm and stress”, which is well in accord with the views of modern psychologists. In his review of Hall’s work on adolescence, Arnett cites a number of similarities between Hall’s notion of adolescence and those of modern scholars, some of which are cited below:
• An increase in adolescent crime rates;
• Increased peer relations and influence;
• Accelerated biological development in puberty;
• High sensation-seeking as opposed to “monotony, routine and detail [which] are intolerable”;
• Mood swings;
• Advanced reasoning skills;
• Vulnerability to media influence; and
• Increased risk behaviour with friends.

Lawson and Heaton (2010: 151) cite cross-cultural commonalities in the various aspects that characterise adolescence, namely:

• The social self, evidenced in peer relations, moral attitudes, education and vocational goals;
• The psychological self, observed in mood, impulse control, emotions and feelings about the bodies;
• The familial self, expressed through feelings towards parents and the atmosphere at home;
• The sexual self, expressed through attitudes towards sexuality and sexual behaviour; and
• The coping self, characterised by the ability to deal with the world.

Socio-economic factors and cultural practices and customs have been positively correlated with sexual and psychological selves that are prominent during adolescence. Upchurch, Sucoff and Levy-Storms (1999: 920) agree and point to the centrality of sexual activity which marks the transition to adulthood.

Today the media depicts the youth as fun-seeking, as exemplified by their obsession with fashionable clothes, hair-styles, music and movies. In contrast, social contexts such as poverty, sexual abuse, violence and wars, impact negatively on adolescents’ lives (Goldson, 2011: 34-35; Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society, Anon, 2008: 7). A factsheet in Advocates for Youth (n.d: 1-2) provides a
statistical description of the challenges young people face. According to the factsheet, 41% of the world’s unemployed people comprise young people of whom 238 million live in extreme poverty and 110 million live in hunger. Likewise, Bray (2002: 53-54) and Hagell and Jeyarajah-Dent (2006: 16) assert that the well-being of children should be society’s priority. Bray’s study (2002: 53) propagates the necessary extensive role of research in championing the well-being of children by providing answers to a wide range of aspects of child well-being such as school achievement, transition from school to work, family structure, intergenerational transfers, migration, HIV/AIDS and family formation. Thus, instances of antisocial behaviour amongst youth could be reduced.

Antisocial behaviour and deviance are positively correlated with adolescence. According to Moffit, as cited in The Canadian Department of Justice’s report on its research on juvenile delinquency (n.d n.p), youth who do not engage in any misconduct are regarded as “statistical anomalies”. Adolescents are by nature driven by the need to be different, hence their failure to sometimes comply with societal norms and values. Consequently, the concept “individualism” thus becomes a characteristic of adolescence. Friday et al (2006: 17) suggest that the pursuit of individual interests, needs, rights and advancement, tends to relegate the collective to the background, thus leading to self-centred behaviour. In contrast, Muus (1996: 3) advocates that individual difference should be celebrated and not made subservient to the collective.

The foregoing views point to a need for a middle ground in the ongoing discourse on adolescent behaviour during adolescence.

Some of the theoretical foundations that underpin the study of juvenile delinquency are discussed next.

2.3.2 Theoretical foundations of juvenile delinquency

Theory clarifies the nature of a phenomenon, in this case, juvenile delinquency, by describing and explaining its nature. In addition to this purpose, a good theory should provide both abstract and practical understanding of youth misconduct in its
manifestation. Shoemaker (2000: 7) is of the view that theory formulation and subsequent research should provide ongoing understanding of how problem behaviour “is either maintained or discontinued”. This implies that theory is not static, thus making it possible for researchers to trace the changing nature of juvenile delinquency over time. Such a view implies that any theory should be open to review for purposes of improving practice and policy on issues related to the problem. Theories that underpin juvenile delinquency will be discussed in the following paragraphs with the aforementioned thoughts in mind.

2.3.2.1 Social Control Theory

According to Hagan (2012: 171-175), control theories have a long history. Shaw and Mckay’s Social Disorganisation Theory, Informal Social Control Theories of Reckless and Sykes and Matza’s theory, are forerunners to Hirschi’s (1969) Social Control Theory. Shaw and Mckay’s ecological studies of 1942 helped to refine their theory which asserts that crime is the result of social disorganisation in which the environment impacts negatively on the individual. When the environment fails to provide positive socialisation in instances of extreme poverty, homelessness, deviant peer and community culture, individuals resort to crime (Hagan, 2012: 165).

In the abovementioned research, it is further stated that in 1943 Reckless built his Informal Social Control theories on the concept, “containment”, which consists of inner and outer containment. In his theories, Reckless probed why some individuals resort to criminal behaviour while others are able to resist it. According to him, inner moral strength, ethics and a positive self-concept protect individuals who are at risk of inappropriate behaviour and help them to control their impulses to act inappropriately. If the inner ability to avoid crime fails, the external factors such as friends, family and the wider community help the individual to desist from criminal activity through counselling. However, the theory is not seen as favourable for intervention programmes and not many empirical studies were conducted to test its merits.

It is argued that delinquent individuals use neutralisation techniques to justify their deviant actions (Bailey, 2004: 6-9). The theorist refers to five techniques that individuals use to make their criminal acts seem inconsequential, namely: denial of
responsibility; denial of injury; denial of the victim; condemnation of the condemners; and appeal to higher loyalties. Thus, they blame other people or situations for their actions. Individuals deny that their actions are criminal if there are no injuries sustained, for example, stealing a television set. When victims sustain injuries, individuals claim their actions were in self-defence. While they may own up to the delinquent act, the individuals shift the blame, for example, claiming they cheated in a test because the teacher did not teach the learning content. Finally, he/she will claim to have committed the antisocial act for the benefit of a disadvantaged group such as stealing from others to benefit the poor.

2.3.2.2 Theory of crime

Haynie (2001: 1020) explains that Hirschi based his work on Emile Durkheim's notion of social integration. In collaboration with Gottfredson (1990), Hirschi's original theory was replaced by A General Theory of Crime which emphasises self-control as a buffer against crime (Welch, 1998: n.p.).

The thrust of A General Theory of Crime is the significance of social bonds, which help to restrain individuals from engaging in delinquent acts. The assumption is that delinquency occurs if one's social bonds are weak or broken. According to Welch (1998, n.p), it is claimed that being attached to important others, committed to and involved in socially acceptable behaviour, and believing in society’s norms and values, reduce the risk of adolescents’ engagement in antisocial behaviour. For example, Ford (2005: 629) and Elliot (2009: 119) respectively, suggest that misconduct such as alcohol abuse, and the lack of mattering to others, have the capacity to weaken social bonds.

A General Theory of Crime emphasises the significance of family integration and conformity, instead of individual personalities. In this regard, the theory cites peer relations, in addition to the family, as an important factor in delinquent behaviour (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2011: 70). Vitz (n.d:12-16) postulates that the “loss of the father” caused by various factors such as divorce, co-habiting couples and illegitimacy of children, weaken the family structure and lead to delinquency. Peacock et al (2008) (Mazembo, Thomson-de Boor & Mphaka, 2013: 10) concur. However, Haynie (2001:
discounts the notion that all families must have a father, since it apparently ignores the reality that the family structure is continually evolving. Several scholars criticise Hirschi’s theory, because it focuses mainly on why individuals refrain from misconduct, and neglects the social contexts that are conducive to bad behaviour. However, similar criticism against the theory has not deterred scholars from tapping into the theory in an attempt to understand delinquency.

2.3.2.3 Anomie and Strain Theories

Merton, Cloward, Cohen and Agnew’s studies on Strain Theory have their roots in Durkheim’s work. The latter defined the concept “anomie” as a “disregard for the law or a ‘moral malaise’”, a lack of distinct norms to guide human behaviour. He argued that society has the power and responsibility to impose social norms in order to control individuals’ insatiable desires (Harrell, 2007: 6).

Merton (in Hagan, 2012: 159-160) suggests that societal values encourage materialism among citizens. Therefore, it is the discrepancy between the goal and the means to achieve it that causes a strain, thus leading to delinquency. Harrell (2007:6) points out that in highly industrialised countries such as the USA, citizens constantly seek and accumulate material possessions. Acquiring such possessions thus becomes their main goal. However, socially acceptable means of achieving the aforesaid goal are often regarded as either time-consuming or inaccessible by some individuals. Accessing an education and a well-paying career in order to achieve one’s financial obligations may be seen by poor communities as a luxury for the rich. Consequently, a strain within the individual is created, causing some to seek unacceptable means to fulfil their needs. They might steal, cheat, fight, bully or kill to get what they want.

Orcutt (1983: 68-75) asserts that Merton’s theory provides a framework for explaining a wide range of antisocial behaviour, thus making a valuable contribution to social research. The theory could assist sociologists to understand some of the causes of juvenile misconduct – why some follow conventional means to achieve their goals while others succumb to antisocial means. In addition, the theory could assist policy-makers to address the causes of misconduct.
Like other scholars, Rauch (2005: 9) traces the link between crime and moral breakdown to the ideas of Durkheim and Merton. According to the former scholar, The Moral Regeneration Movement in South Africa is founded on the latter scholars’ theories. Former and late President Nelson Mandela initiated the movement as a strategy of rebuilding people’s declining spirituality after decades of political and social turbulence (2005: 9). In essence, the strategy, if successful, seemed to support Merton’s suggestion that through adaptation to environmental demands, individuals stand a better chance of achieving their goals using socially acceptable means.

However, criticism levelled against Anomie and Strain theories has not diminished their positive contribution to understanding human conduct, including juvenile delinquency and crime.

2.3.2.4 Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura (1977) is considered the father of the Social Learning Theory. Fellow social researchers support his view that individuals learn new behaviours by observing and imitating modelled attitudes, emotions and behaviours towards the environment.

Naturally, children tend to copy good and bad behaviour from adults and other children. Those at risk of antisocial conduct learn from others that socially unacceptable behaviour is right. Some scholars concur and contend that vulnerable youth learn antisocial behaviour through the attitudes and behaviour of their peers (Haynie, 2001: 1021-1022). They may, for example, steal, lie, fight, disrespect others, bully, cheat in tests, and commit serious offences such as rape and murder, individually or in groups. Shannon and McCall (n.d.) concur, and add that adolescents tend to condone antisocial behaviour because they copy their peers and others.

Social Learning Theory focuses on the social context as a site for learning behaviour and the reciprocal influence between the individual, the behaviour and the environment. Jekielek (1998: 908) concurs, and cites the example of children who observe and learn their parents’ aggressive behaviour towards each other, and apply
it to solve their own problems. They learn that it is okay to swear, bully, use vulgar language, threaten and assault others in conflict situations. Thus, any inappropriate behaviour by adults, irrespective of the context, puts children at risk of misconduct.

2.3.2.5 Ecological Theories

According to Breetzke (2008: 1-2), the concept “ecological” refers to an investigation of the relationship between people and their environment and that the ecological theory is rooted in Shaw and McKay’s (1942) work, which mapped numerous delinquent incidents. The theorists cited poor physical environments caused by urban growth as examples of risk factors for crime.

The aforementioned theorists also contended that “criminal behaviour occurs in space”, and that human behaviour could be understood using this perspective. Consequently, geographical areas inhabited by individuals and groups are probed, since it is postulated that they are either criminogenic or protective factors for delinquency. Hassett-Walker (2009: 12) cites low economic status, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential mobility as precursors for delinquent acts.

2.3.2.6 Labelling Theory

According to Townsend (n.d, n.p), Frank Tannenbaum (1938) is considered the grandfather of the Labelling or Societal Reaction Theory, which is originally known as “dramatization of evil”. The theory posits that society creates criminals and delinquents by condemning deviant behaviour, which is often nothing more than a rejection of society’s “habits, institutions and values”. Edwin Lemert (1951) and Howard Becker (1963) are named among the major proponents of Tannenbaum’s ideas.

However, scholars like Hirschi argue that the theory ignores scores of other factors other than society’s reaction that predispose individuals to criminality and delinquency (Townsend, n.d, n.p). The aforementioned researcher further contends that the theory also fails to provide evidence of the dire effects of labelling on the individual.
Nevertheless, criticism against the theory has not diminished its validity for the study of juvenile delinquency, amongst other problem behaviours. For example, some scholars cited in Townsend (n.d, n.p), assert that the theory could prove useful in investigating the effect of the labelling process in the family, school, various community contexts and other “formal labellers”. In support of this view, they cite the use of diversion programmes whose value lies in de-labelling delinquents and helps to rehabilitate them instead. In their view, the latter approach is a refusal to “dramatize the evil” or the crime and antisocial behaviour. They further contend that its current application is theoretically and practically sound for future research.

The foregoing overview of delinquency theories is not exhaustive, but provides a valid foundation for the study of juvenile delinquency. Various criticisms levelled against each theory should not diminish their value in social research.

Shoemaker (2000: 267) propagates an integrated theoretical approach to the study of the juvenile delinquency. According to him, the lack of a single theory to explain the totality of youth misconduct suggests that studies could focus on “more general patterns of illegal activity” or status offenses instead. Shoemaker (2000: 269) proposes an integrative approach which consists mainly of the following phases:

- Structural phase, which focuses on social conditions;
- Individual phase, of which an individual’s biological and psychological aspects are crucial; and
- Socio-psychological phase, which should focus on social controls, self-esteem and peer associations, amongst others.

Juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in the South African context takes on numerous forms which necessitate the use of a multi-pronged approach such as the one suggested by Shoemaker. For purposes of this study, the above-mentioned integrated perspective was adopted.

Globally, sociologists and criminologists have cited various risk factors as the origin of juvenile delinquency, which will be discussed next.
2.4 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

There are factors that predispose adolescents to engage in delinquent acts. In his study, Shoemaker (2000: 4) found that the question of causation is foremost in various research findings throughout history. The review suggests that there is a striking relationship between the exposure to risk factors and juvenile delinquency. Arthur et al (2002: 576) support the stated view. However, some scholars assert that it is the accumulation of risk factors, as opposed to single factors, that tend to result in antisocial conduct (Conners et al, 2004: 95). The latter scholars further contend that risk factors, at variable levels of severity, cause juvenile delinquency globally.

Some of the risk factors are discussed below.

2.4.1 Community as a risk factor

Cindi (2006: 40) defines a community as a social group that shares common geographical boundaries, values and interests. The concept is often used interchangeably with “society” and will be used in this manner in this review. The expression, “children are a mirror of their community”, aptly describes the correlation between juvenile misconduct and antisocial behaviour exemplified in the individual’s community.

Factors such as over-population, high density housing, diverse racial, ethnic or cultural composition, especially in the most developed countries, are often cited as criminogenic. Prinsloo’s (2007: 155–163) assertion - that modern materialism is one of the critical sources of societal moral decay which impact on adolescent behaviour, is an apt observation. This phenomenon causes the individual to be obsessed with self-enrichment and personal gratification, thus causing him/her to be at risk of offending.

De Wet (2003: 97) cites South Africa as an example and suggests that violent juvenile delinquents, for example, mirror a society that is violent. Stewart and Simons (2010: 591 - 593) attest that the community provides a ‘tool-kit’ for various forms of antisocial behaviour, especially in poor communities.
In some communities antisocial behaviour gradually becomes the norm and is culturally acceptable. A technical report on substance abuse by Gauteng secondary school learners concurs, and asserts that the escalating abuse of alcohol amongst youth is socially acceptable and tolerated (Bureau of Market Research, 2012: 3). When the community exemplifies antisocial behaviour such as binge drinking, sexual immorality, violence, theft, lying and cheating, children and youth emulate them. According to Steyn (2008: 213), drug trafficking, high unemployment rates, social isolation, poor infrastructure and little institutional support, are also precursors of juvenile misconduct. In addition, various research findings overwhelmingly identify poverty as one of the major causes of antisocial behaviour among adolescents.

2.4.2 Individual risk factors

According to Lawson et al (2010: 205), certain factors within the individual predispose him/her to act antisocially. When an individual rebels against pro-social norms and values or is involved in delinquent acts at an early age, he/she may be incarcerated. Physiological and psychological factors cause some individuals to offend. In this regard, Hill et al (2001: 12) recognise the interface between biological, psychological and social factors in the etiology of antisocial conduct. Stephens (2010: 1) cites psychological risk factors such as angry outbursts, disciplinary problems, cruelty to animals and pre-occupation with weapons as important in the study of problem behaviour.

Ford (2005: 642 – 643) postulates that there is a relationship between alcohol abuse and juvenile delinquency, as the former tends to hamper an individual’s psychological functioning. Swanston et al (2003: 746) attest to the latter view and add that sexual abuse is an independent risk factor for delinquent behaviour. Upchurch et al (1999: 920) indicate that the family and neighbourhood contexts are implicated in the adolescent’s early involvement in sexual activity, which is a risk factor for delinquency.

Levy (2001: 343) found that youth with a negative self-concept also tend to engage in delinquency. Steyn (2008: 211) provides additional examples of individual risk factors, for example, aggressiveness, disobedience, lying, stealing, deviance, destructiveness and poor self-control.
2.4.3 The family and juvenile delinquency

The family environment is overwhelmingly positively correlated with juvenile delinquency, both as a precursor of and buffer against youth misconduct (Sanni et al. (2010: 21-27). Some scholars posit that this social institution is probably the single most important cause of delinquency (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990: 97; Loeber, Farrington & Petechuk, 2003: 8; Ernest, 2003: 2). Only a few salient characteristics of dysfunctional families will be discussed next to highlight the role of the home in perpetuating adolescent antisocial behaviour.

2.4.3.1 Broken homes

The causes of broken homes include changes in social factors which lead to dysfunctional family structures. When parental relationships deteriorate into regular fights, break-ups and step-parenting, delinquency is likely to take root. In some instances, adolescents end up abusing illegal substances, engaging in risky sexual behaviour, fighting with others, and are violent (Horne, 2004: 331-334; Horne 2001: 5-3).

Tyler et al (2001: 151) state that affected children run away from such home environments and opt for street life, which is more dangerous. Once in the street, they participate in risky behaviours such as stealing or prostitution in order to survive harsh street conditions.

Ernest’s (2003: 74) study echoed the beliefs of numerous studies which concluded that parental divorce also has a negative effect on children’s behaviour, resulting in loss of identity and emotional conflict, which may lead to delinquency.

Other scholars blame adolescents’ antisocial activities on single and step-parent families. These latter structures tend to cause instability and stress among adolescents, leading to misconduct (Upchurch et al, 1999: 920-922).

2.4.3.2 Role-modelling of antisocial behaviour

In families where parents are cruel or violent, read pornographic material, gamble or use foul language, children emulate these behaviours and use them in other contexts (Sanni
et al, 2010: 23; Williams-Evans & Myers, 2004: 32-33; Swarts, 1997: 40-41). The latter scholars support the notion that antisocial children are the product of their homes and actually mirror the home environment.

Bronfenbrenner (2003) cited in Mhlongo (2005: 38) asserts that family members who spend most of their time together, often emulate one another’s antisocial behaviour. Children, who are by nature vulnerable in adolescence, especially girls, are easily influenced to misbehave by their older siblings, particularly if there is a reward to be gained (Craine, Nishima & Conger, 2009: 436-437; Wester, MacDonalds & Lewis, 2008: 103-104).

Matsoga (2003: 163-164) asserts that parental abuse of substances and selling them for gain are precursors of adolescents’ abuse of drugs and alcohol since the former seem to sanction the behaviours. Another example of parental role-modelling of bad behaviour is when mothers, who are caregivers, abuse alcohol and drugs: thus influencing children to behave in the same manner (Conners et al, 2004: 86).

### 2.4.3.3 Poor parenting skills

Jekielek (1998: 907) has found that harsh or inconsistent punishment by parents cause children to be stubborn or rebellious. Other findings indicate that lack of or inconsistent parental monitoring and supervision of a child’s homework, for example, can lead to delinquency (Griffin et al, 2000: 180-182). Parents are also said to be exposing children to possible delinquent tendencies when they fail to communicate effectively with them or lack appropriate problem-solving skills. In adolescents, the aforementioned factors may lead to poor coping and stress (Klein et al, 1997: 61-76).

Kiriakidis (2010: 95-103) and Levy (2001: 336) concur with the findings of other scholars that harsh discipline, poor supervision, lack of direction and guidance, cause delinquency, especially among male adolescents. Upchurch et al (1998: 931) contend that when parents are extremely controlling, for example, adolescents deliberately rebel against them and engage in early sexual conduct. Orbot (2003: 5) concludes that poor parenting skills have the potential to make the adolescent “inappropriately powerful” in the family. Once the individual has established such a powerful position within the family, he/she...
might take over the decision-making role of parents and become too controlling or selfishly misuse the resources of the family, with the precise knowledge that his/her parents will not challenge him.

2.4.3.4 Parental conflict

Coley and Medeiros (2007: 144-145) argue that parental conflict and subsequent separation and the non-involvement of the non-resident father in the family unit impact negatively on children of low-income minority parents. They tend to engage in delinquent acts more often than the children of non-resident fathers who are more involved in their children’s upbringing. Jekielek’s (1998: 9320) study postulates that heightened parental conflict has a negative impact on the emotional well-being of children. The findings suggest that a delayed divorce, for example, may have detrimental consequences for affected children’s overall well-being, including antisocial conduct, more than would be normally expected if the divorce is expedited.

2.4.3.5 Non-cohesive families

Matherne and Thomas (2001: 655-662) define family cohesion as the level of attachment and emotional bonding between family members. They posit that families such as non-traditional families with both parents, often lack cohesion and experience poor communication, which escalates delinquency.

Gorman-Smith, Tolan and Henry (2000: 92) attest to the increased risk of delinquency if there is poor emotional connection between family members, especially in the parent-child relationship. The scholars add that the risk is not moderated by consistent parental discipline, monitoring and structured family roles.

Steyn (2008: 212) cites poor parent-child ties, child abuse and neglect as some of the causative factors in delinquency.
2.4.3.6  Child maltreatment and sexual abuse

The incidence of child neglect exemplified by the lack of a child’s basic physical and emotional needs heightens antisocial conduct. According to the West Cape News (in City Press, 2010: 13), delinquents who are from poor families and are often neglected and lack family support in the Cape Flats are usually vulnerable to gang influence. Incidents of child abuse are also linked to delinquency. According to Swanston et al. (2003; 746), a history of child sexual abuse is a precursor of misconduct and criminal behaviour for both girls and boys. Khoza (2012: 26) reports that in Goba village in Komatipoort, 11 learners reported being raped by their relatives at home. If, in future, they engage in delinquency, the sexual abuse they experienced might be a factor in the behaviour.

Children who grow up in dysfunctional families and are abused sometimes run away from home. Unfortunately, by so doing they swop family problems for far worse problems in the streets. Consequently, the cycle of maltreatment and abuse continues, and they eventually engage in deviant and risky behaviour in order to survive street life (Tyler et al, 2001: 173).

The factors mentioned above are an indictment against the family structure, environment and processes and probably characterise it as the risk factor with the most influence in juvenile behaviour.

2.4.4  Risk factors within the school

Firstly, the school is the second most important environment in the social development of children. According to Thabethe (2010: 39-40), learners are prepared for adult roles through the imparting of relevant knowledge and skills at school level. Secondly, societal values and proper conduct are inculcated in them as a response to the demands of conformity imposed by their societies. Thirdly, the purpose of the school is to protect and advance societal needs. Lastly, the school is expected to protect all learners who are at risk in and outside the school environment.
However, negative sentiments are associated with the school globally. The factors enumerated and discussed below feature amongst some of the risk factors identified within the school.

### 2.4.4.1 Poor structure and organisation

Masitsa (2011: 165) and Papacosta (2009: 24) assert that effective schools are characterised by factors which act as a buffer against juvenile delinquency in the school context, namely: good discipline practices; environment conducive for teaching and learning; professional and caring teacher conduct; good school management and governance skills; and high expectations of learners.

However, the above-mentioned indicators in themselves, without the practical element required, will not protect learners at risk of antisocial behaviour.

The following discussion explores some of the risk factors within the school that are often positively correlated with juvenile delinquency:

- **Poor school ethos**

In contrast to the aforementioned school effectiveness indicators, Hagell *et al* (2006:52) cite poor structure and organisation as some of the causes of delinquency in the school environment. Children who are at risk of delinquency are exposed to heightened chances of misbehaving if the school’s structure and organisation are poor. For example, when the school fails to spell out and promote its values through its ethos, and when teachers waver in the exemplification and application of these same values, learners engage in antisocial behaviour due to lack of direction.

The apparent lack of ethical direction is also cited as the cause of conflicts and low participation in school activities by both learners and teachers. In South Africa, teachers are not empowered to be effective managers of learner behaviour (Ladokun, 2010: 126). Sullivan *et al* (2008: 15-16) contend that a lack of regular staff meetings promotes a negative tone for the school, thus creating conflict as each group prioritises its own challenges at the expense of the rest of the school community. It was precisely due to the
aforementioned scenario that David Korten (1984), cited in Wikipedia (People-centered development, Anon, n.d, n.p), propagated what is commonly called people-centred development which is closely related to the notion of people-centred schools. Both principles propose that communities, teachers and learners should be actively involved in providing solutions to their collective challenges in their common milieus, be they social, political, educational, or otherwise.

- **Poor leadership**

Research findings cite poor leadership within the school as one of the factors in adolescent misconduct. A number of scholars cited in De Wet (2003: 92) and discussed below, echo the findings of other studies.

In South Africa, there is a tendency by learners at risk to form cliques to rebel against harsh and inconsistent discipline by teachers, by engaging in violent acts (Bemak & Keys, 2000). On the other hand, teachers and principals grapple with their own challenges. When the former lack job satisfaction, they tend to neglect their role of loco parentis. They participate in stay-away action, are often seen by learners abusing alcohol during school hours, and lack pride in their work, instances which demonstrate a lack of ethics amongst teachers. An incident reported in the media aptly supports the latter assertion: teachers in some Soweto schools were among seven hundred latecomers, a number which included many learners (Seale, 2012: 3).

Spaulding’s (2005: 2) findings indicate that when teachers bully, gossip, disrespect authority, harass and utter derogatory comments about their peers, they are role-modelling the behaviours schools are trying to eradicate. Similarly, principals lack leadership and management skills, and consequently, become ineffective managers (Kabali-Kagwa, 1997: 2; Sithole, 1996: 26-27).

The aforesaid assertions regarding the principals’ failure to lead by managing teachers’ misconduct, as expected and required by the DBE’s labour laws, imply that a laissez-faire attitude amongst teachers prevails at the expense of learners. As indicated in the aforesaid and elsewhere in the study, inappropriate learner conduct takes its cue from the teachers’ behaviour.
• **Limited resources**

Schools in impoverished areas lack important resources such as space, time and adequate human resources which promote a caring environment. Classrooms that are overcrowded and teachers who are overloaded with work decrease the appropriate interaction necessary between teachers and learners, thus leading to an impersonal environment. Mufanechiya and Mufanechiya (2011: 97-98) agree and further contend that school size such as big schools affects the micro-climate of schools, thus leading to negative emotions and learning conditions. In such schools, learners at risk lose out on the individual attention they need and teachers lack opportunities to influence decisions on issues of discipline. In addition, poor and neglected school buildings cause learner conflict and may lead to violence (Sullivan *et al*, 2008:13-14; De Wet, 2003: 92; Ladokun, 2010: 8).

There is also a general contention that under-resourced schools in poor areas and elite private schools often bear the brunt of learners’ unruly behaviour and sexual violence, amongst other delinquent acts (Ladokun, 2010: 8). It is postulated that in South Africa the government neglects public schools in poor areas and that there is a lack of policy initiatives by government to help teachers “become more effective managers of behaviour” (2010: 126).

Govender (2012: 10) supports the aforementioned assumption. He cites the lack of basic resources such as food, water, electricity, sanitation and inappropriate structures such as mud houses, as an indictment against the South African education authorities.

• **Lack of opportunities for bonding**

Sherlett (2008: 8-9), Sullivan *et al* (2008: 13-14), Mampane and Bouwer (2011: 1-2) and Spaulding (2005: 2) assert that chaotic school structure and organisation, fail to promote the school’s caring ethos. Examples cited include, rigid behavioural demands, inappropriate classroom placement, irrelevant instruction and inconsistent management. Jansen (2012: 15) agrees with these views and adds that love and discipline are the blueprint for schools. When a school lacks a culture of caring and is therefore impersonal, the
resilience of learners who are dogged by adversities in other contexts, is negatively affected, causing them to be at risk of delinquency.

The aforementioned school contexts also compromise the principle of diversity, thus neglecting individual learners’ needs, abilities and disabilities. The scholars conclude that opportunities for attachment and bonding with teachers act as a buffer against delinquency, the origin of which may be within the individual learners coupled with the social contexts in which they live.

2.4.4.2 Academic failure

Learners whose school performance is poor tend to choose risky outlets such as drinking alcohol, abusing drugs, fighting and other antisocial behaviours to offset feelings of frustration (Crosnoe, 2006: 57-58; De Wet, 2003: 92-97). The latter researcher, and Van Breda (2006: 50), contend that learners who fail academically due to subject-streaming practices become frustrated and lose interest in their studies, turning to delinquent behaviour such as truancy and violence.

Seale (2012: 3) comments on teacher misconduct as a precursor not only of learner under-performance, but also of delinquency. She cites the example of teachers who arrived to school late, in full view of their learners - one arriving with music blaring from her car, explaining that she slept late the previous night.

2.4.4.3 Poor management styles

According to Ramatsui (2006: 11-15) learning institutions use different management styles to manage learner behaviour, namely:

- Democratic
- Autocratic
- Parietal
- Participative
- Laissez-faire.
Elliot (2009: 183-185) concurs, and asserts that parental and school management styles produce similar behaviours among adolescents.

The above-mentioned scholars cite autocratic management styles which tend to deny learners the opportunity to be innovative, creative and intuitive. Learners then rebel against school rules and engage in antisocial behaviour. A permissive management style, which is the opposite extreme of autocratic discipline, leads to a decline in normative behaviour, and consequently, chaos within the school as discipline breaks down. Vandalism, theft, bullying, violence and truancy become the norm as learners do as they please.

The ethos of the school can only find appropriate expression in the management style of the school management team and its teachers.

### 2.4.4.4 Gang activity in the school neighbourhood

Schools that are located in neighbourhoods dominated by gangs are at risk of experiencing increased delinquency (De Wet, 2003: 92-93). Some learners may join these external gangs and form gangs within the school. Some news reports indicate that gang activity in South African township schools is escalating. In January 2012, Makhaya Sizimlele High School in Khayalethu experienced five gang-related stabbings, an incident alluded to in 1.2.2.2 above. Media reports provide ample proof that gangs are terrorising schools. Consequently, fearful learners and teachers may engage in truancy and absenteeism, respectively, thus causing a decline in discipline and learner performance.

In South African township schools, gang-infested schools and neighbourhoods have caused many learners to transfer to inner-city and suburban schools (Maseko, 2009: 3). All the issues mentioned above are some of the numerous factors which exacerbate juvenile delinquency within the school. The following risk factor, like the home and school, is consistently identified as an important factor for delinquency.
2.4.5 Peer influence as risk factor

Social relationships have a powerful influence on behaviour. The peer group is one such relationship after the home and school, all of which are necessary factors in the positive socialising of the adolescent.

However, there is overwhelming evidence that it is the ‘breeding ground’ for delinquency for vulnerable adolescents (Mathye, 2004: 53; WYR, 2003:191-192). Instances cited include unsupervised girls who reported engaging in drinking, smoking and experienced conflict with parents as a result of peer influence (Flannery, Williams & Vazsonyi, 1999: 248-252). De Wet (2004: 92) asserts that adolescents who vandalise school property do so in order to be accepted by peers.

The WYR (2003: 191-192) supports the view that delinquency often occurs in a group context such as the peer context. The report asserts that two thirds to three thirds of all adolescent misconduct are committed by members of peer groups - they steal, rob, rape, and commit other delinquent acts. Consequently, delinquency is escalated in adolescents at risk if they bond with delinquent peers (Haynie, 2001: 1051). Flannery et al (1999: 248-252) assert that peer influence is greater if there is a lack of adult supervision after school.

The discussion above indicates that peer group influence, whether studied as a single factor or in conjunction with other contexts, is crucial in the onset and escalation of delinquency.

The following is an overview of the impact of juvenile delinquency globally.

2.5 EFFECTS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency has long-term effects on the delinquent, in particular, and the family and society in general. The effects are thought to be worse if the problem is left untreated at its onset. Early onset of problem behaviour is often linked with chronic misconduct, both of which impact negatively on the rehabilitation of the individual.

According to Loeber et al (2003: 3–4) and Palmary and Moat (2002: 4), past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour and treatment. They also lament the fact that usually social research focuses mainly on later adolescence when delinquency usually
peaks. Hence, it is important to consider prevention programmes that could stem the problem at its earliest onset. The ensuing discussion looks into the possible effects of the problem as reflected in the past and ongoing research projects.

2.5.1 Effects of juvenile delinquency on society

The society as a collective incurs huge financial costs as a result of juvenile delinquency. According to Williams (2012: 2), in 2009 alone, young offenders in England and Wales cost the public approximately 4 billion pounds on policing, punishment and trials. In the USA, the government spent an average of $240.00 per juvenile offender of the 93 000 incarcerated, which translates into 5.7 billion dollars each year. Such spending could be used to address social issues such as poverty, housing backlogs and job opportunities.

Ellis (2012: 1) concurs with the aforementioned views, and states that teenage abortions in South Africa drain the resources allocated for other societal needs. Additional to the aforementioned issues, is the incessant fear of victimisation. When the government is perceived as failing to curb crime and lessen society’s fears, it may lose the trust of the public.

The problem subsequently compromises preventive efforts made by government agencies, politicians, educators, faith-based communities and non-profit organisations. De Wet (2004: 206) acknowledges that in South Africa, money earmarked for building new schools is often used to repair and replace vandalised buildings and equipment. Mendoza (2009: 2) points out that the quality of life of the community is reduced due to the high costs incurred by health and welfare services. In addition, there is a decline in production rates, property values and the structure of society is weakened.

2.5.2 The effects of juvenile delinquency on the delinquent and the victim

Delinquency affects the delinquent, others close to him/her and the extended society, as well as the victim. The following discussion will focus on how the problem affects the delinquent and the victim.
2.5.2.1 The individual and juvenile delinquency

There is a wide range of negative effects on the individual and his/her relationship with the environment. Antisocial behaviour tends to limit the individual’s ability to be socialised into the society of which he/she is a member. The individual fails to effectively internalise the norms and values of the society, thus negatively affecting his/her physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

Wickliffe (2012: 5) postulates that one of the negative effects of juvenile delinquency is that the individual loses out on the necessary nurturing and support from the family. It is also commonly known that delinquents who abuse dangerous substances are at risk of engaging in risky behaviours such as unprotected sex, which may lead to teenage pregnancy, illegal abortions, STDs and HIV/AIDS. Marte (2008: 4) adds that the offender is open to further multiple risk factors, amongst which are defiant and impulsive behaviour.

Williams (2012:14) and Hagell et al (2006: 54) respectively, posit that chronic offending may lead to unemployment later in life, and those who may be employed, may struggle with the work environment. Estevez and Nicholas (2011: 70) contend that delinquents lose opportunities to learn new pro-social behaviours and skills that can advance their interaction with others, especially in the workplace.

Extensive research data also indicates that offenders may befriend delinquent peers and remain trapped in a life-long, antisocial and dangerous lifestyle. Prinsloo (2007: 156) contends that weak authority structures tend to deprive antisocial children of the opportunity to learn “the value of discipline and self-discipline”. If the delinquency becomes chronic and the youth is incarcerated, he may be tried and sentenced as an adult. In addition, future career choices may be negatively impacted by antisocial behaviour.

2.5.2.2 The victim and juvenile delinquency

Barker (1999: 1) states that the following are some of the effects of delinquency on the victim:
- Psychological trauma, which impacts negatively on relationships and the self-concept;
- Loss of wages if the individual is employed because he/she has to take long leave from work; and
- The individual incurs huge medical and hospital expenses as well as the costs of replacing damaged goods.

The above-mentioned factors are challenges which cause the society to fear the youth. Some scholars criticise the fear which they describe as irrational and thus uncalled for.

2.5.3 The family and juvenile delinquency

The family plays a crucial role in the rearing of children, and is a major buffer against youth antisocial conduct (Mqadi, 1994: 312). However, once a family member develops a tendency to engage in offending behaviour, the family is adversely affected in various ways. Firstly, parents struggle to cope with their delinquent youth. Hoge (2001: 3) and Mhlongo (2005: 41) support the view and point to a decline in the functionality of the family unit - once the family becomes dysfunctional, delinquency escalates.

In an essay on the impact of juvenile delinquency, eWriteGiggs Research Network (Anon, 2008: 1-3), it is asserted that in the case of a victim, for example, the family may experience psychological trauma for the rest of their lives. They may even be forced to relocate to another neighbourhood or another country to heal their psychological scars. Some families may feel ashamed and angry about their child’s offending. Such a reaction may limit the treatment and rehabilitation programmes aimed at addressing the problem. Some parents may blame themselves for delinquent attacks on their child and may consequently suffer from stress-related ailments.

Barker (1999: 1-3) attests to the aforementioned view and enumerates the following effects on the family:
• Affected families may have to make provision for the needs of the offender;
• If their child is an offender, they are ethically bound to shoulder some of the needs of the victim;
• They may be compelled to attend group therapy sessions which may disrupt their daily activities;
• They have to pay lawyers’ fees; and
• Trips to the detention centre to visit the individual may add to their financial costs.

The challenges faced by the affected family are too numerous to mention here. However, the aforesaid provide a synopsis of the effects of juvenile misconduct on the family unit.

2.5.4 The school and juvenile delinquency

The school, like the home, has a major influence on the social development of the youth. However, it is also the locus for various forms of juvenile misconduct (Schmalleger et al, 2008: 29). The latter scholars also contend that juvenile delinquency within the school not only disrupts harmonious teaching and learning activities, but also endangers teachers and learners.

Teachers are confronted daily by acts of learner misconduct directed at themselves and other learners. Quite often, the media cites various incidents of bullying, aggression, fights, violent outbursts, vandalism, theft, the use of illegal substances, carrying of dangerous weapons and inappropriate language directed at teachers and learners. According to Gottfredson (2001: 1-4), such behaviour by juvenile delinquents has harmful effects on the perpetrators and others inside and outside the school environment.

In some schools in South Africa teachers abandon their classes, and this leads to high rates of teacher absenteeism. According to Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003: 58), teachers in crime-riddled schools often go through the following experiences:

• Feelings of hopelessness;
• Sudden drop in work performance;
• Very high or low energy levels;
• Social withdrawal;
• Frequent tearfulness; and
• Beginning or increased substance abuse.

Teachers have been found to harbour feelings of frustration and inadequacy caused by the aforementioned experiences, consequently, rendering them unable to deal with learner delinquency. Steyn (2008: 206) and Masitsa (2008: 237) attest to this finding and state that the abolition of corporal punishment in South Africa and some other countries, undermines the disciplinary role of teachers, thus leading to a decline in their morale.

Since the abolishment of corporal punishment, learners have been known to misbehave with impunity and continue to exhibit undesirable behaviours. They:

• bunk classes deliberately;
• do not submit assignments;
• disrespect teachers and SMTs;
• vandalise and steal property;
• bully other learners and teachers; and
• engage in inappropriate sexual acts in full view of others within the school premises.

The latter make up a few of the numerous acts of misconduct displayed by learners the researcher has personally observed.

Learners, on the other hand, experience a range of effects which include some of those listed in Thabethe (2010: 143) as follows:

• School phobia;
• Truancy;
• Behavioural problems;
Stress indicated by physical and emotional changes; and
Inability to cope with learning activities.

The next section traces societies’ reaction to the problem of juvenile delinquency over time.

2.6 DEALING WITH JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Global reaction to the problem commences with an understanding of the problem, which calls, in the first instance, for a global definition of the problem. A number of scholars concur with this view. Another pertinent concept related to delinquency is ‘status offences’. Some scholars assert that status offenders are unfairly treated. For example, social reformist, Miller, argues that very few juvenile delinquents have broken any law at time of arrest (New World Encyclopedia Contributors, Anon, Juvenile delinquency, n.d). In its report, the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) agrees and posits that the concept ‘status offence’ tends to stigmatise, victimise and criminalise young people (2010: 1). The United Nations Report on Violence against Children cited in the report agrees. The children cited in the report call for the abolition of status offences to afford them equal status as adults. However, countries like the USA, may disagree with the CRIN report since it uses strict curfew laws to limit juvenile misconduct.

The apparent oppositional views cited above emphasise the dichotomous nature of the problem under investigation. The former also highlight another challenge regarding the essence of the problem – the blurring of the boundary between juvenile delinquency and criminality which impacts on how juvenile delinquency is treated by society.

The report by JJAW (Chapter 13: 329-330) offers a synthesis of various definitions of juvenile delinquency. The report advances five criteria to streamline the definition, as follows:

- There must be evidence of an offence;
Affected children must be proved to be at risk of delinquency;
Affected children must be found to be living in dangerous environments;
Affected children must have been arrested for improper reasons; and
Affected children or their families must have applied for asylum.

It is suggested that the aforementioned criteria could be used as possible guidelines on how societies could react to antisocial youth. The ensuing discussion focuses on perceptions about and subsequent reactions to the problem.

2.6.1 Early perceptions about juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice

Previously, children were treated as possessions without legal recourse to protection. Shoemaker (2009: 14-27) provides an overview of societies’ evolving reaction to youth misconduct. In the past, state intervention in dealing with the problem became mandatory. This culminated in the principle of ‘parens patriae’ - the state taking over control of children from parents perceived as failures in rearing their children. This development led to the establishment of juvenile detention centres such as houses of refuge, reformatories and industrial schools. The latter developments were premised on the emerging notion that children needed nurturing and care through adult supervision. Hill et al (2009: 9) support the notion and state that societies saw children as “criminals in the making”, hence the need to control their behaviour through the aforementioned interventions.


The principle of ‘parens patriae’ remains a guiding principle in the treatment of juvenile delinquency, and South African schools would do well to use it as a guide.
2.6.2 Changing perceptions about juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice

Some citizens and scholars blame juvenile justice systems for being too lenient or too harsh towards youth crime. The concept “juvenile justice” is slowly pervading socio-educational discourse globally. As early as the 1800s and 1900s, there was growing awareness of the need to treat juvenile offenders differently from adult criminals. It was argued that by virtue of adolescence being a normal developmental phase, juvenile delinquents needed more support than societal control (Springer et al, n.d: 15).

Concurring with the aforementioned view, are Hagell et al (2006: 47), who posit that biological and psychological influences on adolescent misconduct are seldom considered as risk factors in probing delinquent behaviour. These factors are in some instances identified as precursors of antisocial behaviour. As emotional beings, for instance, adolescents need to feel reassured that they matter to others and can make a difference. In this regard, Elliot (2009:12) postulates that mattering to others plays a powerful and protective role against antisocial behaviour.

The notion of collective responsibility in dealing with juvenile misconduct is a growing trend in socio-criminological research. The family, state and other social control agencies may not ignore the problem since they are accountable for children’s misconduct (Stewart et al, 2010: 591-593); Steyn, 2008: 213). Other views support the latter assertion and suggest that the aforementioned agencies have a collective duty towards the well-being of children and youth by training them to be human (Barberet et al, 2004: 99). The literature review indicated that the concept “deviance” in the study of juvenile delinquency is a key concept in understanding the problem, and will be briefly discussed next.

2.6.2.1 Deviance

The concept is defined as any behaviour considered by public consensus to be out of line with the norms and values of society (Mathye, 2004: 55). According to Lawson et al (2010: 3), deviant behaviour is “more lightly censored by a social rather than a necessarily official reaction”. Some scholars postulate that individuals who diverge
from societal norms to pursue individual interests tend to decrease the collective support they need to be harmoniously socialised. Friday et al (2006: 17) posit that the cycle of individualistic self-centred behaviour could be mitigated through collective engagement with the individual. In this regard, the concepts “intervention” and “support” feature mostly in social research and will be clarified in the ensuing discussion, in conjunction with terminology used in the justice fraternity.

2.6.2.2 Retributive versus restorative justice

The concepts “punishment” and “deterrence” were used simultaneously to explain the harsh manner in which delinquent children were treated. Reacting to the problem thus is conceptualised as retributive and asks the question – how does society punish an offender? Opposed to this approach is the use of restorative justice, which asks the question - how does society repair the damage caused by an offender? According to Van der Westhuizen (2004: 82-84), restorative justice is a philosophy which embraces human emotions such as healing, mediation, compassion, forgiveness, mercy and restoration, amongst a number of other emotions.

Proponents of restorative justice contend that society should treat juvenile delinquents and criminals humanely, with the purpose of repairing the damage caused by their offending. The latter purpose is made possible through various intervention and support initiatives to ensure that the individual’s well-being is restored. The aforementioned and CRIN approach is championed by various scholars and countries, some of which are signatories to the Geneva Convention of the Rights of the Child (2007). The discussion focuses on the perception of juvenile delinquency in South Africa.

2.6.3 Perceptions about juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice in South Africa

Scores of media reports and research findings indicate that the rate of youth misconduct is very high in South Africa. As early as 1994, Metcalfe (in Maseko, 2009: 2-7) cited 31 cases of antisocial behaviour among adolescents in Gauteng schools. In the same study, the former President of the National Professional Teachers’
Organisation of South Africa, Mr Taunyane, lamented the more than three decade-long juvenile antisocial conduct in township schools. Unruly learners who were politically influenced chased away forty school principals in Soweto from their respective schools. Subsequently, learners from the township flocked to inner-city and suburban schools.

Many schools in South Africa reported possession of weapons, sexual abuse, substance abuse and other serious criminal acts by school children. In 1999, 62% of schools reported incidents of racism such as name-calling and fights. Tsotsism, a township culture practised by elite township youth influenced by adult proponents of the culture, invaded most schools. It was a culture that was seen as a bridge between African and white culture which encouraged the adoption of western culture as opposed to African culture. Consequently, school girls were raped, vandalism became rife and organised crime in schools got worse – school property such as computers were stolen (Maseko, 2009: 24-27).

The delinquent culture discussed in the foregoing paragraphs has not abated. The above-mentioned endemic delinquent culture, amongst other factors, has influenced this researcher to investigate the problem in secondary schools in Gauteng. The delinquent culture described in the previous paragraph seems to demonstrate that juvenile delinquency today is history repeating itself.

The following paragraphs will focus on public, scholarly and political reaction to the delinquency.

2.6.3.1 Public reaction to juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice

Ordinary citizens view youth misconduct as dangerous and there is a prevailing attitude of ‘them’ and ‘us’ which polarises society (Altbeker, 2007: 38). The latter scholar suggests that crime in general characterises South Africa as a war zone. Consequently, attitudes towards the problem are generally harsh. The government has adopted a “rigorous policing approach” as an attempt to stem criminal acts (Pelser, 2008: 10-11). However, this strategy does not seem to work. Newham (2005: 1) concurs, and further indicates that the government equated policing with prevention,
thus negatively impacting on crime prevention initiatives such as the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS).

The current obsession with crime and delinquency statistics feeds into the public fear for personal safety and the notion that the country’s justice policies are too lenient towards young offenders, in particular (Du Preez et al, 2011: 34). However, Comaroff et al (2006: 7) cite former President Nelson Mandela’s criticism against the elevation of crime statistics at the expense of offenders’ lived experiences. In this regard, scores of studies support the global view that juvenile offending is more a consequence of modern social ills than offenders’ innate characteristics.

2.6.3.2 Dealing with the problem

As a consequence of the aforementioned views, efforts to deal with juvenile delinquency in a systematic manner were put in place. Rauch (2005: 10) refers to moral degeneration amongst the society which has been identified as a risk factor for delinquency and criminality in general. The former and late President Nelson Mandela initiated the Moral Regeneration Movement in 1997 precisely to address the declining moral fibre of South African society. The campaign became a model for the prevention of delinquent behaviour.

It is advocated that environmental and individual risk factors should be addressed simultaneously as a buffer against possible negative influences (Edwards, 1996: 984-985). The school is regarded as an appropriate site for the prevention of juvenile misconduct, hence, the development of a sample code of conduct for school children developed by the Department of Education (2008: 11). The code propagates the inculcation of social values and norms as against a retributive approach towards non-compliant behaviour. Lephalala (n.d: 7-8) explains that the “Ubuntu” principle could be used as a possible approach to addressing misconduct. The concept “Ubuntu” is defined as a philosophy that means “I am because we are; we are because I am” (Lephalala (n.d: 3). The aforementioned principle espouses the reciprocity expected in relationships and is used as a means of resolving conflicts. However, Lephalala (n.d: 6) cautions that the principle is open to abuse for the exclusive advancement of individual or group interests, if not critically viewed.
Prinsloo (2007: 156-158) supports the teaching of values in schools through the subject Life Orientation (LO), which is founded on knowledge and skills from sociology, psychology, political science, religious and labour studies, amongst others. However, school principals interviewed lamented a lack of common values as an impediment to the successful implementation of the subject.

Rauch (2005: 5-14) indicates that the NCPS of 1996 and the Moral Regeneration Movement alluded to earlier were initiated as an attempt to address crime and delinquency. However, an array of factors negatively impacted on these initiatives, thus causing crime and delinquency to escalate. The foregoing discussion was an overview of some approaches initiated at national level to curb crime in general, and juvenile delinquency, in particular.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The literature review indicated that the present researcher’s contention that juvenile delinquency is an ongoing and escalating global problem is valid. The various consequences of juvenile delinquency on the individual, victim, family and wider community, support the view that no country can afford to ignore it.

The review was meant to provide extensive past and present global perceptions about the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency and its extent. The review also played the role of contextualising the problem of antisocial behaviour as a common human phenomenon societies have to deal with on an ongoing basis.

In South Africa and in Gauteng in particular, the problem in secondary schools has been seen to escalate, despite a new post-apartheid education dispensation originating from the democratic ideal many young people fought for during the apartheid era. In the past, punitive measures were the norm in reinforcing discipline amongst culprits. However, with time, thoughts of tempering punitive measures with a caring juvenile justice system evolved. This balance was seen as a way of addressing past inequalities emanating from social, economic and educational spheres amongst and between communities. The latter factors are generally regarded as precursors of delinquency amongst children in general.
and adolescents in particular. Therefore, the abolishment of corporal punishment in South Africa was lauded in various sectors and lamented in others, especially amongst the teaching populace and parents.

The media and other research reports have characterised the school as one of the main sites of adolescent delinquency in South African secondary schools, thus creating awareness about the problem and its effect on delinquents, their victims and the community. It was the ongoing exposition in various literature genres of adolescent delinquency in schools that led to this study.

Throughout the historical background of the problem, scholars sought to develop theories; namely: social control, anomie and strain, social learning, ecological and labelling theories to empower societies to deal with the problem of delinquency. What emerged is a holistic view of the causes or risk factors that predispose youth to antisocial behaviour. In summation, adolescents learn antisocial behaviour through various ways, namely: due to lack of appropriate social control of behaviour; they disregard the law in order to satisfy their desires; they observe unacceptable behaviours within their social contexts and imitate them; negative ecological factors such as poor location and socio-economic status lure them to acts of crime and delinquency; and as a result of being constantly labelled delinquents, they tend to cling to the behaviour.

Finally, societies' past and current interventions put in place to address the problem, particularly in South Africa, were briefly outlined. Chapter 3 focuses on the research design and methodology used in this study.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology that was followed in this study. Research is mostly defined as a ‘blueprint’ mapping a researcher’s intentions in conducting the study or a systematic attempt to reconstruct reality – the latter being the product of shared experiences and meaning forged in a common cultural setting (De Vos et al, 2005: 132). It is further postulated that research refers to the gathering of data in a structured and detailed manner in order to affirm or refute the research findings by determining their concordance with the theory that underpins the phenomenon under investigation. Lastly, research enables the researcher to systematically describe the phenomenon and explain its mode of existence, thus interpreting the findings and reporting on their meaning (Polit & Hungler, 2001: 175; Wickham & Bailey, 2000: 17).

The concepts “method” and “methodology” need to be elucidated to demonstrate their link with the concept “research” in the preceding paragraph. The former concept refers to tools and techniques which include interviews, case study, content analysis and experiments used to gather data (Hofstee, 2006: 108). Conversely, the latter concept refers to the rationale one uses to explore knowledge and understanding of a phenomenon – the reasons for using the techniques “in relation to the kind of knowledge or understanding” sought by the researcher (Ngubane, 2005: 27). Taken together, the three concepts – “research”, “method”, and “methodology” - encapsulate the essence of the scientific endeavour to make sense of reality, whether through a quantitative or qualitative paradigm.

The main aim of the study is to use the research findings to assist policy-makers in the development of intervention strategies to address antisocial behaviour amongst secondary school-going adolescents. Therefore, the purpose of the research design is to describe and interpret the views and experiences of teachers with regard to the nature, extent and causes of juvenile delinquency in their schools, and current strategies used to deal with the problem.
The literature review undertaken in the previous chapter provided a framework for the study and subsequently dictated the choice of the research design, strategies and rationale which underpin the entire research. The theoretical foundations of juvenile delinquency discussed in 2.3.2 underpinned this study and contributed to the researcher’s understanding of the problem amongst adolescents and school-going youth, in particular.

Through the design discussed above, the study envisaged could shed light on the problem and subsequently inform policy on how best to address the problem and empower teachers in their *loco parentis* role.

Juvenile delinquency has received much media exposure. However, teachers’ experiences of the problem and its effect on teaching and learning have not been as widely researched. However, research on the problem conducted elsewhere as alluded to in the literature review, provided a much-needed framework for the study to enable it to focus specifically on teachers’ perceptions in order to make sense of the problem as it manifests itself in a South African context.

A questionnaire and focus group interviews were utilized for the study. The ensuing discussion will further clarify the researchers’ reasons for interest in the topic under investigation and the chosen design.

According to Statistics South Africa (*South Africa. Statistics South Africa, 2012: 15*), Gauteng Province emerged as the most populous province during the 2011 census. Work seekers and their families flocked to the province in pursuit of better prospects and still do today.

The Gauteng Province is also the site where juvenile delinquency has been escalating, as evidenced by extensive media coverage of the problem discussed in Chapter 2. The province consists of 15 school districts clustered into three regions. There is a spread of public and private schools in townships and white areas, which together make up the most number of schools and learners, as compared to the rural areas within the districts.
According to a report by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the province has 2 483 schools with 16, 2% learners making up the total number of learners in South Africa (2010: 5; 14).

The diverse demographic features of the schools, like everywhere else in the country, have their origin in the political history of the country. The literature review also suggested that some of the causative factors of the problem emanate from the aforesaid past (Altbeker, 2007: 109 & 168; Steyn et al, 2010: 4; Steyn, 2008: 174; Ramphela, 2002: 153-154 & 162; Pelser, 2008: 1).

Based on the foregoing factors which form part of the rationale for the empirical research, the study intends to further explore in depth, the less explored views of teachers about juvenile delinquency in a structured manner.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Black (2002: 5) posits that the purpose of a research design is to expand knowledge and understanding of reality. Juvenile delinquency is without doubt a global problem, and despite extensive research done on a global scale, much still needs to be done to understand it, especially in South Africa.

The study used mainly the qualitative and combined interpretive-constructivist paradigm which commenced with a quantitative phase. Hence, a mixed method design was implemented.

The MMR design is generally underpinned by pragmatism (Denscombe, n.d: 4), a worldview which asserts that the problem in social science research is the main focus of research, and that the multiple methods used to uncover the essence of the problem should generate practical solutions to the problem (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006: n.p). The concept “pragmatism” is defined as a “practical way of thinking or dealing with problems” (See MED, 2002). Thus, it deemphasises theory and elevates results and solutions as the main purpose of research.
The following section is a discussion of the selected paradigm; the quantitative approach, the qualitative approach and the MMR design, selected for the study.

3.2.1 Interpretive-constructivist paradigm

Mungunda (2003: 30) defines the concept “paradigm” as a “frame of reference or mental map through which we see the world”.

Scholars, Edmund Husserl and William Dilthey, championed constructivism and interpretivism, both of which focus on the social construction of reality by individuals in a specific setting. The latter perspective promotes the understanding of a whole phenomenon through the perspective of individuals, who actually experience it and make sense of it as it occurs in known settings (Qualitative data analysis and design, n.d: 344). The paradigm emphasises the “world of human experience”, thus suggesting that reality or knowledge is constructed and shared by groups in a common existential space (Mackenzie et al, 2006: n.p).

Denscombe (2002: 78; 2003: 267-268) is in agreement with the definition above and further suggests that “… it is the diversity of experiences which lend [better insight] into the problem”. The researcher also espouses the assertion that the diverse views that emanated from this study would broaden rather than diminish understanding of the problem as it is experienced by the participants.

Both the open-ended questions in the questionnaire as well as the focus group interviews used in this study were qualitative and were intended to gather the different views of participants regarding their individual and collective experiences of juvenile delinquency in their schools.

3.2.2 Quantitative approach

According to Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2009: 266), the quantitative design was exclusively used by researchers during the 19th century. The design is positivist in nature and according to Walliman (2001: 15), it has its origin in the empirical ideas of Bacon and Hume who utilised numerical data to obtain information about the world,
and also asserted that statistical evidence which describes reality is the only truth worth pursuing.

As scientific research evolved, much criticism was levelled against the impersonal nature of the design. This led to elevated interest in the qualitative design. Despite dissatisfaction with the quantitative approach, its value in scientific research cannot be ignored as it can lead to new understanding of phenomena studied (Labuschagne, 2003: 102; Bryman, 2006: 111).

The current study utilised the closed questions in the questionnaire to quantify the demographic background of the sample and also to contextualize the study.

3.2.3 Qualitative approach

The qualitative approach to scientific research gradually gained support between 1900 and 1950 and strengthened social science research. Many scholars began to realise that qualitative enquiry, unlike quantitative research, gives “shape, place, contour and colour” to the phenomenon being studied due to painstaking description and interpretation of data gathered (Freebody, 2003: 68; Labuschagne 2003: 100 – 101). The latter further cites some of the advantages of the design, namely:

- Processes and meanings are rigorously examined; and
- Data produced is more detailed – quotations, descriptions of situations and events, as well as observed interaction among the subjects, are detailed and in-depth.

Labuschagne (2003: 102) argues that criticism against the qualitative approach does not detract from its successful use in many studies and that all research approaches are inherently deficient. However, the key decision is how to best manage the data to produce trustworthy results, and not summarily dismiss their value.

A brief outline of the selected research design for this study follows in the ensuing paragraphs.
3.2.4 Mixed methods research design

Mixed Methods Research (MMR) is defined as the type of research that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches in a study, inclusive of their techniques, methods, concepts and language, amongst others (Yin, 2004: 41).

Although much criticism was levelled against the design, its use in research was not diminished (Bryman, 2006: 8, 11; Yin, 2006: 45; Miller & Gatta, 2006: 608-609). Its proponents argue in its favour, contending that for as long as it is methodologically appropriate for a study, it should be utilized (De Vos et al, 2005: 71-72).

The researcher of this study supports the merits of MMR and thus used it in this study. However, for the limited purpose of this study, the different types of designs will not be discussed individually. The presentation below is an adapted version of Morse’s (2003) mixed methods designs by Brannen (n.d: 14), who adjusted them to two permutations presenting the designs in terms of sequencing and dominance of quantitative and qualitative methods.

Simultaneous designs
1. QUAL + quan or 2. QUAL + QUAN
3. QUAN + quan or 4. QUAN + QUAN
5. QUAL + qual or 6. QUAL + QUAL

Sequential designs
1. QUAL > qual or 2. qual > QUAL or 3. QUAL > QUAL
4. QUAN > quan or 5. quan > QUAN or 6. QUAN > QUAN
7. QUAL > quan or 8. qual > QUAN or 9. QUAL > QUAN
10. QUAN > qual or 11. quan > QUAL or 12. QUAN > QUAL

In the presentation above, plus signs indicate concurrency and the arrows indicate sequencing of designs. The present study utilised the most common design, namely, sequential design number 11 (quan > QUAL) in the presentation.
As already alluded to, a questionnaire was utilised in the initial phase of data collection. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather a bibliography of the participants to assist the researcher to identify teachers whose profile would depict the general characteristics of the population of teachers in Gauteng Province. Thus, participants for the main phase of focus group interviews were selected from the first phase. The main purpose of the interviews was to engage selected participants in a series of questions related to the questionnaire in order to extract in-depth understanding of juvenile delinquency as a social and particularly educational problem. The implication is that the secondary quantitative phase informed the main qualitative data collection phase.

3.3  RESEARCH METHOD

Hofstee (2006: 107 – 108) argues that what is paramount in the choice of techniques is whether or not they will produce reliable results, irrespective of whether they are used singularly or in combination with others. The methods selected should suit the problem statement, and the results should reflect a correlation between the methods used and the problem – there should be no doubt how the findings were reached. Based on this guiding principle, the questionnaire on the quantitative side, and focus group interviews, on the mainly qualitative side, were used in the study.

The following section maps out the structure of the research methods that were used for this study.

3.3.1  Selection of participants

Researchers commonly refer to participants as subjects or respondents and the concept is often used interchangeably with the latter two concepts. For purposes of the study, all three concepts were used interchangeably. Babbie (2009: 209) defines respondents as people who provide information about themselves, so that the researcher is enabled to construct a composite picture of the group they represent.
3.3.1.1 Population

This study focused on the population of secondary school teachers in Gauteng Province, who were represented by a sample generated as discussed in the next section.

3.3.1.2 Sampling

A sample is a representative group of participants selected from the population. The main purpose of sampling is to ensure that the elements which portray the total population exist in the sample.

Scholars differ on the size of a sample appropriate for qualitative research. Mason’s (2010: par 1.) research found that sample sizes are generally smaller in qualitative studies and have both practical and theoretical advantages. Firstly, they reduce statistical demands on the researcher and secondly, the rapport forged with participants is more humane, thus allowing them democratic space in which they are at liberty to talk at length and set the agenda for discussions (Davis, 2007: 139 – 140).

The foregoing advantages suited the present study and the stated purpose – a smaller and thus easily manageable sample would allow the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of juvenile delinquency – a phenomenon which is so complex and multifaceted that diverse views were crucial for an in-depth understanding of its nature.

For purposes of this study, which is limited in nature, Morgan’s (1997: 43) suggestion of 10 participants and no fewer than 3 groups was adjusted to 6 participants instead, and 3 groups.

Purposive sampling was applied in the selection of the sample which the researcher assumed possessed the required knowledge about the topic under investigation (Babbie, 2009: 207). MacDonald (2008: 28) contends that purposive sampling is purportedly the core decision point in qualitative research. The sampling method was advantageous for the study in that its application does not enforce statistical inference (Walliman, 2001: 234).
The sample was made up of teachers, whose collective profile included, amongst others, longer teaching experience, qualifications and knowledge of teaching and schooling in the South African context. Variables such as age, gender and social background were considered for profiling in order to access a wide range of expressed views (Davis, 2007: 147).

3.3.2 Data collection

The ensuing discussion focuses on the instruments that were utilised to collect data.

3.3.2.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is defined as a collection of questions designed for completion by a respondent in respect of the research topic. Its main purpose is to gather facts, views or perspectives directly from participants believed to be knowledgeable of the phenomenon studied (Hofstee, 2006: 132; De Vos et al, 2005: 166). The initial data collection tool was a questionnaire that was administered to a purposively selected sample of teachers, initially numbering 30, to cover for no-shows. The questions were the product of the literature study which delved into the common aspects of juvenile delinquency, namely: adolescence as a natural and thus normal transitional phase; selected theories that underpin the study of juvenile delinquency; and the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency from a historical perspective.

A common predetermined venue became the site where individual participants answered the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher. Such a group-administered questionnaire was necessitated by the limitations envisaged for the current study – time constraints, travelling expenses, possible late returns of completed questionnaires, the need to clarify questions and unforeseen circumstances that might discourage participation. In essence, group-administered questionnaires save time and costs, and the participants are handled and exposed to similar stimuli simultaneously (Van Breda, 2006: 99).
The questionnaire was utilised to gather mainly biographical information about the participants in order to profile them for the second and main phase of data collection. Questions were closed (on the quantitative side) and open-ended (on the qualitative side) – the latter served to inform the focus group interviews.

The following considerations cited by Eiselen and Uys (2005: 3-4) are crucial for the success of the questionnaire and were carefully considered and applied in this study, and briefly discussed in the relevant sections:

- Research goals must be clearly formulated;
- The target population must be clearly identified;
- Where possible, questionnaire design experts should be consulted;
- The questions should be piloted to limit the emergence of errors later on;
- Much effort should be exercised to adhere to ethical standards; and
- Researcher should demonstrate thorough knowledge of the topic of interest.

Although there is a chorus of discontent in other quarters about questionnaires, such as its inability to produce accurate responses due to social and ethical contexts, it is a tool used successfully by other researchers (Strange et al, 2003: 337-338). The researcher used the questionnaire as it ensured that the necessary sample for the study was selected and other information not easily accessible through other methods was acquired.

3.3.2.2 Focus group interviews

As data collection strategy, focus group interviews have gradually emerged into prominence as a social science tool of repute after much criticism (Tollich, 2009: 99). Definitions of focus group interviews which recognise the researcher’s active role in directing and encouraging group interaction for enhanced insight into the topic under scrutiny, are propagated (Barbour, 2007: 2). Van Breda (2006: 107-108) defines the concept as a “purposive discussion of a topic involving 6 – 10 people who share similar background and common interests” - the data captured consists of spoken and unspoken communication which are the products of the interaction.
The origin of focus group interviews is traced to Robert Merton and Paul Lazarfeld’s works in 1941 (Liamputtong, 2010: 5). Despite much criticism against the aforesaid tool, an improved strategy allowed the researcher to capture participants’ responses in a natural setting, face-to-face, and through focused themes and prompts. Thus, rich data was generated.

Morgan (1997: 8-18), like other scholars such as Denscombe (2003: 189-190), added other advantageous attributes of focus group interviews which served the purpose of this study, namely:

- Cultural differences are accommodated;
- Participants are at liberty to agree or to disagree, ask questions or provide answers to fellow participants;
- The researcher can observe attitudes of consensus and diversity among participants;
- It can be used with other strategies for mixed methods studies; and
- Data can be reported as a sufficient body of knowledge.

It is the aforementioned advantages that motivated the researcher to opt for focus group interviews as the main tool of data collection for the study.

As already alluded to, respondents were deliberately selected from the main sample which responded to the questionnaire in the first stage of data collection. Unstructured, in-depth interviews were used to generate data from participants. According to Van Breda (2006: 108), a venue that is free from external distractions, background music, noisy ventilation systems and machines is a prerequisite for successful interviews, and the researcher ensured that the venue selected satisfied these recommendations.

Approximately 70 to 90 minutes would be used for the interviews which would be captured on audio tape and then fully transcribed. Field notes would be used to record non-verbal responses which a tape recorder might miss.
3.3.3 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis refers to the separation of elements of research data to expose some general principles that can be utilised to explain the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and can be applied in other contexts (Denscombe, 2003: 299). For purposes of this study, the Likert scale will be used to analyse and report the eight (08) closed biographical questions; using tables and a summary of each of the information in each table. The open-ended questions in the questionnaire as well as the focus group findings will be analysed and reported verbatim and in other cases their comments will be integrated in a summary. This study followed the example set out in an article entitled, Step 5: analyze the results (Anon, 2009: n.p) which demonstrates how to integrate the aforementioned modes of reporting qualitative findings. According to Corden and Sainsbury (2006: 11-14), the purpose of integrating both verbatim and summarised reports, is to:

- enhance understanding of the research situation;
- give respondents a voice to share their experiences of the problem;
- illustrate the themes;
- explain how things happened; and
- facilitate “a joint production of meaning”.

3.3.3.1 Questionnaire analysis

The questionnaire used in this study was quantitative except for open questions. The 5-point Likert Scale as explained in 3.3.3 above, was used to quantify only the data which was used to provide a demographic profile of the sample, so to speak, a biography of the participants. Biographical information of the sample such as age, gender, teaching qualifications, teaching experience; subjects offered, extracurricular activities, location of school and philosophical orientation was tabled and discussed. The latter information was used to inform the design of the focus group interviews which made up the main data collection phase.
3.3.3.2 Analysis of focus group interviews

In order to capture the richness of people’s experiences in their own terms, their level of emotion and thoughts, Krueger’s (1994) framework analysis, as explicated by Rabiee (2004: 65), was used. The latter scholar defines framework analysis as a “process with distinct though highly interconnected stages”, broadly classified under an analysis continuum outlined below.

![Analysis Continuum]

The framework utilises five key phases in the process of data analysis, namely: familiarization; identifying a thematic framework; indexing; charting; mapping and interpretation. In the first phase of this study, all the recorded data from the interview – audio-taped, fully transcribed with notes of observed behaviour – was read and listened to for the researcher to familiarise herself with the data. Secondly, themes were developed. Thirdly, the data was carefully sifted and highlighted for comparison within and between cases, thus indexing it. Next, through charting and mapping, data was reduced by reshuffling and rearranging it under newly-developed themes. Finally, the data was interpreted.

Verbatim and summarised comments by respondents, as explained in 3.3.3 above, were used as an integrated mode of reporting.

3.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

In this study, the accuracy of the measurement applied to answer the research question or questions was determined for the purpose of validating the results. The questionnaire was piloted to a small sample of the population and related professionals. Reliability plays a complementary role, seeking to establish whether the same results can be replicated in other contexts, at different times, by other researchers using similar strategies (Golafshani, 2003: 598 – 599). For purposes of the current study, reliability was established by testing the findings as suggested by Denscombe (2002: 104-106).
3.4.1 Validity and reliability in this study

3.4.1.1 Piloting

In this study, both data collection instruments were piloted to ascertain their feasibility with a small sample of office-based educators in the Tshwane North District in Pretoria. The envisaged sample included Further Education and Training (FET) as well as General Education and Training (GET) curriculum specialists, Institutional Development and Support Officials (IDSOs), psychologists and district-based learner and teacher support personnel from various sub-directorates. The same procedure planned for the actual investigation was followed in the pilot phase.

The researcher encouraged respondents to provide their honest opinions on the design and the questions in both research instruments to fine-tune them for the actual study. Their responses helped to address aspects of the study that needed to be adjusted, questions that needed to be added, clarified or discarded for being superfluous or refined for their ambiguity. This provided input into both the face and content validity of the questionnaire.

3.4.1.2 Testing research findings

Although it is postulated that it is easy to confirm validity and reliability of instruments and data in a quantitative study, likewise several steps can be followed to test qualitative findings for trustworthiness and transferability. In order to enhance the credibility of this study, several steps were followed to test the qualitative findings by checking records of data and details such as dates, times and numbers. Reliability was established by consulting others to validate the results (member validation), and the normality or otherwise of the venue was checked to ascertain whether it would not in any way influence the results. In this way, the findings of the study should be confirmed (Denscombe, 2002: 104-106).
3.5 ETHICAL MEASURES

According to Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001: 93-94), there is always tension between doing research for the good of others, while also ensuring that the rights of participants are protected. Therefore, the implication for ethics and for this study, is to encourage full disclosure of information by maintaining a balanced relationship of mutual trust between the researcher and the participants. The present researcher hoped to anticipate potential benefits and harm to participants emanating from their disclosures by observing ethical measures discussed in the next section. This step would enhance the validity and reliability of the results of the study.

3.5.1 Permission to collect data

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), the Tshwane North (TN) District Director and designated school principals. This process was to ensure that venues, participants and records, where necessary, were accessible.

3.5.2 Informed consent

Consent is regarded as the ‘cornerstone’ of research and a ‘negotiation of trust’ between the researcher and the participants that should be ongoing, irrespective of paradigm applied – researcher’s emphasis (Kanuka, 2007; 5; Orb et al, 2001: 95). In the current study, prospective participants were afforded the opportunity to formally agree to participate in the study by signing consent forms. The researcher undertook to fully disclose her identity, the purpose of the study, how it would be conducted, what measures would be taken to protect participants from harm, what benefits, if any, would accrue to participants and how their rights would be protected, amongst others. The researcher did not promise any monetary incentive for participants and this was disclosed to them.
3.5.3 Autonomy

Burns and Grove (in Mhlongo, 2005: 51) emphasise participants’ ‘right to self-determination’, thus affording them the choice to continue or withdraw from the study when circumstances so dictate. In this study, participants were encouraged to utilize their democratic right to participate in or withdraw from the study at any time during the study. They were also encouraged to exercise the freedom to decide which information to disclose as dictated by their personal circumstances.

3.5.4 Anonymity and confidentiality

Burns et al (in Mhlongo, 2005: 52) differentiate between anonymity and confidentiality by indicating that the latter is “the management of private information” by a subject, and the former is “the right to assume that data collected will be kept confidential”. Any personal information pertaining to individual participants was removed from questionnaires and the interview schedule.

The researcher fully acknowledges the dilemma posed by the difficulty of striking the right balance between doing research for the greater good and protecting participants, as alluded to earlier. Nonetheless, the researcher engaged with experts within and outside the district prior to and during the study to minimise any factors that might harm participants and compromise the validity and reliability of the research results. The ongoing politically volatile relationship between district officials, of which the researcher is one, including the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), and school-based educators, made it imperative that neither the participants nor the researcher came to any harm. Hence, much care was taken to ensure that ethical considerations were not compromised.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The wide range of scientific research designs and methodology in the literature made the selection of an appropriate design for this study a mammoth task. In addition, data collection utilizing teachers in the education sphere in the current post-apartheid
climate exacerbated the challenge. Participants had to be repeatedly assured that no harm would befall their persons or jobs.

In the first instance, the rationale for conducting this study in Gauteng secondary schools was explained. The province is the most populous and has since seen an escalation in adolescent delinquency in secondary schools in the post-apartheid era. The media continues to draw attention to the problem for which solutions are sought. The researcher opted for an interpretive-constructivist paradigm and the mixed methods design both of which were applied to gather mainly qualitative data which would answer the primary research question: What is the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools? The design dictated the researcher’s method of selecting the sample, data collection tools and data analyses. Soshanguve and Hammanskraal/Temba secondary school teachers were sampled for the study and a questionnaire and focus group interviews were utilized to gather data and the latter were analysed. Validity and reliability were also discussed. The chapter culminated in the discussion of ethical measures applied for this study.

Chapter 4 will provide the actual data collection, analysis and interpretation / findings of the study.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS: DATA ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the fieldwork which was conducted and the subsequent results, will be discussed. The aim of the study was to make recommendations to deal with antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents, and contribute to educational research and the development of policies in dealing with the problem in future. The main research question posed was therefore: What is the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools?

The literature review in Chapter 2 demonstrated the need for ongoing research on juvenile delinquency which is a perpetual problem among adolescents globally and in South Africa in particular, hence this study.

The research design for this study was discussed at length in Chapter 3. The study followed the interpretive-constructivist paradigm. The combined perspective was chosen to guide the present researcher’s focus on juvenile delinquency as a problem that affects teaching and learning and the effects of current intervention strategies used in schools. The perspectives of teachers were solicited since they possess “inside” information of what is really going on in secondary schools. Therefore, the meaning they derived or constructed about the problem under investigation was crucial in understanding the problem.

Unlike positivists who operate deductively, the researcher opted to operate inductively with the purpose of gaining in-depth understanding of the problem.

The choice of the aforementioned paradigm necessitated the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches for this study. Therefore, the collection, reduction, analysis and interpretation of data were based on this approach. For purposes of this study, the sequential qualitative dominant status design discussed in 3.2.4 was chosen.
4.2 DATA COLLECTION

In Chapter 3 the research design used in the study was discussed. The following section will briefly focus on the participants under each data collection instrument.

4.2.1 Sample

Gauteng is small in size as compared to other provinces. However, the schools are many and scattered throughout the province. Consequently, participants were selected from three Pretoria school clusters which include Former Model C schools, all of which fall under the Tshwane North District (TN D3) where the researcher is currently an office-based employee. In their respective schools, the participating teachers are in secondary schools, mainly in the FET band, except for six schools which have a combination of FET and GET bands. However, all the teachers sampled teach only Grades 10, 11 and 12.

The decision to select participants from these areas was based on convenience, since the researcher resides and works in the precinct and is familiar with the profiles of the secondary schools under investigation. Thus, the participants were easily accessible and additional demands on time and cost in conducting the study were minimized. In addition, the aforementioned factors suited the limited nature of the study.

The population of Gauteng secondary school teachers was the subject of this study and data collection on the sample will be discussed in the subsequent section.

4.2.2 Preparation for data collection

Permission to administer the questionnaire and focus group interviews was sought from Gauteng Department of Education and Tshwane North District and schools. Participating teachers voluntarily signed a letter of consent. Participants preferred, and themselves chose local schools as suitable venues for data collection, to save time and travelling costs. The researcher then sought permission to utilize the schools selected as venues from the respective principals.
A pilot study to test the questionnaire was conducted. The questions in the questionnaire were piloted with a sample comprising educators at selected schools, office-based educators in the district from the curriculum sub-directorate – both Senior Education Specialists in the GET and the FET bands, support services (psychologists), and Performance Management and Development (PMD) unit.

The main purpose of the pilot study was to test the accuracy of questions, the adequacy and appropriateness of methodology, sampling frame, data collection instruments and analysis, to ensure that all the prospective respondents in the study had a common understanding of the questions (Calitz, 2009: 2; De Vos et al, 2005: 206; Van Breda, 2006: 98). Respondents were encouraged to be honest with their views as they critiqued the questionnaire. After the study, omissions were rectified, and some questions rearranged. The study also enhanced trustworthiness and transferability.

4.3 QUESTIONNAIRE

The quantitative phase of data collection preceded focus group interviews which were the main source of data collection. Thus the questionnaire was selected as a means of profiling participants in order to eventually select participants for the focus group interviews. The reason for selecting this method of data collection is that it is easy to construct, could produce a highly reliable scale and that respondents can complete it with ease (Bertram, n.d: 2).

A questionnaire consisting of 24 questions was administered. Eight closed questions asked for a biography of each participant and sixteen questions were open-ended and space for comments was provided. A total of 20 schools in the district participated in answering the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was distributed to groups of teachers in each of the three school clusters which are serviced by Tshwane North District. Participants in each group met in a common venue. The Coordination of Learning Implementation (CLI) unit in the FET curriculum implementation sub-directorate, organized the meetings as part of its own operations. The unit obliged the researcher to administer the questionnaire to
teachers who had gathered for the quarterly curriculum meetings. The participants were informed well in advance about the study and that they would remain for a further 45-50 minutes to answer the questionnaire.

The meetings were held after school, on three consecutive dates, as per management plan, which was issued to schools well in advance.

Approximately, 55 minutes were allocated for answering the questionnaire. Participation was voluntary. Of the 150 questionnaires administered, a total of 91 (60.7%) were completed and returned.

4.3.1 Profile of respondents

One-way frequency tables for each of the biographical variables were calculated. The eight tables are presented in the next section. The information contained in the tables assisted in contextualizing the study. The following are the profiles of the respondents which assisted in providing the subsets which profiled the population of teachers in the province.

This section deals with the first eight questions in the questionnaire as discussed below.

4.3.1.1 Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age categories</th>
<th>f_i</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum f_i</th>
<th>Cum %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-40</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24.18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-54</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34.07</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>89.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.99</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1 depicts the age categories into which the respondents fall. In responding to the question of age, the respondents’ answers displayed point to a fair spread of ages amongst the teaching corps.

There were 14 junior participants aged 21 to 35, 36 senior teachers aged 32 to 45 and 41 most senior teachers aged 46 to 65. This scenario reflects a component of varying age groups within schools, with senior and most senior teachers having the advantage of sharing their views and experiences of juvenile delinquency in pre and post-apartheid South Africa, particularly in Gauteng. Thus, they provided comparative information about the problem and lending more insight into it.

4.3.1.2 Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum fi</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36.26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>63.74</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 demonstrates the distribution of the gender of the respondents. The table shows that approximately two female respondents completed the questionnaire for every 1 male respondent that participated (63.74 and 36.26%), respectively. This result indicates that more than half of the participants consisted of female teachers, whose nature as mothers and primary nurturers of children would enable them to impart valuable insight into the challenges for teachers emanating from learners’ antisocial behaviour.
4.3.1.3 Qualifications

Table 4.3: Respondents’ qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>fi</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum fi</th>
<th>Cum %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certf.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dipl.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38.89</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>67.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certf., Dgr</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dipl., Dgr</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>93.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certf., Dip, Dgr</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 demonstrates a distribution of qualifications of respondents. According to the table, the respondents were all qualified teachers qualified to teach in South African schools. The majority of participating teachers were in possession of teaching diplomas (26.67%), degrees (38.89%) and diplomas, in addition to degrees (20.00%). The latter data points to a well-educated teacher component of 58.89% of the participating teachers that have a minimum qualification of a degree. The findings also pointed to a teacher component which could be reasonably expected to execute its teaching responsibilities, coupled with good learner behaviour management in and outside the classroom.

4.3.1.4 Teaching experience

Table 4.4: Teaching experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in years</th>
<th>fi</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum fi</th>
<th>Cum %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37.36</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25.27</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30.77</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>93.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 points to a frequency of a range of years respondents have been teaching. The respondents were asked to indicate their years of experience as teachers. The findings of the empirical study revealed that 62% of the respondents have more than 10 years teaching experience while 37.36% have accumulated the most experience.
Both components point to a teaching corps that possesses extensive experience between them and would contribute the most knowledge and understanding of the problem in schools, especially with regard to possible interventions to address the problem.

### 4.3.1.5 Subjects taught

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>fi</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum fi</th>
<th>Cum %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34.09</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>41.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>56.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>65.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.88</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>78.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21.21</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>132</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 illustrates the common school subjects taught by the respondents. Mathematics and social science subjects (followed by natural sciences with a percentage of 12.88%) were indicated by only a limited number of teachers as the subject(s) which they teach at school (indicated as 7.58% and 9.09%, respectively).
4.3.1.6 Extra-curricular activities

Table 4.6: Extra-curricular activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra-curricular (multiple choice)</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum f</th>
<th>Cum %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23.60</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>45.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.17</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>60.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.11</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>70.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L Support</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23.60</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>94.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 tabulates the extra-curricular activities of respondents in their schools. A substantial proportion of respondents in the table indicated that they partake in learner support (23.60) and sport (23.60) as extra-curricular activities. Those who were interested in discipline issues were second at 15.17% - the latter activity being crucial in managing learner behaviour.

It is the researcher's expectation when selecting such sports-loving and learner supportive teachers that they would be in a better position to provide more information on intervention strategies which schools could implement to support learners with behavioural problems. In their engagement with learners during their respective extra-curricular activities, they are in a better position than other teachers to identify troublesome and troubled learners and could act as the first port of call when solutions for the problem are sought.
4.3.1.7 Location of schools

Table 4.7: Location of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of school</th>
<th>f_i</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum f_i</th>
<th>Cum %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35.16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>46.16</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>81.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18.68</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 depicts three school locations. The majority of teachers came from rural or township schools (35.16% + 46.16% = 81.32%). The researcher capitalised on the information shared by participants from these areas in the final phase of data collection. The opportunity also assisted in gaining insight into the role of location in relation to the escalation or de-escalation of delinquency.

The researcher wishes to indicate that due to an unknown reason or reasons, teachers of the city schools that were earmarked for the study managed to participate in the questionnaire phase only.

4.3.1.8 Philosophical orientation

Table 4.8: Philosophical orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philosophical orientation</th>
<th>f_i</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cum f_i</th>
<th>Cum %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>97.85</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>97.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8 depicts the distribution of the philosophical orientation of respondents. The majority of respondents (97.85%) had a Christian philosophical orientation. Such a composition assisted the researcher to examine the current philosophical foundations that undergird education in the country and the province.
The biographical information therefore points to a respondent-group that was well represented over most of the properties probed, bearing *philosophical orientation*, and to some extent *qualifications and experience*. For the last two mentioned variables, some of the categories of the variables were sparsely populated (for example, the certificate-category of qualifications, and the “31-40 years” experience category for the *experience* variable).

As already alluded to, the aforegoing profile of teachers in the province assisted in contextualising the study.

The following sections deal with the open-ended component of the questionnaire: the 9 - 24 questions which were open, as already alluded to.

### 4.3.2 Open-ended items in the questionnaire

As stated in Chapter 3 of this study, the purpose of the research is to establish the current views and experiences of teachers on the status of juvenile delinquency in schools and the measures in place to deal with such behavioural problems.

The following questionnaire items probed the participants' perceptions regarding three aspects of youth delinquency:

- The current status of delinquency in schools (the 'nature and extent", q 9-13);
- The causes of delinquency (q14-19); and
- Intervention strategies currently in use by schools (q 20-24).

Thus the aforementioned three sets of questions were open-ended to allow respondents the latitude of making comments to support their responses. These questions are qualitative and the findings are presented in the ensuing section.

The responses were analysed following several steps which are commonly recommended by social science researchers such as Onwuegbuzie et al (2009: 5-8)
and Rabiee (2004: 650), amongst others. The latter scholar’s analysis framework was used to analyse both the open-ended questions in the questionnaire as well as the focus group interviews.

Firstly, the researcher read each response carefully to identify common themes that might emerge. Secondly, the researcher then developed categories using words and phrases to represent topics and patterns that emerged. Thirdly, each response was labelled with one or more categories. Next, the responses on specific categories were divided into smaller categories, thus developing sub-categories. In this manner, patterns and trends emerged and revealed the main issues raised by the respondents. Afterwards, the relations between common patterns and trends were used to identify common themes. Lastly, descriptive analyses of respondents’ views and perceptions for each question were drafted and will be reported in narrative form in the ensuing paragraphs.

In the following paragraphs, the open-ended questions in the questionnaire will be discussed.

4.3.2.1 Respondents’ view regarding antisocial behaviour amongst their learners and elsewhere in the Gauteng Province

The main question for this section was: “What is your view regarding the nature and extent of antisocial behaviour amongst your learners and elsewhere in the Gauteng Province?”

- Q 9: Juvenile delinquency in schools is rife.

A majority of the respondents who substantiated their answers commented on the theme of escalation which included the extent and location of juvenile delinquency in the province. The following comments by some respondents illustrate this point:

- “Generally, antisocial behaviour is a problematic phenomenon in schools in Gauteng Province. Learners don’t have respect for adults and themselves.
They walk around half-naked, drink publicly, and are not interested in culture and customs.”
- “Township schools are plagued by learner delinquency.”
- “Recently, more and more cases of misconduct were reported on in the newspapers and in social media.”
- “Yes. It is becoming a crisis.”
- “I believe there are a lot of schools in which learner behaviour is extremely undesirable.”
- “Learners use drugs, as a result of which their wayward behaviour is on the increase.”

Although none of the comments mention any figures, respondents implicitly and positively aligned themselves with the statement. The extent of the problem in secondary schools in the province is described with words like “problematic phenomenon”, “plagued”, and “crisis”, amongst others. In addition, they contended that, “more and more” reports of antisocial behaviour were reported; there was an “increase” of the problem. Thirdly, juvenile delinquency was said to be “extremely undesirable” where learners exhibited unacceptable behaviours in full view of everyone.

- **Q 10: Have you personally encountered antisocial behaviour amongst learners at your school?**

The question elicited a variety of responses as follows:

- “Always. Students are rude, arrogant and violent. We have to be careful in case we offend a kid, for heaven’s sake!”
- “I am fortunate to be at a school where it rarely happens.”
- “The cases that I have witnessed are not of a serious nature, but they do occur from time to time.”
- “The school where I teach doesn’t experience a lot of discipline problems.”

In answering the question, the majority of respondents asserted that their experience of juvenile delinquency was minimal. Most of the respondents supporting the latter
were teachers in the city schools of the district. In contrast, more than half of the respondents in township and rural schools indicated they observed the problem quite often. In the middle were a minority of respondents who indicated that they experienced the problem always in their respective school clusters. All three sets of responses point to the variable of location as being key in understanding juvenile delinquency. The response, “...for heaven’s sake”, depicted an element of frustration amongst a majority of respondents.

- Q 11: Substance abuse, truancy, bullying, disrespect of authority, theft, lying, inappropriate sexual behaviour and teenage pregnancy are the most common antisocial behaviours amongst learners in your school.

The following responses surfaced:

- “There is a large number of learners in my class who show these behaviours. It is about 90% of them in my class.”
- “Every class is found to have a pregnant learner. Some steal teachers’ belongings and other learners’ calculators, amongst others. Cases of lying, inappropriate sexual behaviour and pregnancy have escalated rapidly.”
- “Before 1994, I never had to keep my stuff locked up in my school. No one would steal them. The fights were common teenage fights. Damage to school buildings and other property happened rarely ... whereas today destruction is a game.”
- “There are some learners who engage in all of the above-mentioned antisocial behaviours, but it applies to the minority of learners in our school.”
- “I strongly agree, ‘cause on a weekly basis we solve most of the above-mentioned, amongst others is gangsterism.”
- “Everyday learners display these unacceptable behaviours.”
- “They are always fighting - belong to different gangsters in the township – both girls and boys.”

The majority of respondents supported the statement and some measured its extent, one actually pointing to a ‘90%’ rate of the problem. Learners were said to be engaging in all of the behaviours cited, including vandalism and gangsterism. The frequency of
the antisocial behaviours was cited as “on a weekly basis”, always” and “everyday”. Once again, location played a significant role.

- **Q 12: Learner misconduct is out of control and culprits are less remorseful.**

Participants opened up a number of issues in their responses to the question:

- “Those who are guilty of misconduct are definitely out of control and seem to think their behaviour is socially acceptable.”
- “Yes. They are less remorseful because each time it is the same learners who commit misconduct.”
- “Not necessarily out of control, but contained with great difficulty.”
- “Others are willing to cooperate and change their behaviours but those who are psychologically and emotionally affected show no remorse.”
- “Children don’t accept that they are wrong – it is always someone else’s fault. They don’t have remorse.”
- “Although this is not the case with everyone, it is applicable to many of the cases.”

The majority agreed that juvenile delinquency was definitely out of control and that it was mostly the habitual culprits who lacked remorse. Others contended that psychological and emotional factors affected some delinquents’ ability to show remorse. Thus, inherent in the answers was the assertion that proper interventions seemed to be a mitigating factor in addressing juvenile delinquency.

- **Q 13: How does juvenile delinquency today compare to the period before 1994?**

The two most important historical eras of the country were contrasted. Perceptions regarding the post-apartheid period were overwhelmingly negative as evidenced by the ensuing comments:
“In the past of teaching the church, school and parents worked together. Today, the onus is on the teacher to raise, educate and discipline a child.”

“It is like graduating from bad to worse.”

“Before 1994, corporal punishment made learners to behave right. These days, the rights make them think they can get away with almost everything.”

“They get away with a lot more. Before 1994, certain methods were used to deal with juvenile delinquency, which cannot be used today.”

“With the advent of democracy, stricter measures were withdrawn. Parents and educators have little control over their children because of the rights given to them.”

“The abuse of rights is the order of the day. The new political dispensation has a very soft spot for learners, thus the culmination into these misdemeanours.”

“Social media has made it look much worse since children post all types of misconduct on these sites for the world to see, thereby creating more awareness.”

As can be seen, the responses to the question were quite varied. However, the responses provide a sense of the extent of the problem. By implication, the overwhelming responses above were that the pre-1994 period was by far the best in terms of learner behaviour and discipline.

In addition, they cited the advent of freedom and democracy as the cause of ill-discipline amongst learners. To some of them, democracy led to a disjunction amongst the home, school and church, hence the escalation in the abuse of rights. Thus, the majority lamented the abolishment of corporal punishment which was viewed as the defining feature of apartheid in South African schooling.

4.3.2.2 The causes and effects of juvenile delinquency

The main question for this section was: “What causes juvenile delinquency and what are its effects?”
Q 14: The country’s political past is to blame for the antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents.

The responses to the question were varied, but there was consensus that it was rather the present political dispensation that is to blame for the escalation of learner misconduct:

- “Antisocial behaviour is unrelated to past political activities.”
- “We used to have children who knew the wrong and the right, who knew that everyone older than you is your parent.”
- “In the past, learners knew their place and were orderly. In the new dispensation, drugs are easily accessible to learners.”
- “Just an easy excuse. Most of the children were born after apartheid.”
- “The behaviour of children is a reflection of societal problems.”
- “The present political dispensation is to blame because most of the laws passed protect the youth who have more rights which they abuse.”
- “Lack of parental care is the major cause of juvenile delinquency. So, parents or guardians are to blame.”
- “No. Antisocial behaviour is caused by parents and the current government which protects children extensively instead of solving the problems.”
- “Learners misbehave because there aren’t any serious consequences for their actions.”
- “Lack of parental involvement is the primary cause - lack of discipline at home.”
- “Our political past had an influence on our constitution and school system. Therefore, it does play a role.”

Those who compared the past and present cohort of learners in terms of behaviour concluded in favour of the former cohort of learners. In addition to democracy being cited as the major cause of delinquency, social factors were also mentioned. However, an overwhelming majority blamed poor parenting as a major factor. Dissenting respondents cited the past dispensation as having had a negative influence on the drafting of the Constitution of South Africa.
• Q 15: There is no argument that adolescence is the cause of juvenile delinquency.

Respondents asserted that adolescence alone cannot be blamed for delinquent behaviour:

- “It is debatable. There are lots of other key factors to consider.”
- “Adolescence is a result of physiological, chemical and psychological changes. It is a transition process that should not lead to serious behavioural problems.”
- “Fallen social norms cause juvenile delinquency. Adolescence has been around for millennia. It’s a biological process. It is caused by a lack of proper rearing and moral development.”
- “The transitional state of their condition makes them vulnerable to delinquent behaviour.”
- “During this stage learners are more likely to be involved in many misdemeanours.”
- “It is a stage in life that everyone undergoes, but needs to be directed.”
- “They misunderstand the changes they experience emotionally and physically, amongst others.”
- “Lack of parental involvement plays a significant role in juvenile delinquency, and this is a cause for concern.”
- “Adolescents like to copy their peers’ behaviours, whether it is good or bad behaviour.”

The majority disagreed with the statement and thus failed to see adolescence as the only factor in juvenile delinquency. Instead, a number of factors were cited, amongst them, transitional factors common to adolescence which are normal to the stage, peer pressure, fallen social norms and lack of parental involvement.

• Q 16: To what extent does delinquent behaviour amongst learners affect teaching and learning in your school and elsewhere?

- “It compromises discipline and therefore, teaching and learning.”
**“Teaching is often disrupted and thus the quality of teaching is affected because the teacher has to focus on bringing the guilty party to order.”**

- “The teacher is unable to complete the syllabus.”
- “My school? No real problem. Elsewhere? Learners misbehave to such an extent that teaching becomes impossible.”
- “I can only answer for my school where discipline is good. It will, however, affect teaching and learning in other schools where misconduct is most prevalent.”
- “Most delinquents don’t perform well at school.”
- “It may affect results because learners who are delinquent are not committed to their school work.”
- “Many learners suffer because of a few delinquents who destroy, disrupt lessons and do not care! Good behaviour is mocked and atrocious behaviour is praised.”
- “Such behaviour tends to disrupt teaching, especially in cases where the educator fails to implement classroom management and discipline in his/her classes.”

An overwhelming majority described the extent to which the problem affects teaching and learning: discipline is almost always compromised; the quality of teaching is affected; a few delinquents disrupt lessons, thereby minimising other learners’ ability to learn and perform according to their potential; delinquents’ own performance subsequently declines; and the lack of or poor teacher classroom management skills exacerbate the problem. As is the case with some of the responses above, location was cited as a common factor by some respondents.

- **Q 17: Delinquents face a disastrous adulthood and future.**

Respondents had the following to say:

- “The behaviour will be carried over to adulthood and as a result might make their future bleak”.
- “Their behaviour will affect their academic achievement, which will then lead to unemployment”.

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“They learn nothing – not societal rules, not social behaviour – of course they are going to suffer”.

“Drugs don’t empower them. They actually destroy them and prevent them from becoming mature adults”.

“It depends on the process of rehabilitation and the support that they get”.

“People tend to curse the delinquents and not give them proper support, care and love, forgetting that they might actually change as time goes on”.

The majority agreed that delinquents risk suffering adverse consequences in adulthood due to their behaviour. The responses were qualified with the overwhelming contention that only proper interventions might mitigate against the envisioned ill effects in adulthood. Notably, the element of mattering to others seemed crucial in helping to curb antisocial behaviour.

- **Q 18: Schools that are poorly organised and dysfunctional could be linked to adolescents’ misconduct.**

The respondents, without doubt, overwhelmingly agreed that no school would be able to maintain acceptable learner behaviour and discipline if it was poorly managed.

- “The management of the school is the pillar of the school. So, management that is better organised leads to better discipline within the school”.
- “There is no effective teaching. The school experiences the following delinquent behaviours: teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, disrespect of authority, late-coming and absenteeism”.
- “Such schools don’t have measures to reduce learner misconduct. Learners end up believing that antisocial behaviour is a way of life”.
- “Learners would not be exposed to good moral values and religious principles, and would lack good role-models”.
- “Dysfunctional schools might cause learners to be delinquent”.

In the comments above there was an indictment of school management in fulfilling its key function. In addition, it was contended that if teachers’ behaviour is antisocial, learners would have no good role-models to emulate.
• Q 19: A dysfunctional society is the breeding ground for juvenile delinquency.
  - “Lack of morals, ethics and good behaviour by a dysfunctional society, can only encourage juvenile delinquency”.
  - “The society is the fountain of learner misbehaviour”.
  - “Where there is lawlessness and ill-discipline, juvenile misconduct will thrive unabatedly”.
  - “A society which promotes violence and hooliganism is no example for the growing youth”.
  - “That’s why we get a lot of dropouts, prisoners and hobos”.
  - “Parents who expect everyone else to discipline and bring their children up are a huge problem”.
  - “Learners from areas where there is poverty end up being criminals”.

Once more, an overwhelming majority indicted the society for role-modelling unacceptable behaviour. More than half of the respondents blamed irresponsible parents who delegate their parenting responsibilities to others. Location plays a role - poor economic background was also cited as a factor that escalated juvenile delinquency.

4.3.2.3 Current intervention strategies

The main question for this section was: “Do current intervention strategies that are in place in your school deter adolescents from engaging in antisocial behaviour?”

• Q 20: I am content with the strategies my school applies to deal with learner misconduct.

For this question, responses varied from very satisfied, satisfied, very dissatisfied and unsure. Some respondents again voiced dissatisfaction with parents’ lack of commitment to discipline their children. Though aware of some intervention strategies used in their schools, a great majority of responses thought they were inadequate and
they also lamented the lack of stricter measures in dealing with the problem, thus bringing to mind the issue of corporal punishment. Yet, others cited the lack of clearly defined policies in dealing with delinquency.

- **Q 21: I approach the School-based Support Team (SBST) in my school for advice on how to deal with instances of misconduct amongst my learners.**
  
  - “Every time. It is one of the structures available to help with learner ill-discipline”
  - “Never! The self-same SBST is dysfunctional, hence problems remain unsolved”.
  - “Occasionally, because some of them are also not able to handle sensitive issues they are supposed to”.
  - “Our SBST is dysfunctional due to incompetent management”.
  - “My learners are well-behaved”.

Responses were equally varied, and ranged from “every time”, “occasionally” and “never”. While the majority acknowledged the existence of SBSTs in their schools, they, however, contended that most were dysfunctional and hence failed to offer the required support to teaching staff. The variable of location played a role as most city school teachers reported positive support from their respective SBSTs.

- **Q 22: Managing learner behaviour takes precedence over my teaching responsibilities.**

The responses for this question pointed to the importance of learner behaviour management skills for teachers:

- “How can one teach if learners are not well-behaved or attentive? It falls under classroom management”.
- “High priority. Meaningful teaching and learning go hand in hand with good behaviour”.

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“Life skills are more important than academic knowledge”.

“My responsibility is towards those who want to learn and behave accordingly. If someone takes that right away in my class, they are not welcome”.

An overwhelming majority asserted that it is almost impossible to teach effectively if learners misbehaved and acknowledged the importance of classroom management skills. In addition, they regarded the management of learner behaviour as crucial in providing life skills training to learners. The fourth statement above was one of a few dissenting voices, arguing that learner misconduct was not their responsibility.

- **Q 23: I know about the GDE's intervention programmes which my school and I use to deal with juvenile delinquency.**

Responses to the question were split into extreme awareness, total lack of awareness and moderate awareness of interventions prescribed by the GDE.

- “Extremely aware. Materials on learner discipline are available, including alternatives to physical punishment. Journals and articles are available to schools”.
- “We receive updates in this regard from the Department of Education”.
- “Moderately aware. We invite correctional services, social workers and priests to our school to talk with our learners and to show them the consequences of unruly behaviour”.
- “GDE intervention programmes are not functional. It is a long process which also disrupts teaching and learning”.
- “Educators don’t play their part. It is their contractual obligation to make sure that such intervention strategies are applied”.
- “I’m not aware really of these intervention programmes. For me, these programmes seem aloof and inaccessible”.
- “We don’t have procedures in black and white”.
- “GDE should provide schools with professional support to deal with learner misconduct”.

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The apparent lack of information and clear directions from the GDE and school management impeded the implementation of suggested strategies. Location also appeared to be a factor in teachers’ ability to access the requisite information. However, a minority of respondents went on to further blame most teachers who have the requisite information but fail to utilise them to manage learner misconduct.

• **Q 24: How would you rate parental involvement in the discipline of their children’s misconduct?**

- “Delinquent behaviour starts at home. We don’t have problem children. We have problematic parents”.
- “90% of parents are not involved in their children’s education”.
- “Parents always leave the responsibility of disciplining their children to schools, thus making it difficult for schools to maintain discipline”.
- “Most parents are involved when there are serious conduct issues of their children’.
- “Parents don’t care”.
- “Parents are rarely contacted in cases of their children’s major misconduct. Some aren’t even aware of their children’s behaviour”.
- “Usually parents are very supportive and appreciate the help from the school. So, often it is because they are out of answers themselves”.

The majority of responses condemned the poor or lack of involvement of parents in the discipline of their children. In fact, they were blamed for being the cause of ill-discipline amongst their children. The majority described their attitude towards learner discipline as the sole responsibility of teachers. A minority of respondents condemned the schools for their lack of communication pertaining to learner misconduct, until it appears in the media. Location was the variable that was common to a minority of responses – parents of learners in city schools seemed to be more cooperative as compared to those in township and rural schools.
4.3.3 Interpretation of findings

Findings from the analysis of data discussed in the aforegoing section indicate that delinquency rates in Gauteng schools are very high. In addition, it was found that male learners, more than female learners, exhibit the most antisocial behaviour. In general, both genders, at varying rates disrespect authority, have the habit of lying, engage in theft, vandalism, truancy, substance and alcohol abuse, inappropriate sexual behaviour resulting in teenage pregnancy, and gangsterism, amongst others.

The variable of location indicates that schools in formerly disadvantaged areas such as townships, squatter and rural areas experience the most antisocial behaviours by learners, as compared to their counterparts in formerly advantaged areas. Most teachers’ personal encounters of the problem in city schools seemed to be minimal. Some teachers of schools that are situated in middle class areas in townships shared similar sentiments to those of their city counterparts. Although the rate of learner misconduct is alarming, it can be contained as evidenced by behavioural changes witnessed in those learners who are remorseful. This suggests that intervention strategies do play a positive role in curbing unacceptable behaviour.

By comparison, juvenile delinquency has escalated since the inception of democracy in 1994. The tripartite role of the state, the church and the home towards the education of children and youth has been delinked. Corporal punishment, once the main intervention strategy against antisocial behaviour, was banned, thus making a bad situation worse. Education policies on learner behaviour are lenient and inversely encourage learners to abuse their rights. The country’s political past may have had a negative influence on learner behaviour, but it is due mainly to the lack of or poor parenting skills in addition to other factors already mentioned.

Adolescence, as a natural phase of transition alone, cannot be blamed for juvenile delinquency by itself, although it makes adolescents vulnerable to misbehaviour. There is no doubt that teaching and learning are adversely compromised by the antisocial behaviour of some learners and that it affects both the delinquent and others such as teachers, the family, friends, classmates, and the immediate community. Its effects may not be immediate, but are felt in adulthood when they fail as parents, breadwinners and members of communities.
Poorly organised and managed schools and a society lacking in morals are a fertile breeding ground for learner misconduct. South African society is characterised by lawlessness and ill-discipline which spill over into the school environment. Parents are complacent in their parenting roles and are poor societal role-models. It is no surprise that there are numerous dropouts, prisoners, street kids and hobos.

For many teachers in townships and rural areas, it is very difficult to teach when learners continuously misbehave since they have to constantly bring them under control, thus minimising teaching and learning time. They are neither aware of nor conversant with the intervention programmes that are in place and recommended by the employer to assist them. Consequently, they are frustrated and some constantly think of quitting the teaching profession. There appears to be inadequate support for teachers to successfully address the problem, particularly from the education department and parents. The latter’s involvement is rated very low, except in city schools where it is reportedly excellent.

The aforegoing findings contributed in further profiling the sample that the study would need to represent the population for purposes of the main data collection phase. The discussion on focus group interviews follows in the next section.

### 4.4 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The interviews formed the second and main part of data collection, as discussed at length in Chapter 3 (Research design). Focus group interviews have the advantage of being amenable to other data collection methods, cater for diverse cultural and philosophical orientations, participants engage actively and freely with one another, and the researcher can observe non-verbal communication amongst participants, amongst other benefits. Consequently, rich data and possible insight on the problem under investigation can be unearthed (Morgan, 1997: 8-18). The aforegoing motivated the researcher to utilise this method of data collection.
4.4.1 Participants

Based on the questionnaire analysis, participants for the interviews were selected using the purposive sampling method. The overall level of knowledge about juvenile delinquency in the province and its nature gleaned during the questionnaire analysis satisfied the researcher that the questionnaire sample represented the relevant population for the study. Thus, this information indicated that participants would be able to share the requisite information sought by the study by answering the research question alluded to in the first paragraph of this chapter.

The teachers who participated in the focus group interviews were from the same schools pre-selected for the questionnaire. Initially, 30 participants were recruited. Individual teachers were contacted by telephone or visited at their respective schools to recruit them for the interviews. Participants were thus over-recruited to replace possible withdrawals at any time during the interviews. The over-recruitment came in handy when participants from Cluster 1 (Former Middle C Schools) withdrew their participation for unknown reasons. They were subsequently replaced by the additional participants. Thus, the initial plan of having 3 groups of 6 participants each was adjusted to two groups with 7 and 5 participants each from Soshanguve and Hammanskraal, respectively, as tabulated in Table 4.9 below. The aforementioned revised design counted as a limitation for the study, which will be discussed in the analysis section.

The remaining participants were grouped according to their clusters as follows: Cluster 2 (Soshanguve) and Cluster 3 (Hammanskraal/Temba). The interviews spanned over a period of five weeks due to disruptions caused by schools' mid-year examinations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Soshanguve</td>
<td>Adese</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hammanskraal/Temba</td>
<td>Alusa</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hammanskraal/Temba</td>
<td>Charmer</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hammanskraak/Temba</td>
<td>Chichie</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4.2 Interview schedule

The interview schedule consisted of seven pre-set guiding questions which were based on the literature study in Chapter 2 and constructed after the questionnaire analysis and findings. The questions are tabulated in Table 4.10 below. The questions were pre-designed to ensure that the scope of the study, its purpose and main research question were addressed. The questions were subsequently designed to answer questions which probed three aspects of youth delinquency (as was the case with the questionnaire), namely:

- The current status of delinquency in schools (the ‘nature and extent’, q 1);
- The causes of delinquency (2-4); and
- Intervention strategies currently in use by schools (q5 – 6).

Table 4.10: Interview schedule and aspects of youth delinquency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main research questions</th>
<th>Aspect of youth delinquency</th>
<th>Interview schedule / Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The status of delinquency in schools</td>
<td>Its nature and extent</td>
<td>1. Does juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools warrant the attention it is getting currently? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factors not commonly linked to delinquency.</td>
<td>2. What factors not commonly cited, are linked to juvenile delinquency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
amongst adolescents in secondary schools?

Personal experiences of delinquency

3. Is there an instance or instances of antisocial behaviour amongst learners in your school that nearly caused you to quit your teaching profession? Why?

Internal school factors

4. Is there any chance that factors within your school are to blame for instances of antisocial behaviour amongst your learners? Why?

Current measures used to deal with delinquency

Intervention strategies

5. What role, if any, do external institutions such as the district, the GDE or non-governmental bodies, amongst others, play in supporting your school’s efforts to address juvenile delinquency? Are you satisfied?

6. What kind of support do you need to better deal with juvenile delinquency amongst your learners? Why?

4.4.3 Analysis of focus group interviews

In Chapter 3, the analysis design was discussed. For this study, as already alluded to, Krueger’s (1994) framework in Rabiee (2004: 65) was selected. The ensuing discussion will address the process of identification of emerging categories (themes) and sub-categories (sub-themes) as suggested by Krueger.

The purpose of analysis in this study was to capture rich data emerging from the interviews. The participants’ perceptions, thoughts and experiences of the problem in their own schools were elicited. Firstly, discussions or interactions among the
participants in relation to the questions were recorded on audio-tape, and non-verbal communication was captured through field notes. The recorded data was fully transcribed by the researcher and cleaned to remove superfluous data.

Before the raw data was actually analysed, it was firstly listened to and the notes reconciled with the verbal communication. Secondly, once the researcher had fully familiarised herself with the data, themes were developed by coding and subsequently grouping similar comments linked to an emerging theme. Thirdly, to develop the sub-categories, the lumped data was carefully sifted for similar ideas, using different colours. Fourthly, with further sifting, data was reshuffled and rearranged under newly-developed themes. Finally, it was ready to be interpreted. The next section will be a discussion of the analysis.

The ensuing discussion refers to the first question in the interview schedule as indicated in Table 4.10 above.

4.4.3.1 Current status of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng province

The ensuing data were generated after a lengthy period as alluded to. This long period (five weeks) ensured that saturation of data was reached. The intervening period of half-yearly examinations also contributed to the focus group interviews taking a longer time to be completed. In the following sections the nature and extent of delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools will be discussed.

a) Nature of juvenile delinquency

When the first question on the status of juvenile delinquency was raised, more than half of the participants supported Tlali’s assertion that it was “definitely out of control” and that it needed to be addressed. The broad category revealed five sub-categories specified in Table 4.11 below.
Table 4.11: Overarching categories and sub-categories linked with the status of juvenile delinquency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad category</th>
<th>Sub-category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of juvenile delinquency</td>
<td>Commonality of antisocial behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social profile of delinquents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dealing with delinquency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extent of juvenile delinquency</td>
<td>Population control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intervention strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i **Commonality of antisocial behaviour**

The foremost sub-category was the commonality of antisocial behaviour in most schools. The major problems were identified as disrespect of authority, gambling, insults hurled at school management, substance abuse, theft, truancy, manhandling of teachers, smuggling of cell-phones into the exam room to cheat, teenage pregnancy, graffiti, rape, and carrying of weapons, amongst others. In summary, Thea asserted that:

“.... the problems are similar in all the schools. In our school there are external gangs who, through a Grade 12 learner who serves as a link, rob learners of their pocket money”.

In a follow-up question intended to exhaust the question, Charmer further indicated that in a former Model C school in which he taught, learners had the tendency of threatening their Life Orientation teacher for threatening to punish them if homework
was not done, with comments like “bring it on”. In yet another comment, Nakedi revealed how boy learners at her school reminded her:

“You like getting into the boys’ toilets [to supervise]. They rape, you know. Boys who gamble are very dangerous”.

ii  Location

The second sub-category identified was related to the variable of location of a school. An overwhelming majority of participants agreed that the specific location of any school influenced the prevalence rate of delinquency. Lemao and Alusa, respectively, indicated that delinquency in their township schools was better because the parents in that specific area “are well-off and can provide for their children”, and that “city schools do not have as many problems” related to delinquency as are experienced in other schools.

However, there was a dissident voice which countered the assumption that former Model C schools were not vulnerable to incidents of delinquency. Consider the following:

Charmer: A former Model C school I once taught at was packed with delinquents. They were out of control. The problem is not given enough attention. They openly insulted management, made drawings of the Deputy Principal’s genitals because he was very strict; showed serious disrespect; some [carried] weapons; the most challenging was the GET band - they used drugs and alcohol.

iii  Social profile of delinquents

The third sub-category, the social demography of delinquents, also emerged as a risk factor for delinquency. Although the majority of delinquents were associated with townships, especially rural schools, it became apparent that in some cases it was a
matter of the environmental effects following the learners to city schools. Charmer revealed:

“Most of them came from the neighbouring townships, their parents being politicians, successful business people and professionals”.

iv School safety

Regarding the fourth sub-category of safety, the most common emotional element identified was that of constant fear plaguing both teachers and learners. The following comment demonstrate the level of fear that teaching staff and learners suffer in their daily encounters with delinquent learners:

Rami: A highly expectant learner gave birth in a bus during a school trip. I have never been subjected to such a terrifying situation. I did not know how to handle the situation. I kept thinking about the employer’s reaction if something bad were to happen to the learner.

It is worth noting that she was not only terrified of dealing with the situation for which she was not trained, but that she would be blamed if anything bad befell the learner. In another comment, Tlali told of a male teacher who was supervising late-coming in his rural school. He reprimanded a boy who had arrived late. The boy manhandled the teacher in full view of community members passing by. The teacher then retaliated with a hot clap. Community members and the disciplinary committee and some learners witnessing the incident, rescued the teacher and some attacked the boy. In a similar reaction, the teacher was beset with fear not only for his safety, but that of the learner and to protect his job. He considered the effects of the media were the problem to be reported to the public. The latter notwithstanding, the boy continued to disrespect the teacher. Such an incident contradicts the common belief that it is only female teachers who are targets of learner disrespect. Thus, the issue of gender then came into sharp focus in the profiling of the nature of juvenile delinquency. According to Thea, “juvenile delinquency is not gender-based, [as] every teacher is disrespected”.

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In another incident that elicited fear amongst a teacher and her learners, was an incident at Tlali’s school as reported below:

_Tlali:_ A girl and her boyfriend who was not a learner, had had a fight. He followed her to school, went directly to her class and drew a gun at her. The teacher whisked the girl to the office. The boy then swallowed ‘maponyane’ (rat poison) and shot himself in the head and died. So, how do you work in such a place? There was no fence – it was a dangerous place.

In another incident, Pinky explained how gang members were expelled in her school when their bullying victim committed suicide - the incident having been reported in the media recently.

v Dealing with delinquency

Lastly, on the issue of dealing with juvenile delinquency, the majority of the participants asserted that the employer represented by districts was only interested in statistics of learner misconduct and not the intervention strategies with which they planned to support teachers. The ensuing could be considered a suitable illustration:

_Thea:_ In our school, we have many pregnant learners, but the district is only interested in stats. The GDE plays the same role as the districts. They report on the pregnancy [rate] in the media, but we have never heard how they support schools to deal with the problem. They hire security staff, but don’t provide them with weapons such as batons to protect us.

The second broad category closely linked to the one above will be discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.
b) The extent of juvenile delinquency

On the category of the extent of juvenile delinquency, population control, location, profile of delinquents, school safety and interventions re-emerged as crucial factors for learner misconduct. Participants generally agreed that most misconduct was not reported.

i Population control

The first sub-category raised the issue of population control. Firstly, there was consensus on the profile of Gauteng Province which, though the smallest in size, attracted an influx of people from inside and outside the country, due to it being commonly regarded as the economic hub of note. However, this impacted negatively on the capacity of schools to provide resources for diversity. Cultural, linguistic and other differences, have the potential to negatively affect teaching and learning in multicultural and multi-lingual learning environments. This was regarded as a potential risk factor for delinquent behaviour. The following statement captured the negative impact of overpopulation:

*Lemao: Cultural differences then come into play. The school must then do something to ensure the child learns another language if his is not [offered].*

Thea contended that delinquency “is so severe that it is impacting negatively on learners and the running of schools” and that Gauteng seemed to share the same dilemma as the Western Cape which experiences similar influx. Another view from Lemao was that “Gauteng is a province where gangsterism flourishes and the province is commonly labelled gangsters’ paradise”.

ii Location

On the second sub-category of location, it was apparent that the majority of participants regarded the variable as very key in understanding learner behaviour. Da Vinci asserts that parents of learners in city schools were, by virtue of being well-off
and educated, a mitigating factor for learner misconduct. The implication alluded to was that in comparison, poverty was a definite risk factor for learner behaviour. In support of this view, Charmer contended that:

“It depends on where the school is located. Township learners are better than rural school learners in terms of behaviour because [the latter] don’t get much support from their home background”.

iii School safety

For the third sub-category of safety, participants demonstrated the same consensus regarding the general lack of personal safety for teachers and learners alike. This point is demonstrated very aptly:

*Da Vinci: It’s become a very dangerous thing to be a teacher. Most teachers become overwhelmed, others are afraid to risk their profession if they reported the misconduct.*

On the other hand, Rami posited that “learners are also victims of juvenile delinquency”. Charmer complained of developing “high blood pressure” while teaching in a former Model C school. The following comment elicited muffled laughter amongst participants:

*Lemao: We are frustrated. We don’t know how to deal with these delinquents. Sometimes you’ll think of going to an early grave.*

iv Intervention strategies

Participants agreed that teaching activities were adversely affected by improper learner behaviour and that intervention strategies dealing with the problem were time-consuming and thus a source of much concern for them.
4.4.3.2 Causes of juvenile delinquency

In the ensuing discussion, question two in the interview schedule will be addressed:

**What factors not commonly cited, are linked to juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools?**

On analysis, two overarching categories emerged, namely: declining societal values and media influence. The ensuing discussion will focus on the former category as tabulated in **Table 4.12** below.

**Table 4.12: Overarching categories and sub-categories linked with causes of juvenile delinquency.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad category</th>
<th>Sub-category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declining societal values</td>
<td>Society’s philosophical orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor parental involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demographic features of parents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Psychological factors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Current education policies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers’ modelling antisocial behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media influence</td>
<td>Sensationalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**a) Declining societal values**

During the discussion, it became apparent that participants seemed concerned that many factors that are commonly linked with learner misconduct were more often than not, discussed very superficially. Consequently, they emphasised some salient points about the problem. Six sub-categories were identified and are tabulated in **Table 4.12** above. Most often than not, the post-apartheid political dispensation is blamed for everything that goes wrong. The ideal of democracy and the various freedoms people
now enjoy are generally purported to be the major causes of juvenile delinquency in many circles.

The theme attracted the most responses. According to participants, questionable societal values have become the norm, especially in former disadvantaged communities and the issue of location and its link to the profile of delinquents emerged yet again. However, the sub-category is not commonly cited as a serious factor and is subsequently often relegated to the background.

i. **Society's philosophical orientation**

One participant expressed the concern over post-apartheid society’s philosophical orientation, the first sub-category, as the major root cause of learner misconduct very briefly:

*Alusa: The moral dimension of our education system [is a problem]. How are we inculcating [good] morals in our learners? Our education system concentrates more on the cognitive than the moral aspect. There is a missing link between the state, society and religion. The moral dimension, the values - are they inculcated? What is the role of Life Orientation?*

Adese affirmed the aforesaid view. She indicated that indeed current society espouses wrong fundamentals “caused by the disjunction between the church and the home”, in particular. She then contended that materialism, for an example, was the norm and the youth tend to imitate society, thus, always chasing after material gratification, sometimes engaging in behaviour bordering on the criminal to achieve their desires.

During the discussion, the majority expressed a clear indictment of society for the escalation of moral decay, especially in previously disadvantaged communities. The contention was that the negative moral behaviour exemplified in communities trickled into the school environment and was demonstrated by delinquent youth who regard it as worthy of imitation. The following statement demonstrates this:
Nakedi: The names communities give to their squatter areas reflect the values the communities have embraced, for example: ‘Tlhalampya’, meaning ‘divorce the dog’ and ‘Serope se tlamperela’, meaning ‘my thigh will earn me money’. Even the language and dress code are vulgar and disrespectful.

According to Rami, even the level of alcohol consumption among communities depicts South Africa as “a drinking society”. She further gave the example of a girl learner at her school, who single-handedly organised a trip for Grade 12s to a resort for the purpose of binging on alcohol “without adult interference”.

There was no doubt that participants viewed townships and squatter settlements as fertile sites for antisocial behaviour, where, for example, incidents of rape were common occurrences. All participants, without exception, threw into the mix poverty as an additional and very aggravating risk factor for delinquency amongst youth. In supporting the factors raised above, one participant stated:

Chichie: As an English teacher, I read many essays and often come across incidents of rape and poverty, [amongst others] reported by many learners. On investigation, I often find that the stories are true.

Delinquent learners are often the product of their societal values and norms. There is an emergent youth culture in most township areas which the youth in those areas regard as worth subscribing to. The culture has delinquent elements in it disguised as showing off one’s riches:

Tlali: Gangsters calling themselves ‘Izikhothane’ (the origin of the word is not clear) – they carry lots of money, tear [off] money, spill cold drinks during lunch to show off. In one local school in our area about 10 learners follow the culture. It’s almost a daily occurrence.
As already alluded to, the dawn of democracy and the resultant rights have had a negative effect on society, in particular the youth. The fast decline in morals is often blamed on the two related factors.

Charmer: *We have the most liberal constitution in the world and we are still trying to handle our new democracy. Its impact – broken families, some children beat their parents up, others control their [parents’] finances and yet they are not working, the culture of laziness and lack of respect for older people. All these are due to democratic rights.*

ii Poor parental involvement

As already alluded to, the second sub-category identified, lack of parental involvement in the lives of their children and their education in general, was cited as a common thread in all aspects pertaining to the escalation of learner misconduct. One participant’s comment affirmed the view:

Pinky: *The problem of delinquency begins at home. These kids are troubled, because there is no family structure. So, there is no adult supervision."

The comment undoubtedly puts the blame squarely on the shoulders of parents – a factor seemingly downplayed by those parents whose parenting skills are in question. In the post-apartheid era, democracy, rather than the emphasis on individual responsibility for the exemplification of good morals, was indicted for the decline in morally upstanding behaviour.

Comparisons between the parents of children in advantaged residential areas and those in townships and rural schools were also made. For an example, while parents of children in city schools pay school fees and are actively involved in their children’s education, “those in the townships don’t pay school fees and don’t care”. This sentiment is illustrated by the following comment:
Charmer: As compared to township schools, parents of learners in city schools support their children, for example, they accompany them to awards ceremonies and share with other parents how they support their children.

Firstly, the variable of family structure was also cited as a serious risk factor for delinquency. For an example, some children were reportedly orphaned, others raised by single parents, especially mothers, and yet others abandoned and head their families. In the latter scenario, whoever takes up the role of parents automatically becomes the official breadwinner for younger siblings. An example cited below is common in poor communities:

Chichie: A girl lives with a “sugar daddy” for financial support. She is the breadwinner at home because her mother abandoned them.

In a similar example related to family structure and its impact on learner behaviour is an apt comment:

Alusa: Lack of supervision and discipline in the home makes children to be wayward. Some stay with their grandparents of advanced age. So, they end up doing as they please. For an example, this year I started with a class of 54 Grade 12 learners, but now I’m left with 44. When I did follow-up, they cited problems at home as the cause of their dropping out of school.

In the second place, the variable of family structure was deliberated upon. Participants discussed at length the common lack of parenting skills amongst many parents, especially pertaining to their role as the home educators. There was consensus that this lack of appropriate parenting skills led to parents - some due to lack of knowledge and others due to declining moral aptitude – inadvertently role-modelling socially unacceptable behaviour.
Alusa: Also lack of positive role-models in the home. For an example, in our school, a Grade 10 boy’s father told him he himself was not educated, but has a job, as do his other sons.

The implication of the assertion was that the importance of education is overrated. The participant also made the observation that the father was indirectly de-emphasising the role of education for his son. Other participants sympathised with some parents who confessed that they were struggling to discipline their own children at home, and that “they have no authority over [them]”.

The issue of poor parenting skills continued to attract more comments from participants. The majority of them agreed that they lacked the support of parents in addressing inappropriate learner behaviour, tackling other challenges facing their schools or even celebrating their common successes as the school community:

*Thea: Parents don’t attend meetings and will give you many excuses why they didn’t attend, such as ‘I had to attend a social club meeting.*

*Nakedi: With us black parents we complain when we have to go to a meeting at school. In townships they only attend when they fetch the reports. If we worked like a triangle, it would be better.*

### iii  Demographic features of parents

The foregoing comments by Thea and Nakedi suggest that the demographic features of parents played a key role in their role in how they influence learners’ behaviour. This third sub-category was regarded as an important factor in delinquency. Township and rural school parents were constantly compared with their city counterparts who seemed better able to manage learner misconduct.

The first half of the next comment elicited shock amongst some participants, while the last half was accompanied by laughter and a sense of vindication. Two types of parents were clearly contrasted – the one seemed to practise laissez-faire discipline and the other a much harsher type of discipline:
Tlali: One learner in our school was found smoking dagga. When his [father] was called in, what he said shocked everyone present: “No, Sonny. E seng hier, man[!] (No, Sonny, not here, man)[!] By implication he was telling [his son] it was okay to smoke, but not within the school premises. [It would be better] if we [could] have parents like this one [my second example] who visited our school to check on the progress of his child. [Upon] learning that the [boy] didn’t attend classes, he beat him up, and the boy became a punching bag for his father.

After the exposition of this latter part, the researcher asked the participant, “What did you do then?” He answered, with a glint of satisfaction in his eye: “We watched”. The comment was followed by hearty laughter from the other participants. The latter reaction brought into sharp irony the reality of declining discipline amongst learners, the frustration and inappropriate behaviour of some parents caused by the conduct of their children.

iv Psychological factors

The fourth sub-category, psychological risk factors, are commonly ignored when learner misconduct is discussed. Participants conceded that they are always regarded as less important, especially to lay people, amongst them, most parents and themselves, despite being educators. Nakedi and Thea shared their challenges in dealing with their 16 and 11 year old children’s behavioural problems at their schools, respectively.

Antisocial behaviour is often regarded as a symptom of internal strife. According to Alusa, “when [learner] behaviour affects the running of the school, it is a symptom of a problem within the child”. He cited the example of a girl in their school who, probably due to previous sexual abuse by older men, “asked a teacher [to make her his wife]”. In another example in his school, “a girl who was constantly bullied by her friends committed suicide because she was the only one among them who was childless”. Once again, the home background was blamed for learner misconduct – parents
whose [deteriorating] relationship with each other impacts negatively on the learners’ psychological well-being.

Another factor closely related to the latter, but which very rarely elicits any interest, is attachment to important others like parents and siblings, and teachers at school-level. Charmer and Rami respectively, conceded: “teachers lack love. We are not emotionally involved with learners, we just teach them. We treat them more like objects, not considering that they are also victims”.

v Current education policies

New policies which were founded on the post-apartheid Constitution were also blamed for adolescent delinquency in schools. Firstly, the banishment of corporal punishment was described with much scorn. Participants felt the banishment of corporal punishment has had a huge impact on their ability to wield influence over their learners. Da Vinci argued that “it was a bad move to banish corporal punishment” and that learners enjoy the current modes of punishment.

Secondly, misguided Learner Representative Councils (LRCs) were cause of concern for participants. They rued the fact that the Code of Conduct for learners rendered teachers powerless to effectively deal with learner misconduct and that in empowering LRCs, they actually encouraged learners to interfere in professional matters that are beyond their scope and capacity. For an example, they lock some teachers and principals out of their schools or classes and disrupt teaching and learning activities whenever it suited them. They were also concerned that the South African Council of Educators (SACE) is just “a watchdog that doesn’t support teachers”.

Thirdly, undue politicisation of education reportedly also caused much frustration amongst teaching corps as they seemed to compensate for the harsh past treatment of the youth. Thea and Lemao contended that the policies on learner discipline are lenient towards delinquents and that they are given too many privileges without enforcing responsible behaviour. For an example, “even if he doesn’t attend classes [regularly], he has to pass [condonation]”. Charmer concluded the discussion on
school policies by asserting that the politicisation of education in the country limits the development of education for a better society.

vi Teachers’ modelling antisocial behaviour

For the sixth category, the researcher’s appeal for comments on teachers’ modelling of antisocial behaviour was met with evasive responses. Participants seemed reluctant to respond to questions which probed their own contribution to the escalation of juvenile delinquency within their schools. They tended to blame some of the factors alluded to earlier. However, when the researcher continued to probe their role, they relented and admitted that some of their colleagues contributed to the decline in proper behaviour by learners. As Charmer put it, teachers “may be ignorant about policies or complacent” and therefore, rendered themselves ineffective disciplinarians.

Pinky contended that teachers sometimes model inappropriate behaviour. Adese and Chichie, respectively, cited the use of bad language some teachers use in front of learners, and their dress-code and that of some girl learners (some of whom don’t wear panties to school), and as Thea asserted, “[some teachers] stooped to the level of learners”. She also made the illustration of a young male teacher “not marking school work” due to lack of passion for his work. The latter further reluctantly agreed that “maybe [they] have contributed” to learner misconduct.

Nakedi agreed and asserted that teachers’ behaviour in schools is copied by other people other than learners, such as student teachers:

Even teachers doing practice teaching have no passion. They complain about everything – their many responsibilities and assignments, [amongst other things]. I don’t know what’s going to happen to the next generation of teachers.

Alusa and Da Vinci were in consensus on the lack of teamwork among teachers caused by conflict which then led to cliques. According to Adese, foreign teachers indirectly contributed to the conflict due to their comparatively better qualifications and diligence, which make learners to disrespect local teachers in their respective schools.
Rami posited that teachers somehow contributed to the decline in appropriate learner behaviour because they do not have any influence:

“In School A they might not have a problem with [learners] dragging their feet to assembly, or littering after break time, while in another [school] they regard such conduct as a problem. Sometimes we need to do introspection; we need to copy other [teachers’] good practices”.

b) Media influence

The second category discussed was on the role of media in the escalation of juvenile delinquency and two sub-categories were identified, namely, sensationalism and media effects.

i Sensationalism

According to Pepe, the media sensationalises delinquency unnecessarily. However, other participants took a different view from his. They asserted that other than the negative impact the media has on the behaviour of children, delinquents and adults in general, it makes society aware of the problem of delinquency in schools with the focus on what society needs to do to address it. The latter view notwithstanding, Pepe’s view brought into sharp focus the negative role that the media is sometimes blamed for and can thus not be dismissed – it deserves to be mentioned.

ii Media effects

Chichie thought of media such as print and electronic media as some of the precursors of inappropriate behaviour amongst youth. She cited pornography in social media which influences people’s behaviour. For an example, she cited a common media report of teachers who expose learners to porn. In support of the view, the following statement emphasises what is known as media effects:
Alusa: Issues of pornography fall under media – media effects on the behaviour of children. Youngsters want to practise what they see. This affects the personality. They imitate what they see. For an example, a Grade 10 learner showed other learners her steamy sex with [her] boyfriend captured on her smart phone. This went viral.

In addition to how the media alters behaviour, participants made a contention that it also affects how people think, what attitudes they construct against or for what they see, hear or read about others or topical issues in the media. The following is worth considering:

Da Vinci: The media always blames the teacher. [For an example], when a primary school learner hung himself in a classroom, the media blamed the school [while] the root cause was the parents. The media has a lot of influence. They report about teachers’ misbehaviour, but never blame learners. So, learners will never respect teachers. When they fail, they never say it’s because they don’t study. So, it doesn’t give you the courage to face discipline issues.

4.4.3.3 Intervention strategies

The fifth, sixth and seventh questions probed the role of internal and external stakeholders in assisting teachers and schools to address delinquent behaviour, the kind of support teachers needed and any comments about the study. Three categories were identified and each with its subcategories will be discussed in the ensuing section. Table 4.13 below refers.
Table 4.13: Overarching categories/themes and sub-categories linked with intervention strategies to deal with juvenile delinquency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad category</th>
<th>Sub-category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional support</td>
<td>Internal and external support.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inadequate human and other resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support needed</td>
<td>Deterrents against antisocial behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Return of teachers’ authority over learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of the study</td>
<td>Creation of awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reviewing of stakeholders’ philosophical orientation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>De-politicizing education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Professional support

All participants indicated their awareness of the existence of professional support that was available for schools with regard to interventions to deal with adolescent delinquency.

i. Internal and external support

There are internal and external structures which deal with learner behaviour, such as the School Management Team (SMT), the School Governing Body (SGB), School-based Support Team (SBST), the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and the South African Council of Educators (SACE). They lamented the poor support, and in some cases, the total lack of support to teachers on matters of learner discipline from these structures. For an example, Adese complained about the lack of learner profiles in their school which could assist them to trace learners’ problems from an earlier time in their schooling journey. In unison, they asserted that there was no support from
subject facilitators and senior district officials visiting their schools, who only criticise them when learners misbehave, but never tell them how to better deal with their misconduct. In addition, Chichie asserted that the SBST doesn’t function because “you can’t appoint a committee without training them”.

ii Inadequate human and other resources

Participants also acknowledged the existence of district psychologists, but were dissatisfied with their level of support in schools, in particular, township and rural schools. The aforementioned example reveals that the pertinent second sub-category of resources is linked to delinquency. In comparison, city schools have the financial resources to employ private psychologists and social workers to utilise their support in managing learner behaviour. Once again, the variable of location emerged as a factor in the procurement of services to curb delinquent behaviour.

b) Support needed

Participants cited their efforts at school-level in attempting to curb learner misconduct. For an example, they commonly invited faith-based institutions such as the church, to assist them in shaping the moral character of learners during assembly sessions in the mornings. Some schools refer their delinquents to a special school that deals with troublesome learners, while others utilise the adopt-a-cop approach to curb inappropriate behaviour. On the other hand, Lemao revealed that at their school teachers “[referred] culprits to the SBST [who] took it from there”. The latter revelation pointed to the lack of teachers’ disciplinary skills which have the potential to escalate delinquency. Rami, on the other hand, cited the fear of reprisals if she escalated any misconduct of a learner to the relevant structures. All participants acknowledged that the measures they used were on their own ineffective in curbing the problem.

i Deterrents against antisocial behaviour

One participant alluded to the banishment of corporal punishment which they previously resorted to and which he argued, was very effective in correcting bad behaviour. He also criticised the policies of the Department of Education:
Da Vinci: The district and GDE shy away from their responsibility through policy. They don't prevent problems. Maybe they should look into the code of conduct [which] is too open – the process of dealing with delinquents is too long. The code concentrates on the process, the theory, rather than how to help the learner.

Adese and Thea blamed the manner in which the GDE and other stakeholders handle learner misconduct. All the participants argued in support of the two participants that external support is minimal and tends to leave discipline in the hands of teachers whose authority has been curtailed. According to Adese, the employer “only wants the stats”.

A synopsis of the responses to the question relating to the role of stakeholders in dealing with delinquency is contained in a response by one participant whose view was that there was a plethora of factors which escalated delinquency and rendered teachers and schools ineffective in addressing the problem:

Charmer: Schools with the best performance are those that are supported by the parents, the SGB and everybody attached to the school. The haves support their schools. In township and rural schools there are no resources. We are there because we are passionate about teaching. The district’s intervention is inadequate – only when a learner has caused pandemonium or disrupted teaching and learning does the district intervene. In our school the District Director did intervene once with a delinquent learner whose behaviour subsequently improved. Yes, there are policies, but they are just lying somewhere in the principal’s office. I think district psychologists are overloaded; they can’t cope with the cases that finally reach them.
ii. Return of teachers' authority over learners

Question 6 in the interview schedule probed the kind of support teachers needed to help them better deal with delinquent learners (Table 13 above). Participants were in consensus with Thea, Da Vinci, Rami and Lemao who, respectively, lamented their loss of “a voice”, the lack of empowerment by the Code of Conduct and their workload, which was exacerbated by “a lot of paperwork” that resulted in their inability “to monitor learner behaviour”. Conversely, according to Thea, Da Vinci and Lemao, and Nakedi, respectively, they needed to have their authority reinstated, the Learner Code of Conduct as well as the South African Schools’ Act reviewed [in order] to empower them, and [that] additional resources such as social workers, be located within the school premises.

iii Communication

Charmer also asserted that incentives and communication were very crucial in enabling teachers to deal with delinquency. He made the following comprehensive comment which was a synopsis of the participants’ needs:

“Township school teachers don’t get incentives, while former Model C schools do. This causes a problem. District intervention is only reactionary as a result of media exposure. There is poor communication between external structures and schools. For an example, the GDE has policies but they are not utilised or are unknown, even most disciplinary committees don’t know them. Secondly, the Teddy Bear Clinic (that counsels learners), [for an example], has no branches anywhere else, except in Johannesburg. There is a need to set up a good culture of teaching and learning and structures for schools to perform optimally in all areas – the TLOs, LRCs, SMTs, teachers and SGBs. Successful schools work as a team and happy teachers produce good results. For an example, if the SGB appreciates its teachers and gets them all the resources through sponsorships, and they won’t have to teach during weekends in the [School Improvement Programme
(SIP), problems such as juvenile delinquency could be minimised”.

c) Benefits of the study

Participants expressed much appreciation for this study and voiced it as indicated in the next section.

i Creation of awareness

When participants were asked for their comment about the study, Question 7, they thought it was an eye-opener, a source of awareness for all stakeholders in better understanding their various roles and the requisite skills – for empowerment - which they need to enable them to address delinquency - be they parents, the SGB, school management and teachers, amongst others.

ii Reviewing stakeholders’ philosophical orientation

According to Da Vinci, stakeholders will be expected to do introspection into how they each dealt with the problem. Charmer, on the other hand, indirectly invited education leadership to improve their support and review the philosophical orientation that undergirds education:

Current education leadership is only interested in the results and tend to ignore the moral decay that has set in. Society can’t continue to ignore what is going on in schools. Take politics out of schools! [The] lack of a culture of discipline is leading to many teachers resigning due to frustration. There is [also] the negative thinking about teachers by the society.

iii De-politicization of education

Participants agreed that it was possible to turn learner misconduct around and manage their behaviour if only the bureaucracy and politics, in particular, were eradicated from
educational activities, and that Life Orientation be reviewed and possibly replaced with a better alternative subject that would improve learner behaviour.

4.5 DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to make recommendations to deal with antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents, and contribute to educational research and the development of policies in dealing with the problem in future. Subsequently, the main research question was: What is the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools? The rationale of the study was based on numerous media reports that suggested that juvenile delinquency in the province was the result of a decline in morality in the society (Madernather, 2005; Ramphela, 2002; Tyson et al, 2002; Masitsa, 2008). The profile of the province was also an additional rationale for the study. The research question was explored by soliciting the perceptions of teachers regarding the phenomenon investigated.

The foregoing analysis in 4.3 to 4.4 confirmed the various theories on youth misconduct as discussed in Chapter 2, as well as factors that are commonly associated with inappropriate behaviour. The ensuing section is an interpretation of the findings from both the questionnaire and focus group interviews. Both data collection methods were underpinned by the two research questions that probed the status of juvenile delinquency and the interventions used to curb antisocial behaviour in schools. Hence, three aspects of delinquency were probed, namely: the status of delinquency, the causes of delinquency and the interventions utilized to manage the problem.

According to local scholars, juvenile delinquency in South Africa is very high and that child justice laws are very lenient on culprits (Maseko, 2009: 2-7, 24-27; Du Preez et al, 2011: 34). Nonetheless, societal leaders such as the late former president, Nelson Mandela, assert that delinquents’ lived experiences are crucial in understanding their misconduct. The leaders also contend that subsequent strategies utilised to deal with the conduct should also address inequalities in society (Comaroff et al, 2006: 7).
4.5.1 Ingrained culture of violence

A number of social researchers comment on the ongoing culture of violence that has come to characterize crime in South Africa and the nature of juvenile delinquency that tends to border on the criminal (Altbeker, 2007: 12, 47, 107; Pelser, 2008: 1). According to participants, acts of rape, bullying, vandalism, aggression, and disrespect of authority are common in schools and elicit much fear amongst both teachers and learners due to their inherent violence. Scholars like Govender (2006: 1) and Madernather (2005: 2-5) agree and posit that school and personal safety are compromised in and outside the school environment as reported in the media. They also contend that the latter is evidenced by the increasing prison population of juveniles. It is no wonder then that participants report being afraid for their safety and tend to protect their jobs by not reporting incidents of delinquency, whether observed or targeted at them.

Most of the participants confirmed that the listed examples of antisocial behaviours in the interview schedule were behaviours they experienced at their schools. According to the participants, incidents of gangsterism, rape and gambling were escalating. The aforementioned examples led to the researcher’s contention that juvenile delinquency in schools is real, rife and that it cannot be ignored (Masitsa, 2008: 236-240; Masitsa, 2011: 163-165; Cindi, 2006: 2-5; De Wet, 2003: 92-93). The variable of location almost always came up as a factor in the escalation of delinquency amongst learners. Township and rural schools were constantly compared with suburban schools where incidents of delinquency happened to be minimal. Some scholars contend that the challenges facing the aforementioned schools, including juvenile delinquency and a range of other factors, have caused the “one way exodus of learners from township schools to suburbs” (Mafora, 2014: 4).

The foregoing comments support and concur with the various theories that explain the occurrence of juvenile delinquency, globally and in South Africa.
4.5.2 Adolescence as a transitional phase

The findings indicated that adolescence does influence how adolescents behave due to the fact that adolescence has been found to be a transitional stage characterized by numerous changes within the adolescent, caused by physiological and psychological factors beyond his control. This transition is a natural phenomenon and is cross-cultural (Lawson et al, 2010: 151; Arnett, 2006: 186-189; Crosnoe, 2006: 57-58; Van Breda, 2006: 50). Academic failure comes to mind when investigating how it affects the psychological well-being of the delinquent. Indeed, the youth in the secondary schools studied are no exception, hence the observation that the problem, notwithstanding its transitional nature, does warrant attention.

4.5.3 Negative social factors

In addition to adolescence, other factors external to the adolescent that emerged also affirmed the theories discussed in Chapter 2. According to Hagan (2012: 165), negative effects in the environment such as poverty, homelessness, deviant behaviour, and community culture deprive the individual of positive socialization, the consequences of which are often delinquency and crime. Poverty and community culture in particular, emerged as some of the major causes of delinquency in schools.

Some participants raised concerns over the philosophical orientation of society which they blame for the escalation of the problem in schools. It was indicated that current societal values in South African society are a result of post-apartheid democratic ideals. The democratic rights espoused in the Constitution led to a disjunction among the state, church and home. The broken link thus caused the escalation of materialism amongst citizens leading some individuals to engage in illegal activities to satisfy their needs. The youth are known to be vulnerable to such influences and the youth culture of “Izikhothane” described in the interviews, comes to mind.

According to Hagan (2012: 159-160) and Orcutt (1983: 68-75), Durkheim found the link between crime and moral breakdown. The late former president, Nelson Mandela, initiated the Moral Regeneration Programme precisely to rebuild the decline in spirituality that ensued after the democratic dispensation (Rauch, 2005: 9, 10).
Another view is that adolescents learn misconduct by imitating others, such as peers, siblings and parents (Haynie, 2001:1021-1022; Shannon et al (n.d. n.p). In the study, it was revealed that the community is one of the main sources of antisocial behaviour. According to ecological theorists, the environment or location can be either criminogenic or protective (Breetzke, 2008: 1-2; Masitsa, 2011: 164-165). In the province under investigation, the variable of location of schools was overwhelmingly described as a risk factor, particularly in township and rural schools where social factors like poverty, homelessness, lack of family structure and resources are rife. Conversely, most schools located in formerly whites-only areas maintain their influence as a buffer against antisocial behaviour.

Participants raised a number of risk factors which they felt were either cited as causes of delinquency, but not emphasized, or were completely relegated to the background and not cited as causes of the problem.

4.5.4 Family background

Quite a number of researchers cite the home or family background as one of the major factors in delinquency. They mention broken homes, divorce, single parenting, step-parenting, broken relationships, parental fights and guardianship, non-cohesive families and lack of mattering or bonding with important others as variables that influence youth behaviour (Loeber et al, 2003: 3; Horne, 2004: 331-334; Upchurch et al, 1993: 920-922; Matherne et al, 2001: 655-662, Elliot, 2009: 119; Ford, 2005: 629; Vitz, n.d: 12-16; Smyth, 2012: 65). The absence of mattering is often cited as another important factor in delinquency as it has the potential to weaken social bonds between not only family members, but also important others such as teachers and friends.

A number of other scholars indict the parental role in the inculcation of upstanding moral behaviour and cite the use of foul language, cruelty, violence, gambling, the reading of pornographic material, speaking badly about others and encouraging antisocial behaviour as the very opposite examples of acceptable behaviour that should be modelled for children (Swarts, 1997, 40- 44; Williams-Evans et al, 2004: 32-
Participants in the study firmly concurred with these scholarly findings.

4.5.5 Factors within the community

The community was also cited as a major risk factor in that it is the foundation of values and norms which community members espouse and which learners follow. It is a common view that delinquents mirror their communities and that often their behaviour becomes socially acceptable if everyone “does it” and if no steps are taken to address it (Cindi, 2006: 40; Stewart et al, 2010: 591-593; Bureau of Market Research, 2012: 3).

Although participants were not initially forthcoming regarding their role in negatively influencing learner behaviour, they eventually cited behaviours amongst some of them as the precursors of delinquency within the school and also as reinforcement of existing misconduct from outside the school environment. Their responses confirmed research results of some scholars who attested to the view that teachers’ behaviours either protect or escalate antisocial behaviour amongst their charges (Spaulding, 2005: 2; Kabali-Kagwa, 1997: 2; Sithole, 1996:26-27).

4.5.6 Factors within the school

Thabethe (2010: 39-40) asserts that the school’s role is not only to inculcate knowledge and skills, but also values and norms in collaboration with the home as the two most important institutions of moral education for children. However, the study found that poor school structure and organization as cited by various researchers, play a negative role in delinquency (Papacosta, 2009: 24; Hagell et al. 2006: 52; Ladokun, 2012: 126; Sullivan et al, 2008: 15-16; De Wet, 2003: 92; Seale, 2012: 3; Jansen, 2012: 15; Mampane et al, 2011: 1-2; Mufanechiya et al, 2011; 97-98; Ramatsui, 2006: 11-18). Teachers felt they were not adequately empowered with resources such as clear policies to address misconduct. They also complained about poor leadership leading to job dissatisfaction; lack of bonding with learners; and poor management styles which - by their own admission - often impacted negatively on learner behaviour.
Juvenile delinquency has negative effects on the delinquent and others. Participants attested to this suggestion and cited examples wherein they personally exhibited some of the symptoms identified by researchers, namely: feelings of hopelessness; low energy levels; frequent tearfulness, and fear (Schmalleger et al, 2008: 29; Gottfredson, 2001: 4; Thabethe, 2010: 117; Steyn, 2008: 206). They also indicated that other learners also became victims of delinquency. They contended that the abolition of corporal punishment became the nail that crucified their ability to discipline delinquents and maintain a sense of order within the teaching and learning environment.

Participants also supported ongoing research findings which indicate that delinquents also suffered negative effects brought about by their antisocial behaviour, especially if there are no interventions to curb the behaviour at its onset (Williams, 2012: 14; Estevez et al, 2011: 70; Prinsloo, 2007: 156; Wickliffe, 2012: 5).

4.5.7 Inadequate awareness of existing intervention strategies

Half of the participants acknowledged that they were aware of intervention strategies to help them deal with delinquent learners. For an example, the South African Schools Act, the Learner Code of Conduct and the subject, Life Orientation, are their main sources of information on how to deal with learner behaviour, in addition to their own efforts in collaboration with other external agencies (South Africa. Department of Education, 2008: 11; Prinsloo, 2007: 156-158). However, the findings reveal that all the latter are insufficient and that as government policies, they are ineffective. Participants further raised the concern that corporal punishment was prematurely banished and replaced by time-consuming policies and procedures which interfered with teaching and learning outputs.

The structures such as the SMT, SGB, SBST and the district, under the banner of the Department of Education, seemingly do very little to support and empower teachers in their efforts to positively influence behaviour. This points to a lack of resources in township and rural schools in particular, such as telephones, special rooms, social workers and sufficient psychologists, and the training of disciplinary committees and the SBSTs. It would seem that teachers are more often than not, indicted for any wrong-doing by the employer and society as indicated by media reports. The
participants shared their views on this latter issue and felt that the society was against them as an entity and that their challenges are disregarded. The issue of leniency on the part of the law, which was alluded to earlier on, comes to the fore. The findings indicate that teachers do need sustained support to deal with delinquency.

The following section will look into issues of validity and reliability of the study as discussed in Chapter 3.

4.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY IN THE STUDY

Although there is criticism levelled against qualitative research as lacking rigour, the researcher followed certain steps to ensure that the study would be considered rigorous enough to encourage further research. Firstly, the questionnaire was piloted. A psychologist and fellow office-based educators in the district were requested to quality-assure the focus group interview schedule and comment on the appropriateness of the questions and the other aspects of the interview phase such as the venue, duration, participants and unforeseen circumstances that could interfere with the interviews.

The researcher prepared all the records pertaining to the data collection phase such as interview dates, venues, times, names and numbers, amongst others, to validate the study (Denscombe, 2002: 104-106). An expert was also requested to analyse the closed items in the questionnaire responses.

4.7 ETHICAL MEASURES

The researcher obtained the requisite permission from the GDE and schools to conduct the study. The requisite ethical measures enumerated in Chapter 3 were considered. The fact that there would be no financial gain for them accruing from the study was also emphasized (Kanuka, 2007: 5; Orb et al, 2001: 95; Burns et al, 2001: 160, 164, 166).
4.8 LIMITATIONS

The study was undertaken only in Tshwane North District and involved only two school clusters and twelve teachers in the focus group interview phase which was the main data collection phase. Therefore, the findings will not be generalized to other parts of the country, but will apply to Gauteng Province which was the site delimited for the study. The foregoing discussion means that the purpose of the study sought to elicit the perspectives and experiences of a sample of teachers in Gauteng in order to arrive at some insight into the reasons for the apparent escalation of the problem in the province. The small sample is typical for qualitative research since the main purpose was to gain in-depth knowledge and insight about the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency and to suggest possible interventions to address it.

4.9 CONCLUSION

The findings of this study suggested that the majority of teachers in secondary schools in Gauteng are aware of the huge challenge posed by delinquent learners with regard to teaching and learning. The major perceptions the study gathered were that the dawn of a democratic dispensation in 1994 worsened adolescent delinquency and rendered many previously disadvantaged schools dysfunctional. According to Mafora (2014: 4), the current instability in most township schools, including the problem of delinquency, is lamented by many stakeholders, “as if we are still in the old order”. The latter comment revokes memories of a sad past in the country’s education system.

The design and methodology followed in this study enabled the researcher to answer the main research question: **What is the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools?** Although the perceptions elicited from the participants were not exhaustive they have, however, assisted in shedding some light about the problem. The participants’ desire to regain their voice in the moulding of learner behaviour came out very distinctly from the findings. They also expressed their concern about the persistent and undue political interference in education, which demotivates many teachers.
In Chapter 5 the researcher will make some recommendations on possible strategies teachers and other stakeholders could utilise in dealing with juvenile delinquency in secondary schools.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

There is no societal problem that pervades the thoughts and energy of societies globally like juvenile delinquency. Reports from the literature review in Chapter 2 indicated how societies since the 7th century have been agonizing about juvenile delinquency and in particular, how to effectively deal with it (Shoemaker, 2009: 6). Various international reports on juvenile delinquency, such as WYR and JJATW (2003), as alluded to in the review, cite modern challenges faced by the youth which generally have an overwhelming influence on their behaviour. The latter reports, amongst others, also attest to the contention that the problem plagues societies and is escalating. International research on the problem also supports the aforementioned views.

South Africa and Gauteng Province in particular, are not immune to the antisocial behaviour of school-going learners, especially in secondary schools. Past and current research and literature on the problem in the aforementioned country and province, in particular, also attest to global views on the problem. Numerous media reports of adolescents’ delinquent behaviour in Gauteng secondary schools prompted the researcher to investigate the problem (Bailey, 2012: 3); Mazibuko, 2012: 6; Seale, 2012: 3; Serrao, 2008: n.p).

The main aim of this study was to make recommendations to deal with antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents, and contribute to educational research and the development of policies in dealing with the problem in future. As discussed in Chapter 1, the following research objectives were identified:

- to describe the opinions and experiences of teachers on juvenile delinquency in secondary schools;
to describe the nature, extent and causes of the problem in secondary schools; and

to describe the extent to which parents, teachers, wider society and policies have caused, prevented and dealt with the problem in secondary schools.

The envisaged outcome of the study will be the extent to which the aim and objectives above have been met after the application of a specific research paradigm and design. The study mainly used the qualitative and combined interpretive-constructivist paradigm which commenced with a quantitative phase. Hence, a mixed method design was implemented. As set out in Chapter 1 and discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, a questionnaire was administered to sampled teachers, after which focus group interviews were conducted with the same sample using an unstructured, in-depth interview schedule.

The ensuing discussion will focus on a summary of the findings and conclusions generated from the data.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

In order to satisfy the main aim of the study, the researcher sought to find answers to the main and secondary research questions which elicited responses discussed in the paragraphs that follow. The main research question was: What is the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng secondary schools? The objectives of the study were:

- to describe the opinions and experiences of teachers on juvenile delinquency in secondary schools;
- to describe the nature, extent and causes of the problem in secondary schools; and
- to describe the extent to which parents, teachers, wider society and policies have caused, prevented and dealt with the problem in secondary schools.

The brief discussion of the findings follows in the ensuing section.
5.2.1 Sub-question one: The opinions of teachers on juvenile delinquency

The main question for this section was: “What are the opinions of teachers on juvenile delinquency in secondary schools and their experiences thereof?”

The findings indicated that the level of awareness of the problem amongst teachers was high. They also attested to the view that it was out of control although most incidents were not reported. The latter statement is what diminishes its prevalence. There was general agreement that adolescents violate social and legal norms by committing minor (status) offences to serious crimes. Most of them witnessed and continue to witness delinquent behaviour amongst learners. Most common instances of juvenile delinquency cited in 1.2.2.2; 2.2.2.3; and 2.3.2.4, included the following:

- Stealing;
- Lying;
- Vandalizing school property;
- Exhibiting inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- Truancy, neglecting school-work;
- Use of obscene language;
- Bullying other learners and teachers;
- Fighting with other learners and teachers; and
- The common use of drugs and alcohol.

Instances of gangsterism were becoming rife, and culprits terrorised teachers and learners as well as the neighbouring communities. The most common concern was the frequent disrespect of school authorities.

The aforementioned status of juvenile delinquency amongst school-going adolescents points to numerous factors which escalate it to the levels reported in the media. It emerged that the problem occurred mostly in townships, rural and squatter areas. Most delinquent acts were performed by learners from poor backgrounds where unemployment is rife. However, parents were found to be the major cause of juvenile
delinquency. The influence of the home or family in antisocial behaviour will be discussed in 5.2.4 below.

Other factors blamed for the problem include community and teen sub-cultures which glorify wrong-doing. In the South African context, sub-cultures differ within and between communities. Some communities engage in and glorify excessive alcohol and drug abuse, especially in previously disadvantaged schools, as a means of socializing. As a result, children and youth, in particular, imitate the behaviours. The review cited in Chapter 2 is testimony to the aforementioned view. Adolescents also create their own sub-cultures to rebel against society.

Since the democratic dispensation, adolescents engage in what is termed *Izikhothane* culture. (See the analysis of focus group interviews in 4.4.3.2). Another example displayed by youth in South Africa is car-spinning which, it is believed, is a status symbol and is touted as a sport which communities and youth can proudly follow. Obviously, the youth are elated by the latter prospect. Currently, a television series on Channel 194 (*Spinaguluva*, 2015: 20:30) seems to glorify car-spinning which, for township dwellers, is synonymous with car theft and township gangsterism.

By their own admission, participants conceded that some teachers are themselves poor role models of appropriate behaviour, both as individuals and their attitude toward their teaching responsibilities. Furthermore, SMTs, Disciplinary Committees and SBSTs, in most of the schools affected by the problem, are dysfunctional. The findings also pointed to factors within the delinquent that escalate wrong-doing as an additional cause for concern since they (teachers) lack the requisite knowledge on how to deal with it – the reason why they tended to treat culprits as objects. The idea of mattering was identified in the literature review as an important factor in juvenile delinquency and was seen as a buffer against antisocial behaviour (2.3.2.1; 2.4.2.; 2.4.3.5; 2.4.4.1; 2.6.2).

Interestingly enough though, is the instance of a former white secondary school that was populated by mostly black learners from neighbouring townships, who were excessively delinquent. The parents of these learners were mostly of middle-class socio-economic position – teachers, lawyers, social workers, police officers, doctors,
and business people. Evidently, this example points to the inherent influence location and by implication, societal background, have on learner behaviour. The latter demographic features enabled the researcher to profile delinquent learners and simultaneously determine the nature and extent of the problem in schools.

The foregoing findings concur with the theories discussed in the literature review in 2.3.2 which explain the nature of juvenile delinquency amongst the youth. The theories are namely: social control, anomie and strain, social learning, ecological and labelling.

It is clear from the findings that juvenile delinquency is a by-product of adolescence, a transitional phase to adulthood which cannot be wished away. When the behaviour overlaps into criminality, interventions from all stakeholders become necessary. The findings concur with the various theories of adolescence that encourage communities to support adolescents to pass through this development phase largely unaffected by internal and external changes of which they have no control. Furthermore, it also emerged that with the necessary interventions, the undesirable behaviour disappears spontaneously during the transition period and adulthood.

Reportedly, the problem occurred daily inside and outside the classroom. Some participants had personally experienced the problem amongst their learners, but were sometimes too afraid to report it for fear of victimisation by the culprits and the employer. Evidently then, fear causes most teachers to deliberately ignore the problem by not reporting it.

In addition, it surfaced that city or former white schools commonly called former Model C schools, had sufficient resources to manage learner misconduct, as compared to schools in squatter areas, rural areas and townships. For an example, participants cited the availability of resident psychologists and social workers in these schools, including physical structures such as sick-rooms and other rooms for their consultations with wrong-doers.
5.2.2 Sub-question two: The most prominent features of adolescents in whom antisocial behaviour manifests

The main question for this section was: “What are the most prominent social and geographical features of adolescents in whom antisocial behaviour manifests?”

In the first sub-question, mention was made of the influence of location on antisocial behaviour. Most participants were adamant that schools in townships, squatter camps and rural areas that are mostly populated by black learners, emerged as the sites in which most adolescent delinquency occurred. By comparison, learners in multi-racial schools exhibited the least antisocial behaviours due to the availability of various resources such as those mentioned in 5.2.1 that help to contain the problem. Therefore, the assumption is that other schools would be able to reduce antisocial behaviour if they had similar resources at their disposal. In addition, the past socio-economic background of most city schools serves as a buffer against unacceptable behaviour, but does not in any way fully protect them from adolescent misconduct. The cross-influence of diverse races and cultures and especially the past socio-economic backgrounds of South African learners, serve as causes of delinquency. So, the problem is not ruled out in these schools.

The findings further indicated that adolescents from so-called formerly disadvantaged areas are affected by abject poverty, homelessness, unemployment and teenage pregnancy, the latter being the only hope of accessing the child grants offered by the government, in order to put food on the table. The scourge of HIV/AIDS has left many children destitute, some becoming bread-winners and heading families at a very young age. Most parents in these areas are illiterate, lack good parenting skills and are poor role-models of appropriate behaviour. Most adults, including the learners’ siblings in former disadvantaged areas, are the most consumers of alcohol and also abuse drugs. In the squatter settlements, the small size of the houses compromises the innocence of children by exposing them to sexual activity at an early age which subsequently leads to teenage pregnancy and diseases.

The communities in disadvantaged areas expose young people to inappropriate language and morals as evidenced by the names they give to the areas. Violence in
the form of rape and murder is rife and disrespect for law and order is common. Stealing and vandalism are also common. Consequently, antisocial behaviour is normalized and a laissez-faire attitude is the norm. Such environments are clearly precursors of antisocial behaviour amongst children and youth.

The holistic development of learners who hail from the backgrounds above is often compromised. What has become normalized in their communities is not countered by appropriate support from the schools they attend because these schools are products of the same communities. They only serve to perpetuate the problem.

5.2.3 Sub-question three: The effects of juvenile offending on discipline

The main question for this section was: “How has juvenile offending affected discipline in schools?”

The empirical findings indicated that teaching and learning are adversely affected by the misconduct of learners, especially if it is sustained and escalated to unacceptable levels. They also revealed the common delay in completing the prescribed syllabus since they constantly have to manage learner misconduct during lessons. Hence, law-abiding learners are also affected and general learner performance declines significantly. Generally, discipline amongst most learners declines significantly, thus affecting whole school discipline, causing the school to become dysfunctional. As a result, it was found that school safety is compromised, a laissez-faire attitude amongst teachers, SMTs and learners becomes entrenched, and criminal elements in the surrounding community invade affected schools.

As expected, participants lamented the banning of corporal punishment and described the current disciplinary measures prescribed in the Learner Code of Conduct (Department of Education, 2008) as time-consuming and not changing behaviour.

Participants indicated that they could manage antisocial behaviour that is a normal feature of the adolescence phase. However, the findings also indicated that some teachers lacked even basic classroom management skills to help them manage learners’ ill-discipline. The participants asserted that instances of delinquency often
experienced were bordering on the criminal and that they lacked the necessary skills and resources to deal with it.

5.2.4 Sub-question four: The role of the family in juvenile delinquency

The main question for this section was: “What role does the family play in causing, preventing and dealing with juvenile delinquency?”

The findings condemned the role of parents within the family structure in the escalation of juvenile delinquency. Many theories discussed in 2.4.3, which are supported by scholars, describe the family environment as a buffer against child misconduct and blame it when children exhibit antisocial behaviour. Rather than play the role of buffer to prevent child misconduct, the family is often the cause of bad behaviour. Some theorists and researchers discussed in 2.3.2.1 and 2.4.3 assert that children learn by imitating others, especially parents and siblings within the family structure. The latter are their first nurturers. Families in advantaged areas, including some areas in townships, were also blamed for the delinquent behaviour of their children. So, families in the latter areas are not exempt from the blame.

Depending on the location, the structure of families was regarded as the foremost cause of delinquency. Theories and some researchers’ work discussed in 2.3.2 and 2.4.3 also asserted that most delinquent children came from single-parent, mostly fatherless families, due to parental divorce or separation - environments which deprive children of the nurturing they need for wholesome development. In addition, poor parental literacy levels, poor supervision and a lack of positive parental and sibling role models exacerbated juvenile delinquency. Clearly, participants indicted the family or home. Parents, more often than not, fail in their role as the foremost agents of the socialization of children, much to the detriment of the moral well-being of the latter.

The study found that most affected parents adopt a laissez-faire attitude in the upbringing and antisocial behaviour of their children. The dawn of democracy and related individual rights seem to have exacerbated the aforesaid attitude. Hence, they indirectly delegate their parental role of correcting children’s delinquent behaviour to the government, and by extension, to the school and teachers. In 4.3.2.2 (Q 24 in the
questionnaire) and 4.4.3.2 in the analysis of focus group interviews, the study found that the aforementioned attitude was the reason many parents of affected learners in townships, squatter settlements and rural areas failed to attend meetings with teachers to collectively address the misbehaviour and poor academic performance of their children. So, teachers have to often deal with chronic antisocial behaviour of some learners on their own on top of their teaching loads.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The findings of the study led to two main conclusions, namely: the acquisition of knowledge about juvenile delinquency as both a global and local challenge, as well as the necessary intervention strategies which stakeholders, especially teachers, could use to deal with it. The conclusion is based on the assumption that the problem cannot be adequately addressed without the requisite knowledge of its existence.

Any conceptualization of juvenile delinquency should be preceded by an understanding of theories that explain adolescence. In Chapter 2, the human developmental stage leading to adulthood commonly called adolescence was discussed at length. While teachers understand the phase, delinquency levels in schools are cause for concern and awareness alone cannot curb the problem. Often, in an attempt to address the problem, teachers tend to detach antisocial behaviour from adolescence. Hence, their frustration when their efforts fail. Based on the latter, it makes sense that knowledge about factors surrounding youth misconduct ought to be imparted to the teaching corps – with knowledge comes understanding, and as such, solutions can be adequately crafted.

The theoretical information in 2.2 to 2.5 is a significant tool teachers need in empowering them to gain the proper perspective on juvenile delinquency – major issues being adolescence, juvenile delinquency and the common factors, globally, that lead adolescents to engage in antisocial behaviour.

The findings also led to the conclusion that teachers are no experts in addressing the antisocial behaviour among their learners. However, they have a key role in ensuring that affected learners in their schools receive the necessary intervention and support
to curb their wrong behaviour. The latter statement thus purports that preventing and correcting learner misconduct is a collective effort of all stakeholders in school communities. Participants clearly articulated their need for training on how to deal with antisocial behaviour. Most expressed lack of knowledge of intervention strategies either due to their own ignorance or lack of adequate communication of such by the education authorities. Another factor commonly cited and which is connected to interventions is the general lack of basic resources, material or human, in previously disadvantaged schools, which obviously hamper attempts to address the problem at school-level.

The positive roles of mainly parents, various community leaders, and interested groups whom adolescents look up to for guidance, were alluded to and emphasized as a desirable contribution to the normal socialization of school-going adolescents.

The main conclusion made from the findings of the study is that juvenile delinquency at school-level is real, but can be managed by all concerned. Thus, the aim and objectives of the study were met by the empirical research. In addition, the recommendations that will be tabled in the ensuing paragraphs are possible interventions that schools and policy-makers could utilise in order to address and de-escalate the problem.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher recognizes the limitations of this study. The findings were based on the empirical study of a single school district with a few participants. Hence, the recommendations that follow cannot be generalised to the rest of the schools in the Gauteng Province or South Africa. Future research based on a more representative sample of the school population in the country is necessary.

In the ensuing paragraphs, actionable recommendations are tabulated based on the two conclusions discussed in 5.3 above.
5.4.1 Recommendations for the Gauteng Department of Education

- Any provincial policy meant to enable behavioural change amongst delinquent youth should be based on a national youth policy that prioritises marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged youth. When youth are marginalized as indicated in 5.2.2 above, they become more susceptible to developing delinquent tendencies and more seriously, escalated crime (WYR, 2003: 20).

- Desired policy formulations indicated above should be a product of experts from various government departments such as health, social welfare, justice, and correctional services. The voice of teachers, parents and youth should complete the list of stakeholders.

- The local social contexts of youth in South Africa as well as the global context of all young people have an effect on how they order their role in society. These contexts should be visited so that young people are accorded the necessary support in embracing their local and global existence and role, respectively.

- The current national Code of Conduct for learners should be revised and embedded in the envisaged policy. Intervention programmes such as mediation, use of guidance counsellors and mentors as well as conflict resolution programmes should be made mandatory for schools. In support of the United Nations Guidelines on the prevention of juvenile delinquency, research by The American Psychological Association has found that the latter strategies reduce discipline problems and violence in schools (Sullivan et al, 2008: 24-25).

- The suggested policy should be used as a foundation for the training manuals for the training of various stakeholders. Erasing the negative effects of the evils of the previous political dispensation on the development of the youth in the country and in Gauteng, in particular, can no longer be deferred.

- In view of the above suggestions, the South African government, through the support of policy-makers, should release funds to manage and correct learner behaviour amongst secondary school adolescents. The envisaged improvement in learner behaviour can be achieved only if sufficient human
resources such as psychologists, social workers and guidance counsellors are employed and deployed to affected areas.

- Policy-makers and all stakeholders should appreciate the fact that when learner delinquency and crime within the school environment decreases, teacher, and learner performance in particular, improve. Consequently, future prospects in all spheres of life of youth from marginalized social environments improve for the better.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Gauteng school district offices

- Based on the envisaged policy revisions and implementation discussed in 5.4.1, districts should mediate the relevant policies to school managers, teachers, teacher unions, SGBs, parents, learners and community stakeholders.
- Teachers, who are the focus of this study, should be trained at entry level into the profession, and on an ongoing basis at regular intervals per annum as shall be determined by the department. Such regular contact with district experts will afford teachers a voice regarding their frustrations and enable them to share ideas and good practices on effective classroom management and discipline.
- Districts should regularly and rigorously monitor and support the implementation of policies. This service is to ensure that antisocial behaviour amongst learners at risk is prevented and that those already exhibiting the behaviour are offered appropriate support services.
- The subject Life Orientation (LO) should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that knowledge and skills imparted to the youth include knowledge and skills on societal norms and values regarding behaviour in order to enhance discipline in schools and the home.
- Districts and all stakeholders should recognize the importance of “education of the whole child” (a fundamental precept of education) by according good moral behaviour the same status as Maths, Science and Accounting. The societal norms and values specified in the Constitution will resemble mere
bones without flesh if they cannot be realized through appropriate individual and corporate actions.

5.4.3 Recommendations for future research

- The views of experts such as school psychologists, social workers as well as guidance counsellors would offer a fresh perception on other unknown dimensions of the problem as well as strategies they explore to intervene as well as their level of success. Information regarding the extent to which they share their expertise of learner behaviour with teachers would be much welcomed.

- Informal settlements are becoming a normal demographic feature of South Africa’s landscape. Some of the country’s successful young citizens grew up and were educated in squatter areas. It would be interesting to know other factors not yet explored that serve as a buffer against learner misconduct in such residential areas.

- Every year provincial governments pump more money into improving matriculation results in their respective provinces. However, future research could investigate how many resources - monetary, human or otherwise, are allocated towards improving learner behaviour, in particular.

5.5 FINAL CONCLUSION

The study was set out to investigate the status of juvenile delinquency amongst secondary school learners in Gauteng. Through the various chapters, the main aim and objectives of the study were achieved.

It is evident from the study that teachers, in collaboration with parents and the GDE, form the main support structure for learners experiencing behavioural challenges. Hence, their voice should be heeded equally or possibly more, due to their role in loco parentis, especially due to the amount of time some of them spend with learners.
In light of the findings of the study and the voice of teacher-participants, improved learner overall behaviour and the concomitant excellent academic performance are mutually inclusive and both aspects should receive equal attention from all stakeholders.
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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AMONGST ADOLESCENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG

Juvenile delinquency is demonstrated in many of our schools in South Africa and perhaps also at your school or neighbouring schools. This questionnaire seeks to understand the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency through your views and experiences of antisocial conduct amongst learners in your school and your neighbouring schools.

This questionnaire comprises of FOUR sections. Section A comprises of closed biographical questions. Sections B to D consist of open-ended multiple choice questions which require you to justify your chosen option. Feel free to elaborate on your answers as best you can.

Questions in Section A should be answered with a cross in the appropriate box. It will take you 45 - 50 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your identity and that of your school will be kept anonymous as you don’t have to indicate them on this form. You will also suffer no harm for answering this questionnaire. Feel free to ask for clarification on any matter pertaining to this questionnaire and the study in general. You have been specifically requested to answer this questionnaire because I believe you have the required knowledge about juvenile delinquency.

Thank you for agreeing to answer this questionnaire.

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Topics covered:

➢ Getting to know you: biographical data
The extent and nature of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in Tshwane North.
Causes and effects of juvenile delinquency.
Current intervention strategies.

SECTION A
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. To which age category below do you belong?

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<tr>
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<th>41 - 45</th>
<th>46 - 54</th>
<th>55 - 65</th>
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2. Your sex or gender:

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<td>Female</td>
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<th>Female</th>
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3. Your qualifications:

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<tr>
<td>Professional Diploma</td>
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<td>Academic Degree</td>
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4. Teaching experience in years:

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<td>31 – 40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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5. The subjects you are teaching:

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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic &amp; Management Sciences</td>
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6. Your extra-curricular activities:

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<td>Sport activities</td>
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<td>School safety activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learner support activities</td>
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<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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7. The location of your school:

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<tr>
<td>City</td>
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8. Philosophical orientation:

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<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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</table>
PLEASE NOTE: Answer all the questions in sections B to D by first encircling the option you choose and justifying your choice in the space provided.

SECTION B:
What is your view regarding the nature and extent of antisocial behaviour amongst your learners and elsewhere in the Gauteng province?

Questions 9 – 13

Question 9

Juvenile delinquency in schools is rife.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree / disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

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Question 10

Have you personally encountered antisocial behaviour amongst learners at your school?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Always
Question 11

Substance abuse, truancy, bullying, disrespect of authority, theft, lying, inappropriate sexual behaviour and teenage pregnancy are the most common antisocial behaviours amongst learners in your school.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree / disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

Question 12

Learner misconduct is out of control and culprits are less remorseful.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree / disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree
Question 13

How does juvenile delinquency today compare to the period before 1994?

1. Much worse
2. Somewhat worse
3. About the same
4. Somewhat better
5. Much better

SECTION C

What causes juvenile delinquency and what are its effects?

Questions 14 - 19

Question 14

The country’s political past is to blame for the antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents.

1. Not at all influential
2. Slightly influential
3. Somewhat influential
4. Very influential
5. Extremely influential
Question 15

There is no argument that adolescence is the cause of juvenile delinquency.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree / disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

Question 16

To what extent does delinquent behaviour amongst learners affect teaching and learning in your school and elsewhere?

1. No effect
2. Minor effect
3. Neutral
4. Moderate effect
5. Major effect

Question 17

Delinquents face a disastrous adulthood and future.

1. Extremely unlikely
2. Unlikely
3. Neutral
4. Likely
5. Extremely likely

Question 18

Schools that are poorly organised and dysfunctional could be linked to adolescents’ misconduct.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree/disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

Question 19

A dysfunctional society is the breeding ground for adolescence.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree/disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree
SECTION D

Questions 20 - 24

Do current intervention strategies that are in place in your school deter adolescents from antisocial behaviour?

Question 20

I am content with the strategies my school applies to deal with learner misconduct.

1. Very dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. Unsure
4. Satisfied
5. Very satisfied

Question 21

I approach the School-based Support Team (SBST) in my school for advice on how to deal with instances of misconduct amongst my learners.

1. Never
2. Almost never
3. Occasionally / sometimes
4. Almost every time
5. Every time
Question 22

Managing learner behaviour takes precedence over my teaching responsibilities.

1. Not a priority
2. Low priority
3. Medium priority
4. High priority
5. Essential

Question 23

I know about the GDE’s intervention programmes which my school and I can use to deal with juvenile delinquency.

1. Not at all aware
2. Slightly aware
3. Somewhat aware
4. Moderately aware
5. Extremely aware

Question 24

How would you rate parental involvement in the discipline of their children’s misconduct in your school?

1. Poor
2. Fair
3. Good
4. Very good
5. Excellent

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION
APPENDIX B

DATE: May to August 2014

RESEARCHER: MP Ntshangase

QUESTIONS FOR UNSTRUCTURED FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

TOPIC: A study of juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools in Gauteng

Please share with me your thoughts, experiences and feelings about juvenile delinquency amongst your learners by answering the following questions:

1. Does juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools warrant the attention it is getting currently? Why?

2. What factors not commonly cited, are linked to juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools?

3. Is there an instance or instances of antisocial behaviour amongst learners in your school that nearly caused you to quit your teaching profession? Why?
4. Is there any chance that factors within your school are to blame for instances of antisocial behaviour amongst your learners? Why?
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5. What role, if any, do external institutions such as the district, the GDE or non-governmental bodies, amongst others, play in supporting your school’s efforts to address juvenile delinquency? Are you satisfied?
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6. What kind of support do you need to enable you to better deal with juvenile delinquency amongst your learners? Why?
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7. Do you have any other comments pertaining to this study?
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APPENDIX C

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

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<th>10 October 2014</th>
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<td>10 February to 3 October 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Researcher:</td>
<td>Ntshangase M.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address of Researcher:</td>
<td>P.O. Box 68468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karen Park 0118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Number:</td>
<td>012 543 1044 / 1098; 072 784 3123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax Number:</td>
<td>012 549 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ozempepg@telkomsa.net">ozempepg@telkomsa.net</a>; <a href="mailto:Margaret.Ntshangase@gauteng.gov.za">Margaret.Ntshangase@gauteng.gov.za</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGR) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 386 0600
Fax: (011) 395 4321

Making education a societal priority
1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher has obtained written permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.

3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher has obtained the written permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

4. A letter/communication that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and District/Head offices concerned, respectively.

5. The researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the SGB officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.

6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school and/or District/Head Office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researchers may carry out their research at the sites they manage.

7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. An amended Research Approval Letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.

8. Items 8 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will be organised and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.

9. It is the researcher’s responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.

10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising higher or research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, fees and telephones and should not depend on goodwill of the institutions and/or the office visited for supplying such resources.

11. The names of the SGB officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individually or organisations.

12. On completion of the study, the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one hard copy bound and an electronic copy of the research.

13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of further research to both SGB officials and the school concerned.

14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/Head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

[Signature]

Dr. David Makhado
Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 01/02/2010

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
9th Floor, 111 Connaught Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0509
Email: David.Makhado@edu.gv.za

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APPENDIX D

Letter to GDE’s Diane Buntting
PO Box 58468
Karen Park
0118
ATT: Diane Buntting
Director: Knowledge Management and Research
Gauteng Department of Education
PO Box 7710
Jonannesburg
2000

Dear Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN GAUTENG SECONDARY SCHOOLS

I am a M.Ed (Socio-Education) student at Unisa currently doing the dissertation section of my studies. My special interest lies in empowering educators to deal with school-going adolescents’ antisocial behaviour. In pursuit thereof, I have prepared a proposal and completed the GDE research request form which outlines all the details pertaining to the research project – both documents are attached.

This is a mixed methods research of a limited nature which will commence with a questionnaire, followed by focus group interviews. Participants in the study will be secondary schoolteachers in the Tshwane North District, representing secondary school teachers in Gauteng Province.

The first and second quarters of 2014 will be utilized to conduct the research. The anticipated duration for answering the questionnaire and focus group interviews (per session) will be 30-45 minutes and 70-90 minutes, respectively.

The participants’ views will form the basis for the development of intervention strategies meant to empower them to deal with the problem. Learners will also be assisted to address their behavioural problems. This will improve the teaching and learning environment and the wellness of the school population in general.
I do not anticipate any risks to the participants, physically or otherwise. Participation will be voluntary and all information shared and the participants’ identities will be kept confidential and anonymous. Participants will be free to continue with or withdraw from the study without any penalty. Willing participants will be requested to sign a consent form. The results of the study will be shared with all the participants and schools in an appropriate forum. The completed research document will be availed to the GDE. Where necessary, the results may be published in an educational journal or presented at an appropriate gathering.

Dr HJ Kriek is my supervisor at Unisa (Dept. of Educational Foundations) and can be contacted at 012 429 6964, or kriekhj@unisa.ca.za. Please feel free to contact either the supervisor or myself (see contact numbers below) for any queries pertaining to the research project.

I appreciate your support and willingness to afford teachers the opportunity to participate in this research project.

Kind regards

Margaret Ntshangase

Signature: ................................. Date: ..........................................  
(012) 549 1870  Cell: 0727843123/ 0827092245  
E-mail: ezemagg@telkomsa.net/Margaret.Ntshangase@gauteng.gov.za
REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITHIN THE DISTRICT.

I am a student of the University of South Africa. At present, I am registered for a Master’s degree in Socio-Education (Code: DIS980C), a dissertation of limited scope. My topic is: A study of juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools in Gauteng.

In order to fulfil the requirements for the study, I need permission to conduct an empirical study involving teachers at secondary schools in the district. The selected sample will be requested to answer a questionnaire, subsequently followed by focus group interviews with a purposively selected sample that will have answered the questionnaire.

The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers on the escalating problem of juvenile delinquency in Gauteng schools.

Participants’ identities and views will remain anonymous and confidential, and potential participants will sign consent forms if they agree to participate in the study. All other issues pertaining to the study will be disclosed in full.

The results of the study will be availed to the GDE, participants and stakeholders in appropriate forums.
My supervisor, Dr H J Kriek, and myself, can be contacted at the contact numbers below for any queries you may have regarding the study.

Your willingness to support this research project will be appreciated.

Yours Faithfully

Contact details:
Researcher:
NAME: MARGARET P. NTSHANGASE
Contact No. 072 784 3123
E-mail: ezemagg@telkomsa.net

Supervisor:
NAME: Dr HJ KRIEK
Contact No. (012) 429 6964
E-mail: kriekhj@unisa.ac.za
APPENDIX F
TEACHER CONSENT FORM

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: A study of juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools in Gauteng.

Dear Teacher

I am currently busy with my MEd (Socio-Education) studies at Unisa. I have a special interest in studying the problem of juvenile delinquency as alluded to in the title of the study. The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and TN District have granted me permission to conduct the research in your school (See the copies of approval attached).

You have been purposively selected to participate in the study on the presumption that you are knowledgeable about juvenile delinquency among adolescents in your school, neighbouring schools and elsewhere in the province.

Your participation in this study will enhance your awareness of and knowledge about the problem, and how to deal with it in the context of your duties as educator in loco parentis. The information you provide will be useful to the GDE and all stakeholders and will foster a collective effort in dealing with the problem. So, your participation is valuable.

I do not foresee any risk or harm to your person or otherwise. The decision to participate in this study rests entirely with you. As and when circumstances dictate, you will be free to continue with or withdraw from the study without any penalty. I undertake to keep your identity and that of your school anonymous, and your views and comments confidential. Pseudonyms will be used to fulfil the latter promise. No information pertaining to your participation in this study will be divulged without your consent.
You will receive the results of the study with other stake-holders at a common information-sharing meeting. The results may also be published in a scientific journal.

Dr HJ Kriek at UNISA (Department of Educational Foundations) is my supervisor in this study. You are free to contact either one of us at the contact numbers below for any questions you may have related to the study.

If you are consenting to participate in this study as outlined above, please sign this letter to declare your consent.

Thank you

Signatures:
Participant: __________________                                Date: _______________

Researcher: __________________                                Date: _______________

Contact details:
Researcher:                         Supervisor:
NAME: MARGARET P. NTSHANGASE               NAME: DR HJ KRIEK
Contact No: 072 784 3123              Contact No: (012) 429 6964
E-mail: ezemagg@telkomsa.net               E-mail: kriekhj@unisa.ac.za
Research Ethics Clearance Certificate

This is to certify that the application for ethical clearance submitted by

Ntshangase, MP

[3993396]

for M Ed study entitled

A study of juvenile delinquency amongst adolescents in secondary schools in Gauteng has met the ethical requirements as specified by the University of South Africa College of Education Research Ethics Committee. This certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue.

Prof CS le Roux

CEDU REC (Chairperson)

27 November 2013

lrouxs@unisa.ac.za

Reference number: 2013 November/3993396/CSLR