

**AN ANALYSIS OF POST-RELEASE OFFENDER REINTEGRATION STRATEGIES  
DELIVERED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS**

**by**

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## DECLARATION

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I declare that **“An analysis of post-release offender reintegration strategies delivered by Non-Governmental Organisations”** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE

DATE

(Nomalanga Ellen Mnisi)

## DEDICATION

To my late brother **Elmond Mnisi** and  
mentee **Raymond Puseletso Gebuza**,  
may both your souls rest in perfect peace.

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I wish to express my sincere appreciation to:

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*“LEBITSO LA MORENA JESU HA LE BOKWE”*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study aimed to explore the nature of offender reintegration strategies and the support delivered to ex-offenders by non-governmental organisations after release. Ex-offenders face a variety of challenges that may hinder their ability to become law-abiding citizens and their relapse make society vulnerable to re-victimisation. Offender reintegration is not the sole responsibility of the Department of Correctional Services. The goal of community-based offender reintegration interventions through governmental and non-governmental agencies is to help offenders overcome the stigma of criminal conviction, detrimental effects of incarceration and other challenges they face in the process of reintegrating back into the community.

A qualitative approach was adopted, and semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews were used for data collection. The sample consisted of experts within the field of offender reintegration working at NGOs that offer reintegration support to offenders in Gauteng Province.

Findings indicated that social challenges that ex-offenders experienced after their release from correctional centres were associated with labelling, stigmatisation, rejection and discrimination from both their families and society in general. In addition, they found it difficult to find employment and to become financially independent. Although findings acknowledged that successful rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders remains their individual choice, the lack of support they experience makes it difficult for ex-offenders to feel part of society and to adapt to social norms in society. When ex-offenders are not accepted and supported within society, it becomes difficult for them to manage and overcome challenges they experience after release therefore increasing the risk of relapse and reoffending.

Findings indicated that the majority of reintegration services delivered by both governmental and non-governmental organisations are offered pre-release. These interventions predominantly consist of life skills and vocational training programmes. Due to limited halfway houses across the country, only a few offenders who lack

accommodation can be placed in those facilities. The lack of adequate support for released offenders was therefore recognised in this study as a gap that needs to be filled to achieve effective offender reintegration. Recommendations with regards to findings were made with calls for advocacy, action and further research.

**Key terms:** offender reintegration, ex-offenders, reintegration challenges, labelling, stigmatisation, recidivism.

## KGUTSUFATSO

Thuto ena e ikemiseditse ho hlahloba mofuta wa maano a ho kopanya batlodi ba molao le setjhaba le tshehetso eo ba e fumanang ho mekgatlo eo e seng ya mmuso ka mora ho lokollwa tjhankaneng. Bao e kileng ya e ba batlodi ba molao ba tobana le diphephetso tse mangata tse ka nang tsa sitisa bokgoni ba bona ba ho ba baahi ba bolokang molao, mme ho kgutlela mokgweng wa bona ho etsa hore setjhaba se be kotsing ya ho hlekefetswa hape. Ho kopanngwa batlodi ba molao le setjhaba ha se boikarabello ba Lefapha la Ditshebeletso tsa Tlhabollo le le leng. Sepheo sa ho kena dipakeng se thehilweng hodima setjhaba sa ho kopanya batlodi ba molao le setjhaba ka mekgatlo ya mmuso le eo e seng ya mmuso ke ho thusa batlodi ba molao ho hlola sekgobo sa kahlolo ya botlokotsebe ditlamorao tse mpe tsa ho kwallwa le diphephetso tse ding tseo ba tobanang le tsona nakong ya ho kgutlela setjhabeng.

Ho ile ha amohelwa mokgwa katamelo wa boleng mme ha sebediswa dipuisano tse hlophisitsweng hantle tsa sefahleho le sefahleho le mohala bakeng sa ho bokella dintlha. Mofuputsi o sebedisitse boikgethelo ba hae ho kgetha bankakarolo ba loketseng thuto ho latela tsebo ya bona ya maemo a phuphutso e hlophisitsweng. Sampole ena e akaretsa le ditsebi tse nang le tsebo ya ho kopanya batlodi ba molao le setjhaba ba sebeletsang mekgatlo e ikemetseng (NGOs) e fanang ka tshehetso ya ho kopanngwa ha batlodi ba molao le setjhaba provenseng ya Gauteng Afrika Borwa. Tlhahlobo ya sehlooho e ile ya sebediswa molemong wa tlhahlobo ya pokello ya dintlha.

Diphuputso di bontshitse hore mathata a setjhaba ao batlodi ba molao ba fetileng ba bileng le ona ka mora hore ba lokollwe ditsing tsa kgalemelo, a amahanngwa le ho tshwauwa, ho kgojwa, kgeswa, ho hanwa le ho kgethollwa ho tswa malapeng a bona le setjhabeng ka kakaretso. Ho eketsa ho moo, ba ile ba thatafallwa ke ho fumana mosebetsi le ho ikemela ditjheleteng. Leha diphuputso di ile tsa dumela hore ho busetsa motho bophelo bo botle ka kwetliso le ho kopanngwa ha batlodi ba molao le setjhaba e ntse e le kgetho ya bona ka bomong, ho hloka tshehetso ho etsa hore ho be thata hore batlodi ba molao ba mehleng ba ikutlwe e le karolo ya setjhaba le ho ikamahanya le



mekgwa ya setjhaba setjhabeng. Ha batlodi ba molao ba mehleng ba sa amohelwe le ho tshehetswa ka hara setjhaba, ho ba thata ho bona ho laola le ho hlola diphephetso tseo ba thulanang le tsona ka mora ho lokollwa tjhankaneng, ka hona ho eketsa kotsi ya ho kgutlela mokgweng le ho tlola molao hape.

Diphuputso di bontshitse hore boholo ba ditshebeletso tsa ho kopanya batlodi ba molao le setjhaba tse fanwang ke mekgatlo ya mmuso le eo e seng ya mmuso di fanwa pele batlodi ba molao ba lokollwa tjhankaneng. Bonamodi bona hangata bo na le ditsebo tsa bophelo le mananeo a kwetliso ya mosebetsi wa matsoho.

Ka lebaka la ho haela ha dibaka tseo batho ba tswang tjhankaneng ba ka phelang ho tsona pele ba lokollwa ka botlalo ho pholletsa naha, ke batlodi ba seng bakae feela ba hlokgang bolulo ba ka behwang ditsing tseo. Ho haela ha tshehetso e lekaneng bakeng sa batlodi ba molao ba lokolotsweng tjhankaneng ho ile ha hlokomelwa thutong ena e le lekgalo le lokelang ho tlatswa ho fihlela ho kgutlisetswa ha batlodi ba molao ka tsela e sebetsang. Ditlhahiso mabapi le diphuputso di entswe mabapi le boipiletso ba botshehetsi, diketso le dipatlisiso tse ling.

**Mantswe a bohlokwa:** Ho kopanya batlodi ba molao le setjhaba, batlodi ba molao ba mehleng, diphephetso tsa ho kopanya batlodi ba molao le setjhaba, ho tshwauwa, ho kgojwa, tlwaelo ya hore senokwane se fumanwe se le molato wa ho etsa phoso hape.

## OKUCASHUNIWE

Ucwaningo luhlose ukuhlola uhlobo lwamasu okubuyisela izephulamthetho kanye nokusekelwa okulethwa kulabo ababeyizephulamthetho yizinhlangano ezingekho ngaphansi kukahulumeni ngemva kokukhululwa. Ababeyizephulamthetho babhekana nezinselele ezihlukahlukene ezingase zithiye ikhono labo lokuba yizo izakhamuzi ezithobela umthetho, kanye nokubuyela emuva kwazo kwenza umphakathi ube sengcupheni yokuhlukunyezwa kabusha. Ukuhlanganiswa kabusha kwezephulamthetho akuwona wodwa umthwalo wemfanelo woMnyango Wezokuhlunyeleliswa Kwezimilo. Umgomo wokungenelela kokubuyisela kwezephulamthetho emphakathini ngokusebenzisa izikhungo zikahulumeni nezingekho ngaphansi kukahulumeni ukusiza izephulamthetho zinqobe ukucwaswa kokugwetshwa ngamacala obugebengu, imiphumela elimazayo yokuboshwa kanye nezinye izinselelo ababhekana nazo ohlelweni lokubuyela emphakathini.

Indlela yemininingwane ngokusebenzisa ukuxhumana okuvulekile nokuxoxa yemukelwa, kwase kusetshenziswa izingxoxo zobuso nobuso nezingcingo ezingahlelekile ukuze kuqoqwe imininingwane. Kusetshenziswe amasu okusampula ukuqonda kwabo ukukhetha ababambiqhaza abafanelekile bocwaningo nendlela yokwenza okungenzeka ibe khona ukuze kukhethwe ababambiqhaza balolu cwaningo. Isampula yayihlanganisa ochwepheshe emkhakheni wokuhlanganiswa kabusha kwezephulamthetho ezisebenza kuma-NGO anikeza ukwesekwa kokubuyiselwa ekuhlanganisweni kwezaphulamthetho esifundazweni sase-Gauteng eNingizimu Afrika. Ukuhlaziywa kwendikimba kwasetshenziselwa izinjongo zokuhlaziya imininingwane.

Okutholakele kubonise ukuthi izinselele zomphakathi labo ababeyizephulamthetho ababhekana nazo ngemva kokukhululwa kwabo ezikhungweni zokuhlunyeleliswa kwezimilo zazihambisana nokunamathisela igama elichazayo kumuntu, ukucwaswa, ukwenqatshwa kanye nokubandlululwa okuvela emindenini yabo nasemphakathini uwonke. Ngaphezu kwalokho, bakuthola kunzima ukuthola umsebenzi nokuzimela ngokwezimali. Nakuba okutholakele kwavuma ukuthi ukuhlunyeleliswa kwezimilo okuyimpumelelo kanye nokuhlanganiswa kabusha kwezaphulamthetho kusalokhu

kuyisinqumo sabo somuntu ngamunye, ukuntula ukusekelwa abakutholayo kwenza kube nzima kulabo ababeyizephulamthetho ukuzizwa beyingxenye yomphakathi kanye nokuzivumelanisa nezinkambiso zomphakathi emphakathini. Uma ababeyizephulamthetho bengamukelwa futhi besekelwa emphakathini, kuba nzima kubo ukuphatha futhi banqobe izinselele abahlangabezana nazo ngemva kokukhululwa, ngakho kwandisa ingcuphe yokuphinda futhi bone.

Imiphumela yabonisa ukuthi iningi lezinsizakalo zokubuyiselwa esikhundleni ezilethwa yizinhlangano zikahulumeni nezingekho ngaphansi kukahulumeni zinikezwa ngaphambi kokukhishwa. Lezi zinhlelo zokungenelela ikakhulukazi zibandakanya amakhono empilo kanye nezinhlelo zokuqeqeshelwa umsebenzi. Ngenxa yokunqunyelwa kwezindlu ezimaphakathi ezweni lonke, izephulamthetho ezimbalwa kuphela ezingenayo indawo yokuhlala ezingafakwa kulezo zikhungo. Ngakho-ke ukuntula kokusekelwa okwanele kwezephulamthetho ezikhululiwe kwaqashelwa kulolu cwaningo njengegebe okudingeka ligcwaliswe ukuze kuzuzwe ukubuyiselwa kwesaphulamthetho okusebenzayo. Iziphakamiso mayelana nokutholakele zenziwa nezicelo zokumela, isenzo kanye nocwaningo olwengeziwe.

**Amagama asemqoka:** ukuhlanganiswa kabusha kwesaphulamthetho; Ababeyizephulamthetho; Izinselele zokuhlanganiswa kabusha; Ukunamathelisa igama elichazayo kumuntu; Ukucwaswa; Umkhuba wokuthi isephulamthetho esilahlwe yicala siphinde senze icala.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>KGUTSUFATSO</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>xiv</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS</b> .....	<b>xv</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 GENERAL OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY .....	2
1.2.1 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY .....	5
1.3 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES.....	7
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	8
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .....	8
1.6 CONCEPTUALISATION OF KEY CONCEPTS .....	9
1.6.1 Social reintegration .....	9
1.6.2 Recidivism .....	10
1.6.3 Restorative justice.....	11
1.6.4 Rehabilitation .....	12
1.6.5 Labelling .....	13
1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY.....	14
1.8 CONCLUSION.....	15
<b>CHAPTER 2 AN ANALYSIS OF OFFENDER REINTEGRATION STRATEGIES</b> .....	<b>16</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	16
2.2 FACTORS IN CORRECTIONAL CENTRES THAT INFLUENCE THE REINTEGRATION OF EX-OFFENDERS.....	17
2.2.1 The effects of prison overcrowding on incarcerated offenders.....	17
2.2.2 The effect of incarceration on offender reintegration .....	20
2.3 LOSSES SUFFERED DUE TO INCARCERATION .....	25
2.3.1 Deprivation of freedom .....	25
2.3.2 Loss of safety.....	26
2.3.3 Loss of meaningful relationships .....	28
2.3.4 Obtaining a criminal record.....	28
2.4 THE OBJECTIVES OF REHABILITATION SERVICES IN CORRECTIONAL CENTRES .....	29
2.5 FACTORS THAT NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE OFFENDER REINTEGRATION WITHIN SOCIETY .....	34
2.5.1 Correctional institutionalisation .....	38

2.6 CURRENT PRACTICE IN OFFENDER REINTEGRATION .....	40
2.7 REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.....	44
2.8 REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOS) .....	49
2.9 PREPARING THE VICTIMS AND COMMUNITY TO RECEIVE THE EX-OFFENDER DURING REINTEGRATION.....	52
2.10 CONCLUSION.....	55
<b>CHAPTER 3 THEORETICAL EXPLANATION OF RE-OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR ....</b>	<b>56</b>
3.1 INTRODUCTION .....	56
3.2 SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY.....	57
3.2.1 Application of the Social Control Theory .....	57
3.2.2 The principles of the Social Control Theory .....	57
3.2.3 Evaluation of the Social Control Theory.....	60
3.2.4 Relevance of the Social Control Theory.....	61
3.3 THE LABELLING THEORY.....	62
3.3.1 The principles of the Labelling Theory .....	63
3.3.2 The application of the Labelling Theory .....	66
3.3.3 Labelling as a causal risk of re-offending.....	67
3.3.4 Impact of labelling on released offenders .....	69
3.3.5 Evaluation of the Labelling Theory.....	71
3.3.6 Relevance of the Labelling Theory .....	71
3.4 CONCLUSION.....	72
<b>CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>74</b>
4.1 INTRODUCTION .....	74
4.2 METHODOLOGY .....	74
4.2.1 Research purpose.....	74
4.2.2 Research goal.....	75
4.2.3 Research approach.....	75
4.3 SAMPLING STRATEGY FOR THE STUDY .....	76
4.4 DATA COLLECTION .....	79
4.5 DATA ANALYSIS.....	81
4.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY .....	82
4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	83
4.7.1 Respect for persons.....	84
4.7.2 Beneficence.....	85
4.7.3 Justice .....	85
4.7.4 Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality .....	86
4.7.5 Voluntary participation.....	86
4.7.6 Informed consent .....	87
4.8 CONCLUSION.....	87

<b>CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>88</b>
5.1 INTRODUCTION .....	88
5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS .....	88
5.2.1 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF EXPERTS .....	89
5.2.2 SECTION B: CHALLENGES IMPACTING ON REINTEGRATION FACED BY EX-OFFENDERS .....	93
5.2.2.1 <i>Challenges associated with social reintegration and functioning</i> .....	94
5.2.2.2 <i>Economic challenges associated with offender reintegration</i> .....	97
5.2.2.3 <i>Physical challenges associated with offender reintegration</i> .....	99
5.2.2.4 <i>Psychological challenges associated with offender reintegration</i> .....	100
5.2.2.5 <i>Challenges associated with relapsing and reoffending</i> .....	102
5.2.3 SECTION C: REINTEGRATION SERVICES OFFERED BY NGOS TO OFFENDERS.....	104
5.2.3.1 <i>The role NGOs play in offender reintegration</i> .....	104
5.2.3.2 <i>When NGOs deliver offender reintegration services</i> .....	107
5.2.3.3 <i>Number of offenders receiving reintegration support from NGOs per year</i> .....	109
5.2.3.4 <i>Requirements for enrolling for the programmes</i> .....	110
5.2.3.5 <i>Programmes assisting with offender reintegration</i> .....	113
5.2.4 SECTION D: OPINIONS ABOUT THE EFFICACY OF OFFENDER REINTEGRATION SERVICES .....	116
5.2.4.1 <i>Effectiveness of offender reintegration services</i> .....	117
5.2.4.2 <i>Community's approach towards offender reintegration</i> .....	121
5.2.4.3 <i>Preparing the community for offender reintegration</i> .....	126
5.2.5 Challenges faced by NGOs .....	130
5.3 CONCLUSION.....	132
<b>CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>134</b>
6.1 INTRODUCTION .....	134
6.2 BRIEF REVIEW OF METHODOLOGY .....	134
6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	135
6.4 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	135
6.4.1 To determine the challenges experienced by offenders after release from imprisonment ...	135
6.4.2 To determine if reintegration strategies assist offenders to deal with challenges associated with reintegration .....	137
6.4.3 To determine if communities are prepared and equipped with resources to receive offenders and empower them not to reoffend .....	138
6.4.4 To determine if communities are willing to accept community members back who have violated their rights and victimised them .....	139
6.4.5 To explore the nature of facilities and support systems available to assist with the reintegration of offenders .....	140
6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	141
6.5.1 Establishing mentoring programmes for ex-offenders .....	141
6.5.2 Creating employment opportunities for ex-offenders .....	142
6.5.3 Interventions DCS can facilitate within communities .....	142

6.5.3.1 DCS to raise public awareness concerning offender reintegration.....	142
6.5.3.2 Establishing offender visitation programmes in schools .....	143
6.5.4 Establishment of NGOs that offer support to released offenders.....	144
6.6 FUTURE RESEARCH.....	144
6.6.1 Department of Correctional Services .....	145
6.6.2 Community .....	145
6.6.3 Ex-offenders .....	146
6.6.4 Employment sector .....	146
6.7 CONCLUSION.....	146
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>ANNEXURE A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM .....</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>ANNEXURE B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE .....</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>ANNEXURE C: ETHICS APPROVAL .....</b>	<b>183</b>
<b>ANNEXURE D: EDITOR’S LETTER.....</b>	<b>185</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Biographical information of research participants.....	90
Table 2: Estimated number of offenders who received reintegration services from NGOs.....	109

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

CJS: Criminal Justice System

DCS: Department of Correctional Services

JDISA: Just Detention International South Africa

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

NICRO: National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders

SANDF: South African National Defence Force



# **CHAPTER 1**

## **GENERAL OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 1 provides a general overview of the study, commencing with the rationale, followed by the aim, objectives and research questions of the study. The significance of the research is then discussed. Key concepts are defined and lastly a brief summary of each chapter is presented.

All incarcerated offenders will eventually be released back into the community either on parole or because they have served their full sentences (Nathan, 2015: 12; Langa & Masuku, 2015: 80; Marhula & Singh, 2019: 22). According to the Department of Correctional Services (DCS, 2019: 19), by the end of 2019, 55 030 parolees and 15 502 probationers were released back to their families and communities. Upon their release, it is hoped that offenders will stop engaging in criminal activities however due to lack of dedicated interventions aimed at facilitating their reintegration, many ex-offenders relapse, reoffend and return to correctional centres (Langa & Masuku, 2015: 80). It is expected that, after release, ex-offenders must adapt to their community, find employment, desist from their criminal behaviour and live law-abiding lives (Muntingh, 2002: 21). Chikadzi (2017: 289) highlights that it is challenging for offenders to adjust to their communities because society is the breeding ground of criminal behaviour and offenders are blamed for their criminal behaviour. However, the expectations of successful offender reintegration, which is premeditated, are not fulfilled because released offenders relapse and reoffend. The reason behind reoffending behaviour is because of various challenges that ex-offenders come across within communities and, as a result of not being able to effectively manage those challenges, they relapse and engage in further criminal behaviour.

The correction and reintegration of offending behaviour is not the responsibility of the Department of Correctional Services only however, it is also a societal responsibility. Therefore offenders need to be acknowledged and regarded as valued members of

their families and products of society (Draft White Paper on Corrections [RSA], 2005: 51). The ability to successfully reintegrate ex-offenders depends on the capacity of the community to offer support services, resources and supervision to released offenders (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 23). Chikadzi (2017: 290) adds that successful reintegration of offenders is shared responsibility of the entire society.

The majority of South Africa's offender population is from communities plagued by poverty, hunger, unemployment, absent figures of authority and care (RSA, 2005: 34). Correcting offender behaviour involves the promotion of social responsibility to ensure that the offenders can acknowledge what they did as wrong, understand why society believes it to be unacceptable and internalise the impact that their criminal actions have had on victims and the whole society (RSA, 2004: 70).

When people are exposed to various forms of violence within their social settings, the more likely it is that they will learn to be violent and join the cycle of violence as perpetrators (Schoeman, 2010: 9; Lopez & Pasko, 2017: 249). Lopez and Pasko (2017: 249) emphasise that many offenders learned their violent and offending behaviour at a younger age. It is therefore the responsibility of the community to take initiatives to prevent crime as crime prevention is not the responsibility of the government only, but also society in general. Community policy is an approach that solves and prevents crime within communities (Liebermann & Coulson, 2004: 125). According to Liebermann and Coulson (2004: 126), people know best the communities they live in, hence they are familiar with the criminal problems within their communities. Masiloane and Marais (2009: 391) add that social crime prevention involves community-based initiatives aimed at preventing crime, such as reporting crime, identifying perpetrators, testifying in court and providing reintegration support to released offenders. The societal responsibility to offer reintegrational support to released offenders lends impetus to this study.

## **1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

Crime is a daily incidence which directly affects people and inflicts fear of being victims of crimes and anxiety regarding their safety (Ceccato & Bamzar, 2016: 117). When crime

is committed, there is a suspect involved who needs to be identified, charged and sentenced should the suspect be found guilty. Sentencing is about achieving the right balance between the crime, the offender and the interests of society, prevention, retribution, reformation, and deterrence of criminal behaviour (Magobotiti, 2017: 63). According to Crowther (2007: 188), when passing a sentence, the aim is not to punish the offender but to make sure the offender makes amends for the crime committed. The sentence should make the offender feel remorseful, restore the damage he or she has done and reduce chances of reoffending behaviour. The aims of sentencing are defined as the punishment of offenders, reduction of crime, reform and rehabilitate offenders, protect the public and make reparation to the persons affected by offenders' offences (Crowther, 2007: 191). Hence, the purpose of correctional centres is rehabilitation, retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, and justice (Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 50).

The principle of retribution recommends that punishment is deserved because an element of suffering is viewed as one of the purposes of sentencing (Magobotiti, 2017: 64). Deterrence aims to prevent criminal activities through the development and application of effective and efficient support. It involves proving to society that the pains and losses associated with punishment will overshadow the possibility of criminal gain or profit (Magobotiti, 2017: 67). Incapacitation, in turn, explains punishment by justifying that the offenders' ability to commit further crimes should be prevented (Magobotiti, 2017: 66). Magobotiti (2017: 66) regards incapacitation as a theory of punishment which proposes that sentencing can contribute towards crime reduction by removing offenders from the community and eliminating their capacity to commit further offences. Lastly, the focus of rehabilitation is that crime is best prevented by addressing the causes of crimes that include economic, social and personal factors. It also highlights the importance of working directly with the individual offender, the victim and the community in order to reduce possibilities of reoffending (Myburgh, 2017: 4). Offender reintegration, which forms part of rehabilitation, is of specific interest in this study.

The commitment of DCS is to ensure successful reintegration of offenders by involving the victims, families and communities that are affected by the effect of crime in the

reintegration process (DCS, 2015: 11). This serves as the basis for offender rehabilitation. Within this context, the aim of rehabilitation, inclusive of offender reintegration services, is to prepare offenders for their return to society as changed individuals who are capable of leading law-abiding lives (Myburgh, 2017: 3). The aim of rehabilitation and treatment of offenders is therefore to return offenders to normality, rather than punishing the offender (Magobotiti, 2017: 67). The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) is responsible for facilitating the correction of offending behaviour in a secure, safe, and humane environment in order to achieve rehabilitation and the avoidance of recidivism (Louw, 2008: 2).

South Africa is one of the countries with the highest crime and recidivism rates in the world (Hesselink & Herbig, 2012: 29; Bhorat, Lilenstein, Monnakgotla, Thornton & Van Der Zee, 2017: 1; Vandala & Bendall, 2019: 2). Ex-offenders who reoffend are often blamed for contributing to the high crime rate (Vandala & Bendall, 2019: 2). It is proposed in the study that this belief cannot be entertained without considering the efficiency and effectiveness of offender rehabilitation and reintegration strategies. Reintegration strategies fit into the rehabilitation process which is aimed at empowering ex-offenders to desist from criminal behaviour.

Offender reintegration is not the sole responsibility of the Department of Correctional Services but is also the responsibility of society that includes the families of offenders. Families of offenders are a potential source of support and assistance upon re-entry into the community (Chikadzi, 2017: 289). Porporino (2015: 1) regards offender rehabilitation as an important and shared responsibility of the correctional system and the community. The family and community have an important role in welcoming and empowering the offender to desist from criminal behaviour. Davis, Veeh, Davis and Tripodi (2018: 1164) add that their role is to provide accommodation, food and support when the offender adjusts to society and seeks employment. It is also important for offenders to maintain contact with family members during and after incarceration, because, according to Chin and Dandurand (2012: 34), maintaining contact and relationships with significant people is a pre-requisite to successful reintegration. The authors furthermore propose that it

would be ideal if incarcerated offenders are treated like hospitalised patients by their families so that they will keep in contact and provide the necessary support for them.

Communities also have a key role to play in the successful reintegration of ex-offenders (Chikadzi, 2017: 289). Community involvement has become an essential ingredient of crime prevention in all kinds of partnerships involving municipalities, the police, schools, health, social services and the private sector (Griffiths, Dandurand & Murdoch, 2007: 31) but Chikadzi (2017: 293) believes that communities lack social services and resources to receive and encourage ex-offenders to live law-abiding lives.

The goal of community-based interventions through governmental and non-governmental agencies, is to help offenders overcome the stigma of criminal conviction, the detrimental effects of incarceration and other challenges they face in the process of reintegrating back into the community (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 2). Bello (2017: 31) emphasises that recidivism is a result of challenges ex-offenders experience during reintegration into society and the ineffectiveness of support mechanisms that are available for them. In order to reintegrate successfully, offenders need to feel that they belong to their communities (family, church, school, employment sector) and also have access to its resources (Dufour & Brassard, 2015: 482).

### **1.2.1 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY**

The motivation for the study was influenced by personally observing the manner in which community members react towards offenders when they are released from correctional centres. After their release, ex-offenders are treated unequally as if they do not belong in the community and rejected as residents of the community due to their criminal pasts. The question asked in this study was: Whether community-based reintegration strategies exist and what is the nature of the support available to offenders during reintegration back into society?

There has been limited research conducted in South Africa regarding the nature of offender reintegration and the challenges that ex-offenders face upon their release

(Matshaba, 2015: 66). Many re-offenders come from communities which are disorganised (Casey & Jarman, 2011: 4). According to Schoeman (2002: 125), disorganised communities are characterised by poverty and unemployment. Ngabonziza and Singh (2012: 88) propose that re-offenders from these disorganised communities experience low achievements and have poor skills which reduce the opportunities for them to transform and become law abiding citizens. Ex-offenders exposed to such conditions are prone to a pattern of relapsing and reoffending. Offenders are plagued by skills deficits, such as poor interpersonal skills, low levels of formal education, illiteracy, poor cognitive or emotional functioning and a lack of planning and financial management skills, which makes it difficult for them to compete and succeed in the community (Griffiths et al, 2007: 4).

Ngabonziza and Singh (2012: 87) propose that the solution to reoffending lies in restoring the offender's sense of positive identity and enhancing self-esteem by promoting restoration, rehabilitation and development. This will create a sense of pride and give the offender a purpose in life and the belief in a positive future worth living for and working towards (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 87). In order to reduce chances of relapsing, it is important to find interventions and programmes that target particular individual needs and challenges faced by ex-offenders (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 88). It is also important that offenders should participate in reintegration programmes which bring changes in dynamic risk factors, such as vocational training, educational programmes and substance abuse treatment, while incarcerated and after being released through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 88).

Against this background, this study focused on challenges ex-offenders experience within their communities after being released from correctional centres. The aim of the study was to explore the availability of community-based reintegration strategies for released offenders and the nature of services offered by NGOs and whether these organisations offer support and services that focus on challenges that ex-offenders experience after their release from correctional centres. However, during the sampling for the study, the researcher became aware that there are only a few NGOs that offer reintegration support

to released offenders within communities. Therefore, the study determined if reintegration strategies delivered by NGOs assist offenders to deal with the challenges they experience during and after incarceration and if communities are willing to accept back reintegrated offenders. In addition, the study aimed to determine if communities are adequately prepared and equipped with appropriate resources to assist ex-offenders during their reintegration back into society. Against this background, the following aim and objectives were formulated.

### **1.3 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of the study indicates the central motivation of the study while the objectives identify specific issues that the researcher intends to examine. The objectives of the study should be clearly stated, and each objective should outline one issue (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2011: 108). The aim of the research was to explore the nature of offender reintegration strategies and the support delivered to ex-offenders by NGOs after release from correctional centres. In order to achieve the aims of the study, the following objectives were outlined:

- To determine the challenges experienced by offenders when they are released back into society after incarceration;
- To determine if reintegration strategies assist offenders to deal with challenges associated with reintegration;
- To determine if communities are prepared and equipped with adequate resources to receive ex-offenders and empower them not to reoffend;
- To determine if communities are willing to accept ex-offenders back after their release;
- To explore the nature of facilities and support systems available to assist with the reintegration of offenders by NGOs.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The researcher aimed to answer the question: “What reintegration services are available within communities and if current reintegration strategies are effective in addressing the challenges offenders experience during their reintegration back into society?” In order to determine this, the following research questions are considered:

- Are offenders adequately prepared for reintegration to their communities?
- What types of challenges impact on the reintegration processes of offenders?
- What types of resources/facilities/organisations/institutions are available in communities to ensure the successful reintegration of offenders?
- Do reintegration strategies/facilities focus on the challenges experienced by offenders during their release into communities?

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study aimed to conduct research in an under-research field dealing with NGO- based reintegration services within communities, such as services offered at Khulisa, Just Detention International South Africa, Hlumelelisa and NICRO. It furthermore aimed to contribute to the knowledge base about the challenges that offenders face after they are released from correctional centres. It is therefore foreseen, as discussed below, that the study could be utilised by the Department of Correctional Services and NGOs to improve offender reintegration services. It is also anticipated that the findings will assist to deliver need-directed services to ex-offenders and to create awareness about community responsibility with regards to the reintegration of ex-offenders.

- **Department of Correctional Services**

The Department of Correctional Services could potentially benefit from the findings of the study by identifying gaps within the practices of offender reintegration that need to be addressed in order to ensure that offenders are successfully reintegrated into society.



- **Non-Governmental Organisations**

The NGOs will benefit from study because of the knowledge generated about the challenges offenders face during and after incarceration and the nature of services that need to be delivered in order to assure the effectiveness of these services. This will enable the NGOs to improve current services rendered and to develop new services according to the needs of offenders after their release from correctional centres.

- **Ex-offenders**

It is anticipated that ex-offenders will benefit from the study because the study will contribute to ensuring that community reintegration services are needs-directed and focused on the real-life challenges that ex-offenders experience during their reintegration back into society. It is further foreseen that the study will benefit offenders by creating awareness about society's roles and responsibilities when it comes to the reintegration of offenders back into society.

- **The broader society**

South Africa's broader society will benefit from this study because the study will create awareness about the challenges offenders face during incarceration and after release, which could influence their reintegration back into society. Most importantly, members of society will be educated about the practice and importance of offender reintegration and their perceptions towards correctional centres and ex-offenders will be corrected.

## **1.6 CONCEPTUALISATION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

### **1.6.1 Social reintegration**

Social reintegration refers to the process of socially and psychologically integrating offenders back into the social environment after their release from a correctional centre (Bello, 2017: 25). Social reintegration involves various forms of interventions and programmes targeting offenders who are about to be released or are already released from a correctional centre in order to prevent reoffending (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 6;

Bello, 2017: 25). Griffiths et al (2007: 3) concurs with Chin and Dandurand (2012) and Bello (2017) by adding that social reintegration is the process of releasing the transformed ex-offender back to the community with the aim of giving the person a second chance of leading a law-abiding life.

For the purpose of this study, social reintegration refers to the support given to offenders, psychologically and socially, during their re-entry into society following their release from incarceration to empower them to desist from criminal lifestyles and become law abiding citizens. This concept was important for the study because rehabilitation is a societal responsibility which means that society is co-responsible for assisting ex-offenders during their reintegration into society and for encouraging them to become law-abiding citizens. It furthermore aims to empower offenders to abstain from criminal activities.

### **1.6.2 Recidivism**

Recidivism refers to a tendency to relapse and revert to criminal behaviour after being released from a correctional facility (Law & Padayachee, 2012). McLaughlin and Muncie (2006: 341) define recidivism as the reconviction of ex-offenders who are released from correctional centres and add that it reflects previous offences that have been committed, reported, recorded and successfully prosecuted. Mushanga (2008: 151; 2013: 162) defines recidivism as a condition whereby, after being released from a correctional centre, an ex-offender becomes involved in criminal activities, is charged with further criminal offences, and is convicted and sentenced for reoffending.

Hesselink-Louw (2004: 32) defines recidivism as a reconviction for any offence. However, there is a difference between general recidivism, sexual recidivism, and violent recidivism. Law and Padayachee (2012), Mushanga (2008), McLaughlin and Muncie (2006), and Hesselink-Louw (2004) agree that recidivism is a process whereby an offender is rearrested after being released from correctional centre. Hesselink-Louw (2004: 32) provides different types of recidivism, such as violent, sexual and general recidivism, which means that an offender who has been arrested for violent or sexual offences, when released from correctional centre, commits the same offence that he or she was convicted

for the first time.

For the purpose of this study, recidivism refers to reoffending behaviour after release from a correctional centre which results in re-arrest and reconviction. The concept is of importance for the study because a significant number of ex-offenders find themselves in situations where they are rearrested and reconvicted even though they participated in programmes aimed at their rehabilitation during incarceration. The researcher wanted to explore challenges that ex-offenders experience after they are released from correctional centres that could hamper offender reintegration and the type of support and services available for ex-offenders aimed at assisting them with reintegration back into their communities.

### **1.6.3 Restorative justice**

Restorative justice refers to addressing the hurts and the needs of both victims and offenders in such a way that both parties and the community which they are part of are healed (Bello, 2017: 25). McLaughlin and Muncie (2006: 359) and Jewkes and Bennett (2008: 12) define restorative justice as a process whereby parties with interest in specific offences cooperatively resolve how to deal with the consequences of the offences and their implications for the future. These parties have the opportunity to be heard about the impact and harm done by the criminal act and steps that need to be taken in order to enable restitution between victims, offenders and communities (Jewkes & Bennett, 2008: 12).

McLaughlin and Muncie (2006: 359) and Jewkes and Bennett (2008: 12) concur that restorative justice is a process whereby all parties who are affected by, or have an interest in the offence work together to restore and repair the harm caused by the offenders and the offence to the victim and the community. Batley et al (2005: 22) define restorative justice as the process whereby the person who committed the crime and those who are affected by the crime work together to address the harm caused by the offence and for all parties to heal.

In the light of the above definitions, restorative justice is viewed as a process whereby the offenders acknowledge the harm and pain they have caused to the victims and all parties work together to repair the harm inflicted. Restorative justice is related to the context of the research study because, when offenders are released from correctional centres, they often return to communities that they have victimised. It is proposed in the study that if restorative justice is not executed, it becomes challenging for both victims and offenders to live in peace in their communities and this can provoke anger, trauma and mistrust between the victims, the offenders and the criminal justice system.

#### **1.6.4 Rehabilitation**

Rehabilitation is an approach to prevent crime by integrating and encouraging social responsibility, social justice, active participation in democratic activities, and empowerment with educational, employment and life skills in order to make South Africa a better place to live in (RSA, 2005: 37).

Rehabilitation is the result of processes that combine the correction of offending behaviour, human development, and a proportion of social responsibility and values (RSA, 2005: 37). The Draft White Paper on Corrections (RSA, 2005: 37) further emphasises that the outcome of rehabilitation involves the responsibilities of various departments within the government such as education, social development, health and the social responsibilities of the nation. Hesselink-Louw (2004: 28) views rehabilitation as a process whereby offenders are provided with psychosocial and educational opportunities, job training, and religious care to reduce their propensity to commit crime and be reintegrated into their communities. Rehabilitation is a process involving interventions or programmes that enable offenders to overcome previous difficulties linked to their offending behaviour so that they can lead law abiding lives and become productive members of the community (Jewkes & Bennett, 2008: 243).

The Draft White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (RSA, 2004) and Jewkes and Bennett (2008: 243) agree that rehabilitation is a process that equips offenders with knowledge and skills to correct their offending behaviour through development and

psycho-social interventions. The Draft White Paper on Corrections (RSA, 2005: 37) and Hesselink-Louw (2004: 28) regard rehabilitation as a process which empowers offenders with skills, such as life skills, educational skills and job training, in order to enable them to reintegrate successfully into their communities.

For the purpose of the study, rehabilitation refers to the process whereby offenders are given the opportunity to acquire skills needed to adjust to the norms and expectations within their communities in order to assist them to desist from criminal activities. Rehabilitation should begin when offenders are incarcerated and only concludes when the offenders are successfully reintegrated back into their societies. It is also important to take into consideration that various parties, such as government departments, private organisations, offenders and society, need to cooperate with each other to enable successful rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders.

### **1.6.5 Labelling**

Labelling is a practice whereby a person is defined and described as a result of his/her behaviour towards others, for example, a person who engages in criminal behaviour is labelled as a criminal (Mushanga, 2008: 110; Mushanga, 2013: 115). McLaughlin and Muncie (2006: 228) further emphasise that labelling refers to the social processes through which individuals and groups organise and categorise the behaviour of others and that the labelled individuals become vulnerable to act according to and respond to the labelling.

Mushanga, (2008: 110) and McLaughlin and Muncie (2006: 228) agree that labelling is a process whereby a person who has violated the law is constantly reminded of his or her criminal actions by others. For example, if a person was convicted for stealing, the community identifies that person as a thief even though that person may be rehabilitated and changed. The effect of labelling and the stigma associated with criminal behaviour is of relevance in the study because it is, as will be discussed in more detail, one of the challenges experienced by ex-offenders during incarceration and after release from a correctional centre. Therefore, it becomes a stumbling block for effective reintegration

because offenders are reminded constantly about their criminal actions and they may also be denied significant opportunities such as employment.

## **1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

The overview outlines chapters of the study and briefly explains the significance of each chapter. The study consists of six chapters outlined below:

### **Chapter 1: General overview and introduction to the study**

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the study. It provides the orientation of the topic, research questions, the rationale of the study, aim and objectives as well as the significance of the study.

### **Chapter 2: An analysis of offender reintegration strategies**

Chapter 2 focuses on literature concerning reintegration strategies for ex-offenders within communities delivered by NGOs; the effect of being incarcerated; the impact incarceration has on offender reintegration; and the various challenges that released offenders face after their release from correctional centres. It further explains the current reintegration practices, the role of NGOs in offender reintegration and the importance of preparing the community for the release of the ex-offender.

### **Chapter 3: Theoretical explanation of re-offending behaviour**

Chapter 3 introduces theories utilised by criminologists to explain why offenders relapse and reoffend after their release from correctional centres. It also outlines factors that influence reoffending behaviour.

### **Chapter 4: Methodology of the study**

Chapter 4 summarises the methodology followed in conducting the study. It clarifies the approach adopted, how research participants were selected, the data collection procedures used, the data analysis utilised and ethical guidelines followed when conducting the research study.

## **Chapter 5: Analysis and presentation of research findings**

Chapter 5 presents the findings revealed by the data analysis. The findings are interpreted and reported on.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations**

Chapter 6 is the final chapter which provides a discussion of the research findings according to the objectives of the study, proposes recommendations to be implemented to ensure that offenders are successfully reintegrated into society and advocates for future research concerning offender reintegration.

### **1.8 CONCLUSION**

Reoffending behaviour is a national social problem. All incarcerated offenders serve terms for their punishment and, at the expiry of these terms, they are released back to their communities. The challenges ex-offenders come across in society as a result of their incarceration leads to reoffending behaviour which contributes to overcrowding of correctional centres.

This chapter provided an introduction and rationale of the study. The aims and objectives of the study were outlined to determine challenges contributing to relapsing and reoffending of offenders and to determine reintegration support for ex-offenders to empower them to desist from criminal behaviour. The chapter emphasised how various stakeholders will benefit from the study and have better understanding of their roles in reducing recidivism.

In the next chapter, a historical overview of challenges that ex-offenders face within communities will be discussed as well as community reintegration strategies.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **AN ANALYSIS OF OFFENDER REINTEGRATION STRATEGIES**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Offenders, particularly high-risk offenders with lengthy records of misconduct, released from incarceration face various challenges that may hinder their ability to manage and lead law-abiding lives (Griffiths et al, 2007: 8; Bakken & Visher, 2018: 1121). Authors, such as Carter and Marcum (2017: 252), Bakken and Visher (2018: 1123) and Griffiths et al (2007), agree that a lack of emotional, social and financial support after their release from correctional facilities are challenges that ex-offenders face and that these challenges influence relapse and reoffending behaviour. Offenders, especially those who have served lengthy sentences, upon release from correctional centres, may have difficulties in adapting to society due to ever-changing norms, which are different from the prison environment they are used to (Cole, 2010: 823). Warr (2020: 28) and Cole (2010) highlight that, during incarceration, offenders are stripped of their identities and reconstructed according to the norms of the correctional centres. Offenders face resentment and rejection from the victims, their families and community, which causes the offenders to be isolated and lonely (Paat, Hope, Lopez, Zamora Jr & Salas, 2017: 90). Challenges faced by offenders at the time of their release may include finding suitable accommodation with limited means, financial instability, poor social support and limited employment opportunities (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 92; Davis, Bahr & Ward, 2012: 447; Sumter, Monk-Turner & Rougier, 2013: 121; Valera, Brotzman, Wilson & Reid, 2017: 413). The changes in society may cause released offenders to reoffend because the offender may feel rejected, lack a sense of belonging and isolated from family and society.

Offenders have limited means of accessing everyday necessities, services and support for specific needs, such as getting employment and housing (Griffiths et al, 2007: 4; Carter & Marcum, 2017: 255). These challenges inevitably influence offenders' ability to successfully reintegrate back into society. In some cases, offenders might regard correctional centres as an environment with better living conditions. Therefore, released offenders will reoffend with the purpose of being reconvicted and placed back into the



correctional centre where they have their daily basic needs catered for (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 98-99). Chikadzi (2017: 293) argues that, when ex-offenders are denied access to opportunities within their communities, they feel rejected and may associate with other delinquents who will influence them to relapse and reoffend. Beijersbergen, Dirkzwager and Nieuwbeerta (2016: 64) allege that ex-offenders will desist from their criminal behaviour only if they feel treated fairly and equally within their communities.

This chapter will elaborate on factors that may negatively influence the reintegration processes of ex-offenders and therefore be causal risk factors for reoffending. The chapter has three sections: section one elaborates on challenges experienced during incarceration that may affect reintegration, section two discusses challenges affecting the offenders' reintegration within the community after release and section three investigates current strategies in offender reintegration.

## **2.2 FACTORS IN CORRECTIONAL CENTRES THAT INFLUENCE THE REINTEGRATION OF EX-OFFENDERS**

South African correctional centres are regarded as “universities of crime” (Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 2). Fitz, Barkhuizen and Petrus (2018: 109) and Boxer, Middlemass and Delorenzo (2009: 4) agree with Hesselink-Louw (2004) that correctional centres are breeding grounds for violence and gangs, where offenders learn further criminal activities. This influences society to lose trust in the rehabilitation of offenders (Langa & Masuku, 2015: 87). Geldenhuys (2017: 17) further adds that conditions in correctional centres are toxic and favour criminality, victimisation and sexual violence. In addition, there are also various factors that hinder the preparation of offenders for reintegration after their release from a correctional centre. These factors are discussed below.

### **2.2.1 The effects of prison overcrowding on incarcerated offenders**

One of the most severe challenges the Department of Correctional Services faces is overcrowding which significantly hampers service delivery within correctional centres (RSA, 2005: 32; DCS, 2019: 18). Overcrowding in correctional centres is caused by the fact that the Department of Correctional Services accommodates both sentenced and on-

trial offenders within its facilities (DCS, 2015: 31; DCS, 2017c: 24). Overcrowding occurs when correctional centres detain more offenders than they are designed to accommodate (Jewkes & Bennett, 2008: 194; Neubert, 2019: 82). By the end of 2016, the total inmate population was 161 984 with a permitted bed space of 119 134 (DCS, 2016: 31; Langa, 2017: 2). In 2017, the total inmate population was 160 280 with the same approved bed space of 119 134 (DCS, 2017c: 24) and in 2018, correctional centres were overcrowded by 38% (DCS, 2018a: 16). By the end of 2019, the inmate population was 162 875 with an approved bed space of 118 572 which made correctional centres overcrowded by 37.4% (DCS, 2019: 46). A total number of 36 911 offenders are incarcerated in Gauteng correctional centres (DCS, 2019: 46) but it is difficult to estimate the overcrowding percentage of Gauteng correctional centres because the DCS annual report only provides approved bed space for all correctional centres in South Africa, not by province.

The Department of Correctional Services has 243 correctional facilities across South Africa (DCS, 2015: 31; DCS, 2019: 46). In 2019, eight of these facilities were temporarily closed for renovations, construction and upgrading purposes (DCS, 2019: 46) adding additional pressure on the remaining operational centres to accommodate the inmate overflow from correctional centres that were temporarily closed.

Overcrowding creates hazardous conditions, including a lack of beds and living space as well as limiting the offenders' recreational time outside of cells (Dissel, 2008: 162; Neubert, 2019: 83). Overcrowding in correctional centres results in offenders joining gangs and smuggling desired items, such as tobacco, cell phones and drugs, and violating other offenders (Goyer, 2001: 9). Geldenhuys (2018: 16) and Goyer (2001) agree that correctional centres that are overcrowded instigate gang violence and create opportunities for further involvement and learning of criminal activities. Mnguni and Mohapi (2015: 54) indicate that overcrowding in correctional centres furthermore delays the completion of prescribed vocational and rehabilitation programmes because of limited infrastructure and staff members to facilitate the programmes.

An additional challenge due to prison overcrowding is the shortage of correctional staff and professional experts, such as social workers and psychologists, to deliver services

and present development and rehabilitation programmes to inmates (Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 11). Neubert (2019: 82) and Hesselink-Louw (2004) explain that correctional centres are overcrowded which leads to a shortage of correctional staff and inappropriate assessments and rehabilitation of offenders. Hence, as a result of overcrowding, South African correctional centres face many challenges associated with the increasing demands for correctional services (Goyer, 2001: 3, Neubert, 2019: 88). These challenges inevitably also affect the quality of offender reintegration services.

When correctional centres have a shortage of staff, inmates have to wait for months or even years before they can access correctional programmes, which results in some offenders serving their sentences without attending any rehabilitative or developmental programmes (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 39; Geldenhuys, 2017: 18). Resultantly, offenders are released from correctional centres with limited skills to assist them to reintegrate back into society after their release (Langa, 2017: 1). Singh (2016: 3) and Chin and Dandurand (2012) note that offenders who serve shorter sentences are released from correctional centres without being exposed to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. Other authors, such as Haney (2002: 80) and Cullen, Jonson and Nagin (2011: 51), argue that the longer offenders are incarcerated in correctional centres, the lower their chances of being equipped with rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to enable them to lead law-abiding lives after their release.

For example, if an offender committed crime under the influence of alcohol, then, due to overcrowding in correctional centres, he or she may serve the prescribed sentence before attending substance abuse programmes therefore, when released to the community, the causal risk factor associated with substance abuse would not have been addressed resulting in the ex-offender abusing substances again after his/her release. In support of the above, Sumter et al (2013: 127) reiterate that most offenders are involved in substance abuse before and after incarceration. Graffam, Shinkfield, Lavelle and McPherson (2004: 148) contend that most ex-offenders are non-violent and that they reoffended because they are addicted to substances and they need resources to support their addiction. De Andrade, Ritchie, Rowlands, Mann and Hides (2018) concur with

Graffam et al (2004) that, after their release from correctional centres, offenders return to alcohol and drug abuse which leads to relapsing and reoffending.

According to Goyer (2001: 8), many correctional centres were constructed during the apartheid era when offenders used to work at the mines during the day and only returned to cells at night, which is no longer the case. Goyer (2001: 8) reveals that, during the apartheid era, 60 offenders were accommodated in correctional cells intended to accommodate 18 offenders. This has not improved because, according to Singh (2016: 5), overcrowding is aggravated by the implementation of minimum sentences in the Criminal Law Amendment Act 105 of 1997 that introduced sentences longer than five years for various offences. This resulted in the correctional centres becoming even more overpopulated as offenders are incarcerated for longer periods. The increased sentence length and the subsequent overcrowding are recognised in the study as factors that negatively affect inmates' ability to successfully reintegrate back into society.

### **2.2.2 The effect of incarceration on offender reintegration**

Incarcerated offenders experience psychological and emotional stress prior to their sentencing because of being arrested, worrying about the outcome of their cases, shame and public humiliation (Cullen et al, 2011: 52). During the period of incarceration, the offenders' social relationships weaken and, when they return to their families and communities, they face greater challenges such as adjusting to social norms, contributing to family needs and rebuilding social relationships (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 2). According to Langa (2017: 4), it is challenging for ex-offenders to regain the trust of their families and communities. If the offenders feel rejected by significant people and stigmatised due to their criminal activities, it becomes easier for them to feel isolated, lose hope and reoffend.

Incarceration furthermore affects social relationships isolating offenders from family, friends and their community of origin (Roberts, 2004: 1281; Zwecker, Harrison, Welty, Teplin & Abram, 2018: 460). Geldenhuys (2017: 24) further explains that, after release, ex-offenders find major changes within their societies and find it challenging to adjust and

adapt resulting in them reoffending. The time spent in correctional centres disrupts the lives of offenders who might have been economically active. In addition, it also impacts on the life of family members who were financially dependent on them (Mdakane, 2016: 29; Clear, Rose & Ryder, 2001:341).

Incarceration, due to its nature, can have damaging, long-term effects on the physical and mental well-being of offenders (RSA, 2005: 76; Steyn & Hall, 2015: 84). Correctional centres are social settings where associations between offenders are formed and they learn new criminal skills from other experienced offenders (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 90). According to Munnion (2007: np) and Khwela (2015: 411), most correctional centres hone pro-criminal skills, such as joining gangs, acquiring and using firearms, forging documents, adopting the finer points of robbing banks and breaking into houses as opposed to developing pro-social skills required for offender reintegration. Lengthy exposure to such pro-criminal activities sharpens criminal skills of offenders who are ironically incarcerated for rehabilitation. Most offenders who are detained for longer periods get used to the correctional centre environment, and their association with criminal elements and identification with criminal values becomes stronger (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 2; Cullen et al, 2011: 53). Hence, Cullen et al (2011: 50) believe that incarceration does not reduce crime but increases reoffending opportunities to an extent that, after release, instead of desisting from their behaviour, ex-offenders will persist and reoffend.

The damaging effects of incarceration can furthermore be psychological, sociological, economic and physical and can affect an individual's chance of successfully returning back to the community (Schappell, Docherty & Boxer, 2016: 361) and increase the risk of committing further criminal activities (Singh, 2016: 8). Gottschall, Greiner, Brown and Serin (2015: 302) argue that when incarcerated, offenders are removed from the community that they victimised allowing them to have an understanding of the impact their criminal acts have on the victims and community at large. Gottschall et al (2015: 302) believe that, when offenders understand the impact their criminal actions have on their victims and community, they may acknowledge the pain they caused and prepare to

transform and lead law-abiding lives.

- **Psychological effects of incarceration**

The environment and nature of correctional centres provoke psychological effects, which may hamper offenders' ability to focus on their rehabilitation (Steyn & Hall, 2015: 54). Offenders who experienced violence while being incarcerated are likely to suffer from stress, anxiety and emotional discomfort (Listwan, Colvin, Hanley & Flannery, 2010: 1142; Paat et al, 2017: 90). Exposure to violent victimisation is traumatising and life changing for the offender in a way that the victimised offender may find it difficult to cope with life challenges after being released from a correctional centre (Boxer et al, 2009: 3; Carter & Marcum, 2017: 249).

Many incarcerated offenders suffer from mental, stress and personality disorders (Dissel, 2008: 168; Bakken & Visher 2018: 1122). These psychological effects could result in emotional distress, depression, suicide attempts, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (Schappell et al, 2016: 363; Steyn & Hall, 2015: 85; Paat et al, 2017: 90). Incarceration has negative consequences, such as an inability to follow rules and increased disciplinary problems (Steyn & Hall, 2015: 85). Such high levels of distress are demoralising and distract incarcerated offenders from focusing on rehabilitation programmes that are intended to equip them with skills to manage challenges after release from correctional centres.

- **Social effects of incarceration**

Incarceration also has a negative impact on the offenders' ability to reintegrate back into society. According to Stringer (2020: 2), offenders survive the psychological and emotional trauma of being incarcerated because of intimate relationships they may have with others. Social support is a vital component of increased rates of successful reintegration because it reduces sociological problems experienced by offenders (Schappell et al, 2016: 363). Hence, it is important for offenders to maintain relationships and have contact with their families during incarceration (Tartaro & Levy, 2018: 25). Listwan et al (2010: 1146) agree with Schappell et al (2016: 363) that the greater the

social support the offender receives, the less stress and anxiety they experience, which, in turn, increases their chances of successful reintegration.

The family is a basic building block of a healthy and prosperous community and nation, however many families in South Africa are dysfunctional (RSA, 2005: 34).

Most released offenders face significant social adaptation issues, such as family or community labelling and stigmatisation, rejection, inability to find employment, achieving formal education, and rebuilding individual and social capital (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 5). Loss of social opportunities could cause rejection, isolation and inadequate social support networks that led to the engagement in criminal activities in the first place (Mingus & Burchfield, 2012: 98).

The community's negative attitudes and perceptions regarding offenders is another factor that works against the efforts of offenders to commit to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes (DCS, 2015: 14). Some ex-offenders are overwhelmed with feelings of distrust and bitterness towards the community and their attitudes reduce the possibilities of mending their relationships and developing connections with their community members (Dufour & Brassard, 2015: 491). Difficulties adjusting to communities can influence the risk of released offenders engaging in illegal activities to satisfy their needs such as lack of employment and substance abuse (Cole, 2010: 823; Carter & Marcum, 2017: 256).

Due to the labelling and stigmatising of ex-offenders and their isolation from the community due to antisocial behaviours, the offender is frequently reminded that he/she has violated the law (Newburn, 2013: 219). Studies conducted by Muntingh (2009: 20) and Carter and Marcum (2017: 259) also found that offenders are frequently reminded of their past criminal activities by the community and their families. Muntingh (2009: 20) adds that, after release, ex-offenders are always suspected when criminal offences are committed in their neighbourhoods and that hampers their ability to reintegrate back into society.

- **Economic effects of incarceration**

In general, South Africa is faced with the challenge of unemployment and this hinders released offenders' efforts to obtain employment even more (Matshaba, 2015: 74). Chikadzi (2017: 295) also argues that a lack of unemployment is a devastating concern for all South Africans and that ex-offenders are no exception. During incarceration, offenders lose their employment, their opportunities to acquire skills needed in the work environment and networking skills to seek employment (Schmitt & Warner, 2010: 8; Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 31; Griffiths et al, 2007: 8). Although the Department of Correctional Services has introduced intervention programmes targeting education and vocational training to enhance employability after incarceration, ex-offenders still face unemployment problems because they compete with educated, law-abiding citizens who have no criminal record (Martin, 2015: 121). Resultantly, after release from correctional centres, ex-offenders often have to depend on their families for accommodation, financial support and employment opportunities (Tartaro & Levy, 2018: 25). Morgan-Mullane (2018: 201) highlights that the incarceration of a family member who was a breadwinner in the family deprives dependents from an income and emotional security. Incarceration also places an additional financial burden on the family due to added expenditure for transport to attend trials and for visiting the person at the correctional centre.

The incarceration of a family member traumatises the other members of a family, including the children, and they may feel confused and helpless (Strydom & Kivedo, 2009: 107). Morgan-Mullane (2018: 200) notes that the incarceration of a parent threatens the future of children as it places them at a greater risk of being in contact with the Criminal Justice System as juveniles. When the breadwinner is incarcerated, the family has to adjust to living in poverty and many caregivers find it challenging to provide basic needs for the family (Strydom & Kivedo, 2009: 106). Being unable to provide for their personal needs and losing contact with social networks because of their conviction, ex-offenders are at risk of persisting with criminal behaviour to sustain themselves. In some instances, ex-offenders might even commit crimes with the aim of being rearrested and sentenced to correctional centres because they know their basic needs will be provided there



(Sumter et al, 2013: 120).

- **Physical effects of incarceration**

Incarceration has a negative impact on the physical wellbeing of offenders. Overcrowded correctional centres increase the risks of victimisation of offenders to sexual abuse, intimidation, assault, murder and exposure to infection of chronic diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted infections (RSA, 2005: 76-77). Gangs are prevalent in the South African correctional system and this violates the safety of inmates due to gang fights, attacks, forced sexual activity and extortion (RSA, 2005: 76; Schappell et al, 2016: 365). According to Mnguni and Mohapi (2015: 550), the physical health of many incarcerated offenders deteriorates while some lose their lives due to diseases contracted at correctional centre, such as hepatitis, syphilis, tuberculosis and HIV/Aids. Exposure to these dangers can hamper offenders' ability to focus on rehabilitation and preparation for reintegration after release.

## **2.3 LOSSES SUFFERED DUE TO INCARCERATION**

Offenders experience a stress and a painful transition that restrains their goals and plans when they are removed from their communities to be incarcerated in correctional centres (Cullen et al, 2015: 50; Carter & Marcum, 2017: 2). Incarceration results in a loss of freedom, employment, personal belongings, significant personal relationships, social networks and the offenders' ability to look after themselves and their families (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 31; Griffiths et al, 2007: 8; Schmitt & Warner, 2010: 8; Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 91). These losses are discussed below.

### **2.3.1 Deprivation of freedom**

Offenders within correctional centres are not only deprived of physical freedom but also their freedom to make choices in their lives (Muntingh, 2009: 8; Mdakane, 2016: 85). They are deprived of their psychological freedom because they cannot decide on their daily routine, activities and simple actions such as what time to wake up, what to eat, when to sleep and leisure activities (Haney, 2002: 83; Mdakane, 2016: 85). As well as their

independence, during incarceration, offenders are also deprived of their freedom to have personal relationships with family, friends and community members as they have to obey strict rules and adhere to officials' instructions in correctional centres (Gonçalves, Endrass, Rossegger, Grace & Dirkzwager, 2019: 2; Muntingh, 2009; Haney, 2002; Jewkes & Bennett, 2008: 62; Drapal, 2018: 44). The deprivation of freedom also limits the offenders' physical activities, like taking a walk, exercise and having their own space and privacy. Mnguni and Mohapi (2015: 54) assert that incarcerated offenders spend most of their time in their cells with limited opportunities to engage in activities aimed at enhancing skills needed to reintegrate themselves successfully to their communities. Goyer (2001: 8) and Geldenhuys (2017: 17) add that, most of the time, offenders are locked in their cells because of overcrowding.

Steyn and Hall (2015: 86) explain that most offenders find it difficult to cope during incarceration because of being isolated from society. This deprivation of freedom makes it challenging for offenders to maintain positive relationships with their families and communities (Haney, 2002: 79; Vaswani, 2019: 3). Winfree and Jiang (2006: 50) are of the opinion that incarcerated offenders who lose significant relationships with family and friends are more prone to violating the rules in correctional centres. In addition, it becomes challenging for offenders to successfully reintegrate back into their communities if their relationships with family and society are not mended, and this creates opportunities for offenders to strengthen relationships they have with other offenders (Dufour & Brassard, 2015: 483). Mdakane (2016: 85) highlights that, during incarceration, offenders depend on the correctional system for their needs and structured daily routines to such an extent that they lose their capacity to be independent and make personal decisions. It is therefore important to provide support to offenders when they reintegrate into communities in order to prevent further involvement in criminal behaviour and to protect society (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018: 3).

### **2.3.2 Loss of safety**

Incarceration is unbearable to offenders even without the threat to personal safety however victimisation is a pressing concern for incarcerated offenders (Kowalski, Mei,

Turner, Stohr & Hemmens, 2020: 127). Because of mistreatment erupting within a correctional centre, the rights of the offenders are violated. The violence manifests in various ways, such as gang fights, robberies, assaults, murders, forced sexual activities, which could result in contracting diseases, and intimidation, which is ignored by correctional officials (Goyer, 2001: 2; Singh, 2016: 5). Neubert (2019: 87) states that overcrowding in correctional centres is the root cause of threats to the safety and lives of offenders. The DCS (2015: 16) also mentions that overcrowding within correctional centres contributes to offenders assaulting each other, compelling them to deal with challenges regarding the safety of offenders (RSA, 2005: 76). Neubert (2019: 82) concurs with the Draft White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (RSA, 2005) that overcrowding raises security concerns within correctional centres, which leads to inmates being locked-up most of the time.

Labrecque, Scherer and McCafferty (2018: 128) further explain that, as a result of being victimised within correctional centres, it becomes challenging for offenders to focus on rehabilitation programmes as they are worried about their safety. Schappell et al (2016: 363) further highlight that offenders who experience victimisation are more vulnerable to aggression and emotional distress. They then perceive correctional centres as unsafe and threatening environments and are less likely to focus on their rehabilitation.

Offenders who have suffered abuse at the hands of correctional officials or fellow inmates cannot be expected to return to society and spontaneously lead constructive lives and are therefore at risk of reoffending (Labrecque et al, 2018: 128; Muntingh, 2002). Victimised ex-offenders might have anger towards those who perpetrated violence on them and towards their victims and society for laying charges against them that led to their incarceration (Listwan et al, 2010: 1145). They may express their anger by victimising other people whom they blame for the trauma experienced while incarcerated. Victimised offenders therefore perceive their living environments as threatening (Listwan et al, 2010: 1146). Exposure to trauma and aggression during incarceration may hamper reintegration if it is not addressed during an offender's reintegration process.

### **2.3.3 Loss of meaningful relationships**

Stable relationships, parenthood and employment are critical factors to motivate and sustain the ex-offenders from criminal behaviour (Dufour & Brassard, 2015: 482). It is important for incarcerated offenders to maintain their relationships with family and friends because, after serving their sentences, they will need support from families and communities to adjust upon release from correctional centres (Chikadzi, 2017: 288). However, Schnappauf and DiDonato (2017: 12) believe that psychological and economic challenges that the offenders' families experience after the incarceration could have a negative impact on their willingness to maintain the relationships with the offenders. Ex-offenders are no longer trusted by their communities and they lose their social contacts within communities (Jewkes & Bennett, 2008: 62; Mdakane, 2016: 91). Vaswani (2019: 3) adds that ex-offenders lose heterosexual relationships because being incarcerated denies offenders intimate relationships with their spouses or partners. This has a negative impact on ex-offenders when they reintegrate back into society because they must regain the trust of family and community because of the stigma associated with imprisonment (Langa, 2017: 4). Ex-offenders have challenges reconnecting with their families and the community and have difficulties in rebuilding or mending these relationships (Muntingh, 2009: 29; Carter & Marcum, 2017: 253). Also, dysfunctional families may influence criminality and provide opportunities for released offenders to relapse and reoffend (RSA, 2005: 91). Dufour and Brassard (2015: 483, 491) in turn, are of the opinion that released offenders are overwhelmed with feelings of distrust and bitterness towards the community, and that this attitude influences their unsuccessful reintegration into society.

### **2.3.4 Obtaining a criminal record**

Another consequence of being incarcerated is obtaining a permanent criminal record. Roberts (2004: 1291) and Carter and Marcum (2017: 258) note that ex-offenders lose privileges and benefits of their citizenship such as obtaining housing and employment. A criminal record stigmatises ex-offenders for their lifetimes, impacting, for example, on their ability to obtain employment (Murphy, Fuleihan, Stephen & Jones, 2011: 101;

Zwecker et al, 2018: 460). Matshaba (2015: 75) explored the challenges faced by ex-offenders. In the study, a research participant shared that he was shortlisted for employment, however, during the interview, when he was asked about his last employment, he honestly replied that he was incarcerated for eight years. He was then informed that the company could employ him due to his criminal past (Matshaba, 2015: 75). Muntingh (2009: 19) and Mdakane (2016: 91) further add that ex-offenders are regarded as dishonest people who cannot be trusted by potential employers, which results in their job applications being rejected even if they qualify and have skills required for the job.

Murphy et al (2011: 108) regards a criminal record as a permanent symbol of a spoilt identity that never disappears, and it affects the lives of millions of citizens who are deprived of jobs, education, and housing. A criminal record therefore functions as a barrier in offenders' efforts to reintegrate into society (Murphy et al, 2011: 108; Mdakane, 2016: 21). Denying ex-offenders' legitimate opportunities to reintegrate back into society negatively impacts their ability to desist from criminal behaviour. Muntingh (2009: 20) is of the opinion that, when ex-offenders disclose on job application forms or during job interviews that they have a criminal record, this may result in them being rejected by potential employers. When potential employers are reluctant to employ ex-offenders, their connections to criminal networks are strengthened (Roberts, 2004: 1294). Therefore, Houser, McCord and Nicholson (2018: 256) regard the unemployment of ex-offenders as a risk factor for relapsing and reoffending.

## **2.4 THE OBJECTIVES OF REHABILITATION SERVICES IN CORRECTIONAL CENTRES**

The main objective of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) is to rehabilitate offenders and equip them with skills to lead crime free lives. According to Muluze (2008: 330), this objective is emphasised yearly as a priority in the Department of Correctional Services annual reports. The DCS highlights that every employee within the department is a rehabilitator and that officials who interact with offenders must ensure that they provide offenders with opportunities to use their incarceration time positively and assist

them to reintegrate successfully into their communities when they are released (RSA, 2003: 48). The incarceration of the offender should not influence further criminal behaviour but it should empower the offender to desist from the offending behaviour (Mdakane, 2016: 30). On the contrary, Muntingh (2001: 4) found that the threat of punishment does not appear to have any significant influence in preventing people from committing offences. Harding, Morenoff, Nguyen and Bushway (2017: 11103) also believe that incarceration influences higher possibilities of reoffending after release. Muntingh (2001: 4) posits that many incarcerated offenders are recidivists who were previously incarcerated and released to the community and that this clearly shows that the deterrence approach does not hold much promise as a crime reduction strategy. Bakken and Visher (2018: 1122) agree that a majority of offenders who are released from correction centres do not make a successful transition to society, meaning that they relapse and reoffend.

Rehabilitation is accomplished with the successful reintegration of offenders, who do not reoffend, into the community (RSA, 2003: 48). However, there are conditions within the community that are risk factors that may cause offenders to commit crimes despite correction and rehabilitation efforts by the Department of Correctional Services (RSA, 2005: 49). Mdakane (2016: 130) states that a rehabilitated offender who is less likely to reoffend and more likely to contribute as a productive member of society will save the taxpayers money because rehabilitated offenders contribute to society instead of becoming a financial burden if they are incarcerated for reoffending.

The objectives of rehabilitation are to break the cycle of crime and violence, to reconcile the offender with the community, to enhance the capacity of the offender, to promote healthy family relations and to provide guidance and support to parolees within the community (RSA, 2005: 38-39). These objectives are discussed in more detail below.

- **Breaking the cycle of crime**

The cycle of crime contributes to a continuous cycle of rearrests, reconvictions, sentences and releases (Jules-Macquet, 2010). Chikadzi (2017: 290) further states that many

offenders are rearrested and reconvicted soon after they are released. The researcher proposes that the reason for this is that released offenders are unable to deal with the challenges that they face outside correctional centres because, after being released, ex-offenders are expected to discover legitimate opportunities of making a living and to survive with help or support from the community (Chikadzi, 2017: 288).

According to Jules-Macquet (2010), it is challenging to break the cycle of crime because, during incarceration, low risk offenders share accommodation with high risk offenders and they acquire criminal skills from them. The purpose of sentencing is not only to punish offenders but to protect society and promote social responsibility with the aim of preventing reoffending (RSA, 2005: 38). After incarceration, offenders feel rejected by their families and communities. During focus group interviews with ex-offenders conducted by Matshaba (2015: 72), an ex-offender who was one of the research participants said: "People are talking behind my back, some call me bandiet. If something is stolen in my neighbourhood, the neighbours point fingers and suspect me; people are not comfortable around me because they perceive me as a dangerous person". Geldenhuys (2017: 24) recommends that society needs to refrain from labelling and stigmatising offenders, as offenders need to be supported to desist from criminal behaviour and be encouraged to make use of skills they learned within correctional centres. Often the stigma is transferred to the family members of the offender who are publicly shamed and humiliated because of the criminal actions of the offender (Clear et al, 2001: 341). Bakken and Visser (2018: 1123) agree that the cycle of offending does not only affect the Criminal Justice System but is also costly for the offenders' families and communities because, when ex-offenders feel rejected within communities, they may reoffend.

- **To reconcile the offender with the community**

Incarceration isolates offenders from their families and strips them of their identities and their roles in their families (Stringer, 2020: 2). Before ex-offenders can be united with their communities after release, they need to reconcile with their families. One of the rehabilitation mandates of DCS is that it needs to help offenders to make amends, heal the relationships broken by the crimes they committed and restore trust between the offenders, the victims and the communities (RSA, 2005: 39).

Many incarcerated offenders were primary caregivers of their families before their incarceration and plan to resume their roles after their release from correctional centres (Stringer, 2020: 12). Social support from the community, including participating in social institutions, such as community projects, plays a crucial role in ensuring successful offender reintegration (Wright & Cesar, 2013: 376-377). Dufour and Brassard (2015: 495) argue that, even if offenders mend their relationships with the community and find employment, it becomes challenging to desist from criminal behaviour because that is how they identify themselves. Consequently, communities become unsafe when high risk offenders are released without adequate preparation, supervision and support (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 1). Risk includes both the danger posed by a person and the person's vulnerability to victimisation within society (Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 111). Successfully reintegrating offenders is ultimately in the best interests of the community because, if the community does not accept the offender back, the released offender will relapse and reoffend, which means the community will be repeatedly victimised (Murhula & Singh, 2019: 29).

- **To enhance the capacity of the offender**

The aim of rehabilitation is to increase the offenders' ability to get employment, earn legitimate salaries and make an honest living after their release from correctional centres (RSA, 2005: 67). The Department of Correctional Services has the responsibility to equip offenders with market related skills which will empower them to qualify and gain employment upon their release into society (RSA, 2005: 39).



Offenders who have been imprisoned for longer periods, might have little chance of successfully reintegrating back into society because their communities have little social and economic resources to support them after being released from correctional centres (Wright & Cesar, 2013: 378).

Many offenders were brought-up in dysfunctional communities and when they are released from correctional centres, they return to those communities that influenced their criminal behaviour (Berman, 2005: 8). In addition, Willis (2018: 16) alleges that some offenders were exposed to traumatic life experiences and that, after release, they return to the same dysfunctional families that made them vulnerable to offending. Schnappauf and DiDonato (2017: 10-11), Berman (2005) and Willis (2018) emphasise that offenders returning to the same family relationships and social pressures that led to their incarceration could, once again, lead them to destructive behaviour and recidivism. Lebel, Richie and Maruna (2015: 109) propose that offenders should receive mentoring from ex-offenders who reintegrated successfully in order to manage reintegration challenges.

- **To promote healthy family relations**

When offenders are released into society, healthy social relationships are essential in order to reintegrate successfully (Berman, 2005: 17; Zwecker et al, 2018: 460). During incarceration, it is important for offenders to have contact with their families therefore offenders should not be punished by being denied visitors while incarcerated (RSA, 2005: 39).

- **To provide guidance and support to parolees within the community**

Parole is described as a process whereby the offender is released from the correctional centre with the continuation of serving their remaining sentence within the community (Mathabathe, 2018: 3). Offenders released on parole are expected to adhere to parole conditions and are required to report their whereabouts and the activities they engage in to their parole supervisors (Berman, 2005: 28; Ostermann & Hyatt, 2016: 788). The purpose of parole is to provide ex-offenders with a means of rehabilitation and to ensure that parolees are supervised and provided with necessary services to help them to desist

from criminal behaviour (RSA, 2005: 39). Although some offenders manage to be reintegrated successfully regardless of challenges that they face within communities, there is limited research about successful rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders in South Africa (Chikadzi, 2017: 288). Wan, Poynton and Weatherburn (2016: 507) highlight that the benefits of parole supervision (such as desisting from criminal behaviour) are always hidden in studies, meaning that they are not publicised and good practices are not identified and shared to inform policy and practice.

It is argued in this study that it is not adequate for rehabilitation to take place in correctional centres alone but that it must continue after release in order to assist ex-offenders with reintegration. According to Wright and Cesar (2013: 380), in theory, during incarceration, correctional centres are supposed to transform offenders and release them to the communities as people who are capable of leading crime free lives. However, because communities are not prepared for the release and return of offenders after incarceration, this is a gap that needs to be investigated and addressed.

## **2.5 FACTORS THAT NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE OFFENDER REINTEGRATION WITHIN SOCIETY**

Ineffective treatment of ex-offenders such as lack of support and employment opportunities, labelling, stigmatisation and unfair treatment can result in the increase of reoffending (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 90; Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 12). Reintegration is when a released offender is reintroduced into the community with the aim of living in a law-abiding manner however to be able to reintegrate successfully, it is essential for the community to accept and welcome back the ex-offender (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 91). In order to achieve successful reintegration, the community and the released offender must therefore be willing to transform and form new relationships (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 91). No matter how rehabilitated and transformed the released offender is, if the community is not prepared and willing to accept him or her back, successful reintegration will not be achieved. Law and Padayachee (2012) emphasise that the community's negative attitude towards offenders contributes to released offenders to re-enter society un-rehabilitated, bitter, scared, without prospects and ready to reoffend.

After their release from correctional centres, ex-offenders face challenges that could hinder their reintegration (see section 2.1) (Muntingh, 2008: 1; Haney, 2002: 77; Wong, Bouchard, Gushue & Lee, 2019: 1019). It is important that, during incarceration, the quality of offenders' lives is improved by equipping them with skills and resources that will empower them to manage the challenging process of adjusting to their communities (Vandala & Bendall, 2019: 6). In section 2.2.2 above, factors during incarceration that could have negative impact on offender reintegration were discussed. There are also community-based factors that could prevent offenders from reintegrating successfully and leading law-abiding lives. These factors are discussed below in further detail.

- **Social factors**

Families and communities provide a social support network for the offenders to help them to reintegrate successfully after incarceration (Zwecker et al, 2018: 460). Winters, Jeglic, Calkins and Blasko (2017: 204) further explain that when the bonds between the offenders and their families are weak, criminal behaviour worsens because the offenders lose the trust of their families and their communities as they are regarded as corrupt members of society. This level of distrust makes it difficult for released offenders to even be employed for household duties, such as gardening and cleaning, within their communities (Bezuidenhout & Van Niekerk, 2015: 49). Incarceration causes social withdrawal from family and community that, for some offenders, continues even after their release from correctional centres (Haney, 2002: 82; Zwecker et al, 2018: 460).

Released offenders must depend on their families for accommodation and financial support after release, which becomes overwhelming and challenging when the family is struggling to maintain itself due to unemployment and poverty (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 55). Maintaining or mending broken relationship with their families is often difficult for the offenders due to their incarceration, more particularly in cases where family members were victimised by the offenders (Chikadzi, 2017: 292). Paat et al (2017: 89) also believe that incarceration breaks family associations and makes it impossible for ex-offenders to resume their family responsibilities. For example, in cases where parents are incarcerated, their children may be abandoned, placed in foster care or raised by relatives

(Clear et al, 2001: 344; Pfeiffer, 2018: 7). Children of incarcerated offenders are therefore forced to mature in various aspects of life, educationally, socially including starting their own families, without the help or support of their parents (Clear et al, 2001: 344; Pfeiffer, 2018: 51). Offenders who are parents have difficulties protecting their parental rights during their period of incarceration and upon their release (Graffam et al, 2004: 148).

Some offenders come from dysfunctional families and communities, some have lost their parents or do not know their whereabouts and were raised by relatives. Families also abandon offenders because of their incarceration and, after release, they have neither family nor a place to stay. Due to the loss of their biological family, offenders sometimes adopt other offenders with whom they are incarcerated as a pseudo-family. Resultantly, these released offenders might reoffend to return to their adopted “family” in correctional centres when they are rejected by communities (Geldenhuys, 2017: 25).

During the incarceration period, the offender’s family members may experience distress over the period of detention and some may have relocated or formed new relationships therefore it is important for family members to receive notification and information concerning the offender’s release (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 55). Mnguni and Mohapi (2015: 55) identify a lack of support from the offender’s family and community during incarceration and reintegration as a major contributing factor to the offender’s reoffending behaviour. This lack of support could provoke anger, anxiety, depression and stress for the offenders who might resort to crime for survival. Ex-offenders find it difficult to be re-introduced and reintegrated back into their communities because communities are not forgiving and have negative attitude towards them (Bezuidenhout & Van Niekerk, 2015: 49).

- **Economic factors**

Unemployment is one of the biggest challenges that ex-offenders face upon release from correctional centres and potential employers are hesitant to employ people with criminal records because of the stigma associated with being incarcerated (Langa, 2017: 1). Dissel (2008: 158) states that some ex-offenders who were employed prior to their

incarceration will lose their jobs because of incarceration and will face reduced possibilities of being employed after their release. Diminished possibilities of being employed puts ex-offenders at greater risks of relapsing and reoffending (Houser et al, 2018: 270). After being released into their communities, some ex-offenders have no means or resources to support themselves. Being subjected to economic challenges hampers chances of successful reintegration, creates feelings of helplessness and encourages ex-offenders to return to a life of crime (Paat et al, 2017: 89). Geldenhuys (2017: 25) postulates that ex-offenders do not reoffend because of inappropriate rehabilitation programmes or because they do not recognise that their criminal behaviour is unacceptable but because they fail to meet their economic needs and goals.

Vocational and educational training form part of the Department of Correctional Services' mandate. During incarceration, offenders can enhance their employability skills through working on the farms and in workshops and production centres. These offenders are accredited with certificates of employment, which enhance their ability to find employment after reintegration, and is aimed at decreasing the stigma associated with being incarcerated (RSA, 2005: 68). Dissel (2008: 170) and Crabbe (2016: 3) emphasise that most offenders in correctional centres have no qualifications. Dissel (2008: 170) further adds that offenders can enrol for vocational training which equips them with farming, plumbing, carpentry and painting skills. Education and vocational training encourages offenders to return to the community as productive citizens who can lead law abiding lives (Sumter et al, 2013: 120; Bezuidenhout & Van Niekerk, 2015: 50) In contrast, Lyons and Pettit (2011: 259) argue that spending time in correctional centres downgrades employability in the legitimate labour market and skills and expertise acquired before incarceration because, after their release, potential employers are hesitant to employ ex-offenders because of their criminal records and lack of skills. Many ex-offenders are economically disadvantaged with little education, poor job skills and poor communication skills which makes it challenging for potential employers to employ them after incarceration (Crabbe, 2016: 4). Therefore, it becomes difficult for ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully because they have criminal records (Adams, Chen & Chapman, 2017: 31).

- **Psychological factors**

During incarceration, some offenders are exposed to violent and traumatic experiences within correctional centres to an extent that, after their release, they have challenges adjusting to their families and communities (Boxer et al, 2009: 4; Listwan et al, 2010: 1144). Exposure to violence in correctional centres leads to psychological problems such as isolation, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder which have a negative impact on offenders' reintegration after release (Haney, 2002: 86). Labrecque et al (2018: 128) highlight that these psychological challenges make offenders vulnerable to reoffending and that, after release, ex-offenders have difficulties in reintegrating into society. Their inability to adjust to the norms of their families and communities may influence ex-offenders to persist with their criminal behaviour to satisfy their needs (Chikadzi, 2017: 296; Cole, 2010: 823).

The transition from correctional centres into society is associated with stress and uncertainty because of various changes that may have taken place within families and communities of offenders while they were incarcerated (Chikadzi, 2017: 292). These can include technological advancements which they may find challenging to adjust to and end up being frustrated and feeling incompetent (Chikadzi, 2017: 296). According to Brown, Fine and Cauffman (2019: 39), offenders start to experience post-traumatic stress disorder during incarceration that is likely to be displayed after the offender is released from a correctional centre particularly in the case of offenders who serve lengthy terms of imprisonment. This phenomenon is known as institutionalisation which is discussed in more detail below.

### **2.5.1 Correctional institutionalisation**

Institutionalisation occurs when offenders are emotionally and psychologically transformed by the institutional environment, in this instance, correctional centres, where they live in for a lengthy period of time (Haney, 2002: 80). Chikadzi (2017: 296) and Hesselink-Louw (2004) explain that offenders who spend decades in correctional centres struggle to adjust to their communities. The longer offenders are incarcerated in

correctional centres, the higher the chances that they will adapt to, transform and rely on the demands of the institution. Institutionalisation makes it challenging for offenders to adjust to their societies, increasing the risk of them reoffending with the intention of returning to correctional centres which are familiar to them (Haney, 2002: 81; Chikadzi, 2017: 296). Harding et al (2017: 11103) opines that incarceration or correctional institutionalisation could influence reoffending behaviour and thus increase chances of re-incarceration. When offenders become institutionalised, they find it challenging to amend the relationships and bonds with their families and communities because they no longer have close networks with the outside world (Carter & Marcum, 2017: 253).

Correctional centres have been criticised by society for giving inmates too many privileges. Correctional centres are sometimes named “five star” hotels, holiday homes and even “Sun City” as inmates have all their basic needs provided at the taxpayers’ expense while law abiding people must work to provide for their needs (Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 5). During incarceration, offenders adjust to the culture and way of life in correctional centres which makes it challenging for offenders to adjust to the norms of society after release from correctional centres (Chikadzi, 2017: 297; Hesselink-Louw, 2004). It might appear that recidivism is an indication that correctional centres are attractive or humane while, in reality, life in correctional centres is extremely difficult with harsh conditions such as overcrowding and violence (Law & Padayachee, 2012). Geldenhuys (2017: 3) notes that the perception regarding correctional centres is that the punishment is too lenient so that offenders do not recognise that their behaviour is unethical or that the punishment is very harsh in a way that it isolates offenders from the social norms and encourages them to enhance their criminal skills. Donohue (2009: 4) emphasises that, due to high rate of recidivism, it seems that correctional centres do not have harsh conditions as is assumed by society because, after release, ex-offenders persist with their criminal behaviour.

Mnguni and Mohapi (2015: 55) emphasise that offenders serving longer sentences tend to adapt to correctional institutions to an extent that they persist with criminal activities after release. Mabuza and Roelofse (2013: 52) and Chikadzi (2017: 298) allege that ex-

offenders reoffend with the intention of being rearrested and convicted due to social and psychological challenges of adjusting to their communities. During this study conducted at NICRO with ex-offenders, one research participant stated that some offenders preferred staying in correctional centres because “incarcerated offenders receive their basic needs for free such as food, accommodation, clothes and safety needs” (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 98). Correctional institutionalisation has a negative impact on offender reintegration because the Department of Correctional Services is responsible for providing necessities of incarcerated offenders such as food, shelter, medical care and study aid (Mabuza & Roelofse, 2013: 52). When released, offenders cannot afford such basic needs, so it becomes easier for them to reoffend and return to correctional centres where their needs are provided (Mabuza & Roelofse, 2013: 53). It is therefore important to be aware of and devise strategies to address these challenges by implementing effective reintegration plans and support for offenders to ensure successful offender reintegration.

## **2.6 CURRENT PRACTICE IN OFFENDER REINTEGRATION**

Offender reintegration requires offenders to participate in a pre-release programme (RSA, 2012). According to the Department of Justice (RSA, 2012), after release from correctional centres, offenders should be provided with material and financial support in order to reintegrate successfully. It is recognised that, to correct an offender is a process, and the shared responsibility of families, communities, social institutions, government and non-governmental organisations. It is required of all parties to be visible at all levels during the correction and reintegration process of offenders (RSA, 2005: 7). Therefore, the purpose of the policy of offender reintegration is to facilitate social acceptance meetings between the offender, the victim and the community in order to administer effective offender reintegration (DCS, 2006). The aim of offender reintegration is to reduce possibilities of relapsing and reoffending by preparing the offender for his/her release and preparing the community for the release of the offender (DCS, 2006). The primary objective of offender reintegration is to provide offenders with the assistance and supervision they need to live crime-free lives, reintegrate successfully into the community,



and avoid recidivism (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 6). Theoretically, offender reintegration starts after sentencing through rehabilitation programmes until preparation for the phase when the offender is released from the correctional centre (DCS, 2006). From previous discussions, it is clear that this is not happening due to infrastructural and operational challenges.

Sumter et al (2013: 120) assert that the successful transition of offenders from correctional centres to their communities requires assessments of skills, abilities and the support that offenders, family and community would need during the reintegration of offenders back into their communities. Reintegration programmes should therefore set the stage for a successful transition into the community.

Although incarcerated offenders in correctional centres are presumed to long for the day they will be released and regain their freedom, the reality of not having warm and welcoming homes to return to (either because their families have rejected them, or parents have died or relocated without their knowledge) hampers this enthusiasm (DCS, 2018b). According to DCS (2017b), many offenders who are still kept in incarceration qualify for parole however their parole cannot be granted because they do not have homes to return to or addresses that can be monitored. The longer offenders are kept in incarceration, when they qualify for parole, the more overcrowded correctional centres become but a lack of housing and homelessness are contributing factors to criminal activities (Wong et al, 2019: 1019).

Internationally, offender reintegration practices include the placement of released offenders in halfway houses within their communities so that they can re-adjust to their communities before they are trusted to be able to lead law-abiding lives (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2012: 1). In order to reduce overcrowding in correctional centres, halfway houses were first established in the United States of America (Latessa & Lovins, 2019: 325) and later across the world (Latessa & Lovins, 2019: 326). Wong et al (2019: 1020) and Mathabathe (2016: 7) regard a halfway house as a community-based correctional residential programme that provides temporary housing and reintegration support to assist released offenders with challenges of transition from correctional centres to their

communities. Although other countries, such as Australia and Botswana, adopted the practice and establishment of halfway houses, there is no literature on how these countries manage the halfway houses and whether they are effective.

According to Berghuis (2018: 4656), many offenders enter correctional centres with various challenges and, when they leave correctional centres, they have additional challenges such as the loss of a house/home. In South Africa, not every released offender will be placed in a halfway house as they are only used to accommodate offenders who are released on parole (Mathabathe, 2018: 3). Mathabathe (2016: 8-9) identified other factors that enable a parolee to qualify to be placed at a halfway house, such as family not willing to accept the offender back, when the offender's family does not have enough resources to care for the released offender or when the offender's family cannot be traced. Offenders in South Africa who qualify for parole cannot be granted parole if they do not have a monitorable address (DCS, 2016: 50). Therefore, the Department of Correctional Services formed partnerships with Non-Profit Organisations to establish and fund halfway houses with the aim of providing stable accommodation to released offenders (DCS, 2016: 50; DCS, 2017b; Mathabathe, 2016: 3). Currently, eight halfway houses have been established and are funded by the Department of Correctional Services in Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West regions (DCS, 2018a: 14; DCS, 2016: 51; Weelands, 2018: 485). There is, however, no literature on the maximum number of offenders placed at halfway houses. According to Mathabathe (2016: 10 & 13), about seven or eight offenders are placed in Western Cape halfway houses.

Each country has its own procedure of managing the offender reintegration process through halfway houses. But the objective of halfway houses is similar across the world. Firstly, the purpose of these halfway houses is to provide a friendly family environment and accommodation to offenders released on parole but do not have homes or monitorable address for accommodation and adequate support systems within their communities for reintegration (DCS, 2018b; DCS, 2016: 51; Weelands, 2018: 485; Mathabathe, 2016: 7). Secondly, halfway houses offer reintegration programmes to

offenders to prepare them for life after release and to reduce the possibilities of reoffending (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2012: 10). Thirdly, halfway houses offer reintegration programmes, such as substance abuse counselling, employability skills, educational services and anger management, to equip offenders with skills to reintegrate successfully into their communities (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2012: 19; Clear et al, 2001: 345; Wong et al, 2019: 1020).

The findings outlined in the literature review chapter emphasise that international and national reintegration processes have a common goal which is to adequately prepare the offender for successful reintegration. However the question remains if these halfway houses are effective in combating recidivism since there is no literature on the effectiveness of halfway houses. According to Yukhnenko, Sridhar and Fazel (2019: 3), internationally, recidivism is often used to measure whether offender rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are effective to prevent relapsing and reoffending behaviour.

The current focus of the study is to explore the support that ex-offenders receive after their release from correctional centres. It is also acknowledged that crime victims and communities also need to be prepared for the release of offenders. This should form part of the offender reintegration interventions which are discussed below. In this regard, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS, 2020b: 3) indicates that, in order to ensure successful offender reintegration, victims are invited to participate in restorative justice interventions, such as victim offender mediation dialogues prior to parole placement. The purpose of these interventions is to create the opportunity for both offenders and victims to have discussions about the criminal act and its impact in order to create an opportunity to restore peace and healing. The DCS (2020b: 7) indicates that it takes pride in its commitment to ensure successful offender reintegration by involving victims, families and the community in parole considerations.

## **2.7 REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS**

Chin and Dandurand (2012: 31) emphasise the importance of treatment, education, and vocational and rehabilitation programmes in correctional facilities to prepare offenders for a successful return to the community and to encourage them to avoid reoffending. Various skills development, mental health care, drug dependence treatment, educational and job training, counselling and mentoring programmes are offered during incarceration to prepare offenders for their re-entry into the community (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 32). The Department of Correctional Services signed a memorandum of agreement with various other state departments, which will be discussed briefly, to offer its services to offenders during incarceration to prepare and equip them with resources needed for successful reintegration (DCS, 2013: 2).

- **Integrated support system**

The South African Draft White Paper on Corrections (RSA, 2005: 13) prioritises the need to create an integrated support system after incarceration which involves various role players, such as community institutions and organisations, to encourage further rehabilitation, employment opportunities, support services and prevention of recidivism. The purpose of the integrated support system is for offenders to have adequate access to rehabilitation programmes and counselling services (RSA, 2005: 73). Community correctional officials are responsible for referring offenders to support services offered by various role players, such as social workers and psychologists, based within the offenders' residential areas to avoid travelling costs, and to motivate and assist offenders to secure accommodation and employment prior to their release from correctional centres (RSA, 2005: 73). Another purpose of the integrated support system is to engage with various potential employers and the community to encourage them to be involved in the recruitment of offenders for employment (RSA, 2005: 73). It can therefore be concluded that procedural directives exist to guide offender reintegration practices.

Notwithstanding these directives, Valera et al (2017: 420) conclude from their study that, after release, offenders do not have adequate support systems for successful

reintegration into their communities. Findings from the study indicated that the ex-offenders who participated in the study were not referred to any psychologists, social workers or medical centres to assist them with their reintegration (Valera et al, 2017: 420).

- **Department of Basic Education**

In accordance with the South African Human Rights Commission (2018), every citizen of South Africa has a right to education. Vandala and Bendall (2019: 2) explain that incarcerated offenders have access to educational and training programmes during incarceration because it is their constitutional right as citizens of the country. In this regard, Ford and Schroeder (2010: 49) highlight the importance for incarcerated offenders to pursue their education during incarceration in order to promote sustained criminal desistance. The Department of Correctional Services signed a memorandum of understanding with the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) to offer vocational programmes, such as welding, building, plastering, nail technologies, tiling, furniture making and agriculture, to offenders (DCS, 2018a: 12).

DCS also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Basic Education to provide correctional centres with school furniture, school equipment and educational programmes (DCS, 2013: 2; Khulisa, 2016: 8). The purpose of these educational and vocational programmes is to develop knowledge and skills in order to improve offenders' employability after release (Quan-Baffour & Zawada, 2012: 75-77; Vandala & Bendall, 2019: 2). Porporino (2015: 3) agrees that, when offenders complete their qualifications, they are empowered to focus on long term goals such as studying further, choosing careers and getting employment.

- **Department of Higher Education**

The Department of Higher Education provides expertise in the area of research, development and facilitation of rehabilitation programmes. It furthermore provides university students with experiential learning opportunities (DCS, 2013: 5; Khulisa, 2016: 11). Correctional centres are equipped with libraries and computers for student offenders to access books and online resources for their studies (DCS, 2016: 8).

The Department of Correctional Services signed a memorandum of understanding with University of South Africa (UNISA) to assist offenders who are studying with UNISA to have access to internet connectivity so that they can register and submit assignments online (Khulisa, 2016: 9). Educational programmes that offenders enrol for during incarceration improve inmates' ability to reintegrate within their communities and also change the community's negative perceptions about offenders and correctional centres (DCS, 2015: 10-11).

- **Department of Arts and Culture**

The Department of Arts and Culture provides incarcerated offenders with arts and cultural programmes, such as bead-work, drama performances and drawing projects, during their incarceration period that form part of rehabilitation interventions (Khulisa, 2016: 3). These programmes are offered until offenders are released with the aim that they become involved in related community projects after release (DCS, 2013: 5; Khulisa, 2016: 2). Arts programmes may involve painting, drawing, sculpture and cultural heritage studies. The development of these creative skills is intended to reduce possibilities of ex-offenders relapsing and reoffending (DCS, 2016: 14). Offenders are equipped with vocational heritage skills through arts and culture to aid with rehabilitation during their incarceration and reintegration processes (DCS, 2016: 7). In addition, the Department of Arts and Culture supports offenders, while under correctional supervision and after release, who participated in the projects by marketing, publishing and selling their work to art galleries (DCS, 2016: 7).

- **Department of Health**

Cuellar and Cheema (2012: 932) assert that adequate medical health care for released offenders is important for successful offender reintegration because the poor health status of offenders complicates the offender's ability to adapt in society, obtain employment and take care of their families.

Correctional centres are regarded as the unhealthiest environment in society which contributes to offenders being exposed to infectious diseases (Agboola, 2016: 22).

Agboola (2016: 23) agree that South African correctional centres have poor hygienic conditions so that diseases, such as tuberculosis, spread and infect offenders. Cuellar and Cheema (2012: 931) affirm that many incarcerated offenders are in relatively poor health.

The Department of Health provides medical support to offenders incarcerated in correctional centres (DCS, 2013: 7). Just like all citizens of South Africa, incarcerated offenders have a right to quality health care, therefore the health care services provided to offenders should have the same standard and be of the same quality as health care services available in communities (DCS, 2020b: 4). The main priority of health care services is to offer medical assistance to offenders with specific emphasis on treating offenders who suffer from tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, chronic diseases and mental health related disorders (DCS, 2013: 7).

After release, ex-offenders also have access to medical treatment which is provided by government medical centres (such as public clinics and hospitals) where consultation is free for all community members (Rich, Holmes, Salas, Macalino, Davis, Ryczek & Flanigan, 2001: 287). It is important that, after release, ex-offenders continue with their medical treatments in order to live healthy lives. Hui-Ching and Ming-Chi (2019: 2) add that providing health care to ex-offenders and the availability of accessible health care services will assist with reintegration by attending to their physical and emotional needs. However, no research is available to indicate whether ex-offenders visit health care centres to continue with their medical treatment. Research findings from the study titled “Challenges facing ex-offenders when reintegrating into mainstream society in Gauteng, South Africa”, conducted by Chikadzi (2017: 297), conclude that ex-offenders lack after-care services within their communities. According to Chikadzi (2017: 297), during incarceration, various organisations offer services to offenders to prepare them for reintegration, however, after release, ex-offenders receive no form of support from organisations and communities.

- **Department of Social Development**

The Department of Social Development cares for and protects children in conflict with the law and incarcerated mothers and their children within correctional centres (DCS, 2017c: 32). The role of the Department of Social Development is to maintain the welfare of offenders, meet their psychosocial needs, improve the quality of life for offenders and mend the offender's relationships with significant others (Chitereka, 2009: 152). As incarcerated offenders suffer alienation from their families and society (Chikadzi, 2017: 293), the Department of Social Development helps offenders who have not been in contact with their families to reconcile with them (DCS, 2020a). The aim is to amend the broken relationships between the offender, family and the community at large prior to the release of the offender (Granse, 2003: 363; DCS, 2020a). Murhula and Singh (2019: 29) point out that the stronger the relationship between the offender and the community, the higher chances the offender will successfully reintegrate to the community. Social workers employed by the DCS provide offenders with programmes that enhance their social functioning, social adjustment and prepare them for reintegration into society (Murhula & Singh, 2019: 27).

- **The community work programme**

The community work programme is a government initiative established by Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Langa, Masuku, Bruce & Van der Merwe, 2016: 42; Van der Merwe & Langa, 2019: 50). The community work programme is designed to provide employment opportunities to unemployed citizens, including ex-offenders (Langa, 2017: 2). The duties of the employees of the community work programme is to clean streets by cutting trees and grass, patrol the streets at night to combat crime, grow vegetable gardens within community organisations, such as schools, and raise public awareness about crime and substance abuse (Langa, 2017: 2). Employees of the community programme earn R81 per day for duties performed (Langa, 2017: 2; Van Der Merwe & Langa, 2019: 50). Earning a salary through this initiative enables ex-offenders to contribute to and be recognised as part of the community, lead law-abiding lives and have a legitimate means to afford basic necessities. From the



literature, it is not stated how many ex-offenders are employed through the Community Work Programme (CPW), therefore it is difficult to determine the effectiveness of the initiative.

## **2.8 REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOS)**

Muntingh (2008: 2) emphasises that the NGOs play a critical role in offender reintegration since DCS cannot provide reintegration support to ex-offenders on its own. Langa (2017: 3) also notes that NGOs play a vital role in supporting ex-offenders to readjust and return successfully to their communities.

The Department of Correctional Services formed a partnership with NGOs to equip offenders with skills, including employability and job preparedness, to integrate them successfully into their societies (DCS, 2015:16; Singh, 2016: 5). The Draft White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (RSA, 2005: 85) states that the partnership between the DCS, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations and faith-based organisations is essential to achieve the goal of rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders successfully. However, there is no database of NGOs that offer offender reintegration services to offenders and this is a gap since it negatively affects research and practice.

According to DCS (2017a: 86), partnerships with NGOs within Gauteng were established to provide reintegration services to offenders, such as Former Convicted Offenders Development Initiative (FOCODI) and Imbokodo. FOCODI is founded by former ex-offenders and the NGO offers programmes such as life orientation, conflict resolution and anger management programmes (Muntingh, 2008: 5). Imbokodo is also an NGO that is accredited by DCS to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for offenders (Saferspace, 2020).

Khulisa, Just Detention International South Africa and Hlumelelisa are NGOs that the researcher identified for the purpose of the study. The services offered by these non-governmental organisations are elaborated below.

- **Khulisa**

Khulisa crime prevention initiative was established in 1997 at Leeuwkop Prison to provide offenders with opportunities to use creative arts as a means of self-expression (Khulisa, 2015; Singh, 2016: 6). Khulisa is a non-profit company which inspires, empowers and enables vulnerable children, youth and communities to unlock their potential and develop skills towards a sustainable future (Khulisa, 2015). Khulisa helps the members of communities with skills development through forming partnerships with national and local government departments, schools, correctional facilities, community leaders and corporates (Khulisa, 2015). Khulisa offers rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to parolees, amongst others, the “I am coming out” and “My path” programmes.

The “I am coming out” programme prepares incarcerated offenders for successful reintegration into the community by reviewing their strengths, weaknesses and anticipating challenges that they will face after release (Khulisa, 2015). Khulisa rehabilitation and reintegration programmes have been implemented in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, North-West and Western Cape correctional centres (Khulisa, 2005). Since the programmes were implemented in correctional centres, 41% of participants who enrolled for these programmes have not reoffended and are also involved in other ongoing projects within correctional centres (Khulisa, 2005). The “My Path” programme is a one-year programme offered to offenders, to enable them to explore their emotional, social, psychological and physical beings in order to discover the abilities they have (Singh, 2016: 6; Khulisa, 2018). However according to Moyo (2019), a social work supervisor, Khulisa no longer offers rehabilitation and reintegration support to incarcerated and released offenders due to a lack of funds and resources.

- **NICRO**

National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) was founded in September 1910. It is one of the largest and most enduring South African non-profit organisations that specialises in social crime prevention and offender reintegration

(NICRO, 2016). NICRO offers various services and programmes to individuals, families and communities. It also offers an offender reintegration service, for example, the Tough Enough Programme. The Tough Enough Programme assists offenders and their families with the reintegration process before and after an offender is released (Singh, 2016: 6; NICRO, 2016). It is a one-year programme that focuses on pre-release preparation and reintegration of offenders through enhancing protective factors such as emotional and vocational skills, relationships and resources (NICRO, 2016). The Tough Enough Programme offers skills development programmes, such as educational, vocational, faith based and substance abuse treatment, to offenders to prepare them for reintegration and managing challenges that they will encounter after their release (Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012: 89).

NICRO has recruited community members to participate and become trainers in The Tough Enough Programme. The role of the community members is to mentor, provide reintegration support and guidance to the Tough Enough Programme participants who are offenders (NICRO, 2007: 9). The programme equips offenders to develop skills to build relationships with others, be accountable for their actions and think about their future plans (Ngabonziza-Singh, 2012: 88). The Tough Enough Programme is effective for offender reintegration because reoffending rates decreased to 20% among the participants of the programme (NICRO: 2016). NICRO also works with individuals, families, communities and various institutions to address the causes of criminal behaviour and reduce the opportunities and influences of committing crime (NICRO, 2016: 3).

- **Hlumelelisa**

Hlumelelisa is a non-profit organisation which was founded in 2003 by Paul Bruns with the aim of rehabilitating incarcerated offenders by empowering them with horticultural skills (Hlumelelisa, 2014). According to Hlumelelisa (2014), many offenders reoffend because they do not have the means to provide for themselves and their families.

Hlumelelisa facilitates a 10-month programme in horticulture and life skills in correctional centres to equip offenders with agricultural skills so that, after release, they are able to

get employment in the horticulture industry and be productive members of their communities (Hlumelelisa, 2019: 1). Offenders who participate and complete the programme receive a recognised horticultural certificate (Hlumelelisa, 2014). A success story emanating from the programme is about an ex-offender who completed the programme and established a nursery in 2014 while six ex-offenders were employed by the NGO (Hlumelelisa, 2014).

- **Just Detention International South Africa**

Just Detention International South Africa (JDISA) is an international organisation, previously called Just Detention International, which focused on ending sexual abuse within correctional centres (JDISA, 2015). Just Detention International was started by correctional officers who were employed at Pollsmoor Prison who identified sexual abuse as a challenge in their centre and formed a partnership DCS (JDISA, 2015).

The goal of JDISA is to ensure that survivors of sexual abuse receive adequate support to heal from the trauma in order to reintegrate successfully after release from correctional centres (JDISA, 2015). According to JDISA (2015), during incarceration, the Department of Correctional Services is responsible for ensuring that offenders are safe within correctional centres and that they are not exposed to sexual abuse.

## **2.9 PREPARING THE VICTIMS AND COMMUNITY TO RECEIVE THE EX-OFFENDER DURING REINTEGRATION**

After an offence is committed, the focus is on finding the perpetrator and arresting him/her (Masiloane & Knock, 2010: 212). The victim and the community are only contacted when there is a need to testify during the sentencing process (Masiloane & Marais, 2009: 395). This leaves the victim and community feeling disrespected, disempowered, angry and unsafe (Law & Padayachee, 2012: 1).

According to Masiloane and Knock (2010: 217), the functioning and objective of community victim centres is to provide victims with support and skills regarding the negative effects of crime and make the Criminal Justice System more sensitive and

service oriented towards the victims. Sometimes the victims and their families suffer intimidation and victimisation from the offender's family and friends because they blame them for the incarceration (Masiloane & Marais, 2009: 397). The role of the community victim centres is to provide counselling, referrals to other institutions (such as medical institutions), inform victims about the Criminal Justice System procedures and provide the victims with progress reports regarding the case (Masiloane & Knock, 2010: 219). There is no recent literature about whether the community victim centres are still active however, according to Bougard and Booyens (2015: 21), there are Thuthuzela Care Centres situated in all South African provinces to provide various services to victims of crime. The duties of the service providers in the Thuthuzela Care Centres are to provide medical health care, counselling and legal examinations for victims of crime (Bougard & Booyens, 2015: 22). The Thuthuzela Care Centres are located at various health facilities across the country to ensure the cooperation and involvement of all stakeholders in the provision of various services offered to victims of crime (Bougard & Booyens, 2015: 21).

Winkel, Schweizer and Pemberton (2010: 2) point out that, after the offence, victims may experience post-traumatic stress which indicates that they are not coping with their lives and that they need emotional and psychological support. Kempen (2018: 40) emphasises the importance of believing and expressing sympathy for the victim and not secondary victimising them by having doubts and distrusting them.

According to Haney (2002: 88), no progress will be made with successful reintegration of offenders into their communities unless the communities change the way they treat ex-offenders. If major institutions or civil society stigmatise offenders and do not achieve positive change, reintegration efforts will be deleteriously affected. It is therefore of utmost importance to prepare the victim, community and the offender's family for the release of the offender (Murphy et al, 2011: 108; Haney, 2002). Chin and Dandurand (2012: 56-57) believe that reconnecting the offender with those who are affected by the crime is a difficult and emotional process as relationships are damaged and cannot be easily repaired. They propose a process of restorative reintegration where the victim, community and offender's family are adequately prepared for the offender's release. The main goal

of restorative reintegration is to prepare the victim and the community for the offender's release and to provide protection, counselling and support to the victim, the offender and the community during the offender reintegration process (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 58). It takes time for victims of crimes to heal from the trauma experienced and some victims may choose not to participate in any decisions concerning the offenders' release, however, it is important that they are informed about the processes or decisions taken regarding the release of the offender (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 58).

In South Africa, the practice of restorative reintegration is practiced as well as other initiatives to empower the members of the community to deal with the after effects of crime and to empower them to progress with their lives. Restorative justice is about addressing and repairing the harm done to the community by the offender. It is a process whereby the relationship between the victim, offender and the community is restored (Wood & Suzuki, 2016: 152; Rossner & Bruce, 2016: 107). It is important in this process for the offender to accept the responsibility of his/her actions, ask for forgiveness from the victim that the offender has harmed and be willing to face the consequences or punishment for his/her actions (Batley et al, 2005: 22). Murhula and Singh (2019: 31) add that restorative justice benefits victims and offenders because it highlights recovery and healing of both parties and restores the broken relationships in the community. The victim-offender dialogue is initiated to empower the offender to acknowledge the harm and apologise to the victim so that the victimised person can also forgive the offender (Winkel et al, 2010: 2).

The South African Police Services (SAPS) has victim empowerment centres within police stations to assist and equip victims with skills to manage anxiety, stress and depression that can be caused by the criminal justice procedures (Masiloane & Knock, 2010: 213). When victims of crime are acknowledged, supported to deal with the trauma caused by the victimisation and prepared for the offender's sentencing and reintegration, they can forgive offenders, understand what the process of offender reintegration entails and provide adequate support for offenders to reintegrate successfully.

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

Offenders confined in correctional institutions face a range of social, economic and personal challenges that could destroy their rehabilitation process. When offenders are released from the correctional centres, they find it difficult to reintegrate back into society. When ex-offenders do not receive adequate support from their communities to deal with these challenges effectively, they will relapse and reoffend.

Ensuring correction and successful reintegration of offenders is not the responsibility of the DCS only; it is also the responsibility of the community as a whole. The victim, the offender's family and the community have an influence (either positive or negative) on successful reintegration of offenders. The harm caused to victims by offenders is acknowledged, however, the community needs to trust the procedures of the Criminal Justice System in rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders by mending relationships with the community and supporting ex-offenders to lead law abiding lives. The next chapter will explain factors that influence ex-offenders to relapse and reoffend.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THEORETICAL EXPLANATION OF RE-OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

There are various explanations and theories for criminal behaviour. A theory is a scientific approach applicable to real circumstances in the world (Williams & McShane, 2010: 1), meaning that every situation has a scientific explanation for its existence. Criminological theories are scientifically tested and are based on research evidence (Williams & McShane, 2010: 4). Theories of crime have been linked to the manner in which society understands crime (Valier, 2002: 1).

Recidivism is a complex issue worldwide and theorists have various opinions about the causes of recidivism. According to Vanessa Padayachee, a research coordinator at the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO), research conducted at the institute estimates that 80-94% of former offenders reoffend after being released from correctional facilities in South Africa and reintegrated to the community (Greyvenstein, 2018: 79).

Released offenders experience challenges that are causal risk factors for reoffending behaviour (Constantinou, Freestone, Marsh, Fenton & Coid, 2015: 7512). According to Hesselink-Louw (2004: 114), these risk factors could be used to predict future reoffending behaviour, and subsequent danger posed to society by the ex-offender. Leverso, Bielby and Hoelter (2015: 74) agree that risk factors are important in predicting recidivism. Risk factors also contribute to the ex-offender's vulnerability to victimisation in society (Leverso et al, 2015: 74). Risk factors that could influence the ex-offender to relapse and reoffend include, for example, conflict with significant others, low self-esteem, substance abuse and a lack of relationship skills, problem solving skills, education and employability skills (Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 155). Leverso et al (2015: 74) also identify a lack of self-control, antisocial peers and a history of antisocial behaviour as risk factors that could be used to predict future reoffending behaviour.

Chapter 3 offers a theoretical explanation of reintegration challenges that ex-offenders



are exposed to after their release from correctional centres and the impact these challenges have on their successful reintegration. These theories aim to highlight the importance of effective reintegration strategies to break the cycle of crime.

### **3.2 SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY**

Travis Hirschi developed the social control theory to explain why some people commit crime while others chose not to engage in criminal behaviour (Williams & McShane, 2014: 167). The social control theory originates from positivist theories that explain traditional behaviour and the consequences of deviating from such behaviour (Williams & McShane, 2014: 169). The theory focuses on how the involvement in criminal behaviour weakens the social bond with society rather than on reasons for the existence of that bond (Williams & McShane, 2014: 169).

#### **3.2.1 Application of the Social Control Theory**

The social control theory believes that a person engages in criminal behaviour because of being brought up in a broken family and a lack of involvement in community engagements such as church, school, sports and others (Williams & McShane, 2014: 169). The foundation of the social control theory is that offenders are more likely to engage in deviant activities when their bond to society is broken and weak and that the stronger the social bond, the less likely it is that a person will commit an act that could cause harm to the community (Brown, Geis & Esbensen, 2010: 300; Booth, Farrell & Varano, 2008: 425; Craig, Baglivio, Wolff, Piquero, and Epps, 2017: 5). Hirschi (2017: 108) also notes that a person weighs the advantages and disadvantages of engaging in delinquent behaviour and that the bond that person has with society will be a contributing factor in deciding whether the individual desists or persists with involvement in such behaviour.

#### **3.2.2 The principles of the Social Control Theory**

The social control theory is characterised by four elements, which are attachment, involvement, commitment and belief, to explain why people engage in criminal behaviour

(Williams & McShane, 2014: 168; Craig et al, 2017: 5). These elements are discussed below.

- **Attachment**

Attachment represents the understanding and strength in the relationship between a person and others, such as parents, friends and society that can prevent antisocial behaviour (Booth et al, 2008: 425; Williams & McShane, 2014: 168). Craig et al (2017: 5) indicate that attachment is an emotional element that refers to a person's affection towards others. Brown et al (2010: 300) emphasise that, when an individual has a strong conventional attachment with significant others, he or she will care about the impact his/her criminal actions have on loved ones.

After release, ex-offenders might perceive others as avoiding, rejecting and talking behind their backs, hence, they will start to regard themselves as outsiders, which will motivate them to become attached to other delinquents (Brown et al, 2010: 321). The association and attachment to people with a history of anti-social functioning will therefore increase the risk of reoffending.

Broken families and substance abuse are also casual risk factors for offending. Offenders from violent families, who were also victimised, are at a high risk of developing insecure attachments with others and may have difficulties in forming positive relationships with law-abiding citizens (Muller, Gobel-Fabbri, Diamond & Dinklage, 2000: 462). According to Margolin and Gordis (2000: 454), experiences of physical abuse teach children aggressive behaviour and aggression as a norm for problem solving. Matshaba (2015: 73) identified substance abuse as a risk factor in criminal persistence because offenders need money to maintain their addiction.

- **Involvement**

Involvement is the level of interaction between the individual and significant others (Booth et al, 2008: 426). Involvement refers to the amount of time and energy an individual commits for participating in social activities within their family and society (Williams &

McShane, 2014: 168; Craig et al, 2017: 6). However, a person could also be involved in legal or illegal activities. Involvement and participation in society institutions, such as school, church, and sports, decreases possibilities of being involved in delinquent behaviour (Williams & McShane, 2014: 168). Findings in Chapter 2 conclude that, after release, ex-offenders are at risk of being rejected from communities. Therefore, when ex-offenders are rejected, they do not engage in societal institutions and will join deviant groups where they will be encouraged to reoffend. Booth et al (2008: 439) and Williams and McShane (2014: 169) state that involvement in conventional activities discourages delinquency because it reduces free time and creates attachment opportunities with members of society. People who are idle and are not engaged in conventional activities are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviour because boredom could lead to a person becoming involved in anti-social activities, such as substance abuse and criminal activities (Brown et al, 2010: 302; Cruickshank, Barry & Morrison, 2008: 22).

- **Commitment**

Commitment is evident in the ambition a person has towards a certain goal (Brown et al, 2010: 301). Commitment is an investment of time, resources and good behaviour towards an activity or institution (Williams & McShane, 2014: 168). When a person is committed to goals, such as having a family, building a career and establishing a business, then it is less likely that he/she will commit crime because of the fear of losing what they already have or aim to achieve (Brown et al, 2010: 301). Commitment signifies what a person could lose when engaging in criminal behaviour, such as a stable job, freedom from incarceration and meaningful relationships, and that they will acquire a criminal record (Booth et al, 2008: 426). A lack of commitment, due to unemployment, lack of accommodation and meaningful relationships, as mentioned in Chapter 2, are risk factors that could hamper the successful reintegration of offenders.

- **Belief**

Belief is when a person identifies him/herself with societal values and respects and obeys those societal norms and rules (Williams & McShane, 2014: 168). When a person

believes in legitimate rules within society, the lower are the chances that he or she will engage in antisocial behaviour (Williams & McShane, 2014: 168; Brown et al, 2010: 302; Booth et al, 2008: 426). For example, when a person does not believe in family and community customs, it becomes easier for that person to deviate from those social norms and this could result in engaging in deviant behaviour. According to Bryant (2011: 5), persistent offenders are a product of the broken norms of families and social environments that expose the offenders to the criminal lifestyle and influence persistent offending.

### **3.2.3 Evaluation of the Social Control Theory**

The social control theory proposes that weak social bonds increase the chances of engaging in criminal behaviour. Engagement in criminal behaviour, in turn, causes weak social bonds (Brown et al, 2010: 303). Imprisonment increases the possibility that groups with which the ex-offender had a bond with before his/her incarceration might reject him/her after release, subsequently resulting in the weakening or breaking of previous bonds, resultantly increasing the risk for reoffending (Brown et al, 2010: 303).

Critiquing the social control theory, Brown et al (2010: 304) emphasise that people could have a strong bond with society but still engage in criminal behaviour, such as corrupt politicians, teachers, medical officials, government officials and abusive ministers. The social control theory affirms that an individual engages in deviant behaviour out of free will (Williams & McShane, 2014: 167). Brown et al (2010: 300) agree that a person may engage in criminal behaviour willingly regardless of whether they have a strong bond with society or not. Perri (2011: 217) used the example of white collar perpetrators who are from the academic community, law enforcement, political and business sectors who engage in non-violent offending. White-collar criminals are well-educated, trusted employees and considered as good citizens who have a strong bond with their communities (Perri, 2011: 219). The predominant critique is therefore based on the findings that not all offenders who have weak social bonds with families and communities reoffend. The social control theory does not have an explanation for why people with a strong bond with society engage in criminal activities.

The social control theory argues that crime cannot be understood apart from its social context, meaning that, in order to understand criminal behaviour, the social context should also be explored (Brown et al, 2010: 319). Hoffmann (2003: 756) and Intravia, Pelletier, Wolff and Baglivio (2017: 225) maintain that community disorganisation weakens a person's attachment to the community and involvement in conventional activities hence increasing the risk of reoffending. However, Burker (2011: 255) notes that self-control is the cause of criminal behaviour because it determines how people behave in situations. According to Booth et al (2008: 426), Hirschi's social control theory focused only on male offenders that led to criticism and attempts to assess how social control theory could apply to female offenders.

Within the context of this study, the social control theory fails to explain why some offenders manage to reintegrate successfully regardless of challenges, such as familial rejection and stigmatisation that they face after release from correctional centres. In addition, the social control theory based its principles on offenders who do not have strong social bonds with society but fails to explain cases where perpetrators who have a strong social bond with the community persist with their criminal behaviour.

### **3.2.4 Relevance of the Social Control Theory**

The social control theory emphasises that attachment is an important element to empower offenders to desist from criminal behaviour after their release. Attachment also assists them to successfully reintegrate back into society (Craig et al, 2017: 6). In contrast, if the community marginalises an offender after release, the offender may persist with reoffending because of the rejection and isolation. A family with strong conventional social bonds reduces the chances of both victimisation and engagement in criminal behaviour of family members (Schreck & Fisher, 2004: 1033; Craig et al, 2017: 5). It can therefore be concluded that, should an offender be released into a community with opportunities to build and maintain strong social bonds, the higher the chances are that the offender will successfully reintegrate and become a productive citizen.

The social control theory is of relevance in this study because it highlights the role that

society plays as both motivator and preventer of criminal behaviour after an offender's release. The role of reintegration interventions should thus be to assist with rehabilitation of offenders thereby transforming and assisting them to lead law-abiding lives. The role of the community regarding offender reintegration is to create an enabling environment and provide necessary support for released offenders to strengthen bonds with society and enable offenders to be socially engaged, hence desisting from criminal behaviour.

In contrast, desisting from criminal behaviour becomes a challenge if there is a lack of support from the communities that ex-offenders return to after release from correctional centres (McNeil, Lightowler & Maruna, 2012: 3). Due to overwhelming challenges that offenders come across after their release, McNeil et al (2012: 4) argue that desistance from criminal activities is ultimately a personal choice that an ex-offender makes.

### **3.3 THE LABELLING THEORY**

Howard Becker is the founder of the labelling theory. He explains that, when rules are broken, the person who broke those rules is then regarded as an outsider who cannot be trusted to live according to the rules and norms of a certain group (Valier, 2002: 89; Lemuel, Joshua, Joemer, Hernandez & Mojares, 2017: 102). The labelling theory focuses on the deviant labelling processes and causes that lead to deviant acts (Bernburg, Krohn & Rivera, 2006: 68; Lemuel et al, 2017: 101). The labelling theory argues that negative societal reactions, such as labelling and stigmatisation of criminal acts, is a step towards reducing criminal careers (Pickford & Dugmore, 2012: 15). As a result, an offender's choice to either desist or persist with criminal offending is greatly influenced by public labelling (Pickford & Dugmore, 2012: 15).

The labelling theory proposes that people who are regarded as different from others, either because of race, disability and illness (physical or mental) are prejudiced and discriminated against as a result of their unique characters (Corrigan & Rao, 2012: 464). A stigma is a mark that differentiates an individual from others and associates the stigmatised individual with negative characteristics that results in discrimination (Massoglia, Remster & King, 2011: 136). Within the context of this study, stigmatisation

refers to a process whereby offenders acquire undesirable characteristics because of their involvement in criminal behaviour and incarceration (Champion, 2001: 128; Davis, 2002: 250). According to Robbers (2009: 8), the initial criminal label occurs after incarceration for a specific offence. Thereafter, the offender will commit secondary deviance because he will accept the label and will eventually act on it. However, Bernburg (2019: 9) argues that, when parents, teachers and community members label a person as deviant, the individual will respond to the deviant label prior to being in contact with the Criminal Justice System. After the acceptance of the label, there is a risk that the offender will internalise the label and, as a result, persist with criminal behaviour. Greyvenstein (2018: 79) also identifies labelling as one of the risk factors that contribute to reoffending behaviour. The other risk factors include broken relationships, unemployment and institutionalisation in correctional centres. Mingus and Burchfield (2012: 98) highlight that the labelling theory emphasises that the deviant label and the stigma associated with it is a product of society rather than the individual committing the deviant act. The labelling theory therefore is concerned with the process of labelling and stigmatising of offenders and how it can become a causal risk for reoffending (Sun, 2013: 51). The labelling theory is based on various principles which are discussed below.

### **3.3.1 The principles of the Labelling Theory**

Three core principles are proposed in the labelling theory. Firstly, that adopting a deviant label is an active process. Hadjimatheou (2016: 567) postulates that being in conflict with the law is followed by public criminal labelling. According to Hadjimatheou (2016: 568), deviant labelling starts during incarceration because offenders are institutionalised in correctional centres and they are compelled to wear inmate uniforms which alert the community about their criminal status. Bryant (2011: 121) and Lemuel et al (2017: 101) further elaborate that, throughout incarceration and after release, deviant labelling occurs in a form of tagging, defining, describing and emphasising the characters of the offence an individual is accused of. Offenders are labelled according to the type of crime they were accused of, and incarcerated for, e.g. rapist, murder, prostitute, drug lord or thief (Geiger & Fischer, 2005: 194; Bryant, 2011: 33). As a result of being labelled deviant,

offenders are then obliged to live a criminal lifestyle, and this is when the label becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Yuill, Crinson & Duncan, 2010: 3; Lemuel et al, 2017: 102). According to Moyer (2001: 168) and Bryant (2011: 33), an individual does not become a chronic offender after committing a single offence, however, there must be repetitive deviant acts committed which are accompanied by society's reaction and label for the individual to become a chronic offender.

Cruickshank et al (2008: 23) remark that, for some offenders, the self-fulfilling prophecy is not a result of an individual involvement in criminal activities but because of a criminal family background and that society blames people for their parents' criminal acts, for example, the child of a serial killer would be labelled as a "son of a serial killer". Moyer (2001: 175) further states that there is a risk that labelled individuals live up to the criminal label tagged upon them by society. Hadjimatheou (2016: 571) concurs with Moyer (2001) that the criminal label could force an individual to reflect on the label because society's reaction could be overwhelming for that person.

Secondly, negative stereotyping and characterisation of people influence stereotyped persons to be vulnerable, accept and internalise the stereotype (Corrigan & Rao, 2012: 465). In this case, ex-offenders are a group of people who are prejudiced and discriminated against and subsequently labelled as deviants because of their incarceration. This form of stereotyping results in them being rejected and marginalised by the community after their release from correctional centres (Tewksbury & Copes, 2012: 112). According to Robbers (2009: 8), people who are identified, labelled and stigmatised in any way tend to behave according to the suggested label and stigma. Brown et al (2010: 321) also note that a person's understanding of his/her identity is a reflection of his/her perception of how society treats them. Released offenders could persist with criminal behaviour because deviant labelling transforms the ex-offender's self-concept to an extent that the offender conforms to the stereotypical expectations of the society that labels them (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003: 1289; Lemuel et al, 2017: 102).

Thirdly, individuals who are labelled as deviant tend to experience psychological and social consequences such as adopting the deviant label and being involved in deviant



behaviour. This, in turn, causes them to be deprived of opportunities for social growth (Bryant, 2011: 121). For example, during incarceration, offenders forfeit opportunities to accumulate experience and skills needed in the labour market, which reduces legitimate work opportunities after their release from correctional centres (Backman, Estrada & Nilsson, 2018: 1045). In addition to being deprived of developing opportunities, being labelled and stigmatised as a deviant furthermore limits ex-offenders' possibilities of finding employment after release.

The labelling theory highlights that society's reactions to criminal actions causes those who have committed criminal offences to be labelled (Williams & McShane, 2010: 109). For example, when a person is labelled as a thief, the labelled person will persist with criminal behaviour relating to stealing (Karimu, 2015: 5). Therefore, when society labels a person as deviant, societal ties between the public and the deviant person become broken because of the labelling and subsequent rejection of the person (Mingus & Burchfield, 2012: 99). When the labelled individuals accept their deviant status, they conform to the label and start to organise their life and identity around the deviant labels (Burke, 2003: 142) which influences them to relapse and reoffend (Burke, 2003: 143). Crank (2018: 158) also maintains that an offender's actions are regarded as expressions of self-identity as the offender will intentionally reoffend and be consistent with the adopted identity. Thus, the labelled person joins a group that is similarly labelled as being deviant. The shared identity between members of the deviant group results in them offering social support to each other and the internalised label could result in deviant activities (Bernburg et al, 2006: 68). Thornberg (2015: 310) notes that identity is a social process where deviant groups see and judge themselves from the perspective of their group and through interpreting others' behaviour as acceptable behaviour.

The consequence of successful labelling is that the labelled person becomes isolated from society and joins deviant others who share the same norms (Brown et al, 2010: 328). The deviant group provides social shelter, comfort, a sense of belonging and replaces societal norms for the labelled individual (Bernburg et al, 2006: 68). According to Thornberg (2015: 158), offenders within the deviant group internalise their deviant identity

through their lifestyles, such as their dress code, the way they communicate and the way the walk. The deviant group will not desist from their deviant behaviour because it is difficult for them to find legitimate opportunities, fit into the norms of society, and because they lack support and resources to end their criminal lifestyles (Thornberg, 2015: 158).

### **3.3.2 The application of the Labelling Theory**

The focus of the labelling theory is on the characteristics of the individual offender and his/her social environment (Jackson & Hay, 2013: 301). The labelling process transforms people who are marginally involved in deviant behaviour into chronic or career offenders (Jackson & Hay, 2013: 301). Labelling can have a negative impact on the offender's reintegration process and may thus contribute to the building of a criminal career (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003: 1288; Hadjimatheou, 2016: 571). People are at risk of becoming offenders because they are labelled as such by the community and the criminal justice system not because they have committed the crime (Sun, 2013: 51). Labelled and stigmatised ex-offenders persist with offending behaviour because society regards them as worthless and denies them access to educational and employment opportunities and resources (Jackson & Hay, 2013: 303). McNeil et al (2012: 5) identified factors, such as injuries during the commission of the offence, long-term incarceration, exposure to correctional centres and reassessing what is important in the offender's life, as influencers to persist with or desist from criminal behaviour regardless of being labelled, rejected or stigmatised by society.

The negative attitude society has towards ex-offenders makes it challenging for offenders to successfully reintegrate into society (DCS, 2015: 16). Burke (2003: 137) believes that no behaviour is naturally deviant and that the behaviour is considered and only becomes deviant once society confers the criminal label upon the act and the person who committed it. The negative treatment ex-offenders receive from society through labelling and stigmatisation pressure them to organise their identity in accordance with the labels given, therefore resulting in them eventually withdrawing from the conventional group, norms and activities (Geiger & Fischer, 2005: 194; Mbuba, 2012: 242).

Denov and Campbell (2005: 224) emphasise that, during incarceration, offenders lose their self-identity and adjust to the correctional centres' lifestyle by committing further crimes, fighting and joining gangs for survival whilst imprisoned. Thornberg (2015: 166) adds that the deviant identity is more significant during incarceration as offenders are housed in correctional centres where their interactions are limited to other offenders.

Bryant (2011: 5), Moyer (2001: 174) and Burke (2003) maintain that society does not label the deviant act however it labels the person who has committed the act and that secret offenders who commit deviant acts are not labelled as offenders because their criminal acts are undetected. This means that people are labelled as offenders because of being incarcerated and those whose criminal acts are undetected are not regarded as offenders and therefore are not labelled as such.

### **3.3.3 Labelling as a causal risk of re-offending**

When ex-offenders are labelled as law-breakers, they are socially excluded by being denied access to services offered to law-abiding community members (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003: 1298; Besemer, Farrington & Bijleveld, 2017: 2). Once a person is labelled a deviant, he or she is denied essential life opportunities within the community because of the stigma and will therefore have a greater propensity to repeat his/her deviant behaviour (Mingus & Burchfield, 2012: 98). Lebel et al (2015: 113) allege that society will never understand and accept that ex-offenders have paid their debt for the crimes committed by spending time in correctional centres. Therefore, ex-offenders find it difficult to move beyond the stigma associated with their incarceration because they are regarded as deviant by society notwithstanding the fact that they have served their sentences (Massoglia et al, 2011: 134).

Jackson and Hay (2013: 300) assert that labelling released offenders as criminals increases their chances of relapsing and reoffending because the offender is stigmatised and rejected by society. Because of labelling and stigma, individuals are unable to establish a healthy social bond with the community, gain legitimate employment and establish a healthy support network (Mingus & Burchfield, 2012: 100). In a study

conducted by Magadze, Roelofse and Oliver (2017: 133), which focused on community corrections forums, a research participant stated:

*“When is our debt ever going to be paid according to the community and when will we be full citizens, with rights like everyone else in the community? When will we cease to be criminals by community? Only when society stops treating us that way and accepts us for who we are and who we can be and not who we were.”*

Lemuel et al (2017: 112) add that, after incarceration, ex-offenders have paid their debts for their criminal pasts and that, after their release, they should be afforded resources (e.g. employment) to live law abiding lives. The quote above highlights that the effects of stigmatisation and labelling result in the unequal treatment of ex-offenders after their release from correctional centres. Mingus and Burchfield (2012: 99) further postulate that labelled and stigmatised individuals perceive themselves as worthless because of their history of coming into conflict with the law which leads to their rejection and their risk of reoffending. The labelling process effectively closes off the possibility of living a law-abiding life for ex-offenders (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2006: 125). According to Creaney (2012: 1), ex-offenders are unable to overcome the labelling and stigmatisation from society because the harmful effect of being labelled as a criminal is damaging to the offender’s personality and also negatively influences their ability to be employed.

Society interacts with labelled individuals according to perceptions of how offenders should be treated, such as not trusting them and refraining from socialising with them (Renzetti, Curran & Carr, 2003: 166). Mbuba (2012: 243) emphasises that it is challenging for ex-offenders to adjust to their communities after incarceration as they are used to the correctional institutionalisation lifestyle. Besemer et al (2017: 3) further state that the labelling effects are more serious for ex-offenders who are unskilled, have no tertiary education and are socially and economically disadvantaged. The deviant label that ex-offenders acquire, subsequent negative feedback and lack of interaction with communities as a result of their criminal past, also has a negative impact on future opportunities and accomplishments (career, employment, family, etc.) of the ex-offender (Mbuba, 2012: 241; Besemer et al, 2017: 2). For some offenders, the label becomes a

critical factor of a persistent criminal lifestyle because the labelled offender is influenced to join the deviant group and the criminal lifestyle (Besemer et al, 2017: 2). During a workshop held by the Department of Correctional Services, ex-offenders made it clear that having a criminal record has negative effects on employment opportunities and their successful reintegration to the communities (DCS, 2015: 14). This opinion also concurs with section 2.3.4 in Chapter 2.

### **3.3.4 Impact of labelling on released offenders**

Labelling could have psychological, social and emotional impact on ex-offenders. According to Lemuel et al (2017: 102), when a person is criminally labelled, it becomes challenging for the labelled person to reject the label because the label surpasses their original status, such as a parent, uncle, teacher, employee and neighbour. Furthermore, labelling impacts on the ex-offender and his/her family as discussed below.

- **Personally**

Research findings by Denov and Campbell (2005: 235) confirm that, after incarceration, the offender's family can conclude that the offender was guilty of the offence for which he/she was incarcerated. Carter and Marcum (2017: 253) also found that the families of offenders are hesitant to mend the broken relationships after release from correctional centres because they think that the offender will continue with his/her criminal behaviour. This leads to families rejecting and abandoning ex-offenders (Zwecker et al, 2018: 471).

Being stigmatised and labelled as deviant by society may cause the ex-offender to be anxious and fear rejection (Glass, Mowbray, Link, Kristjansson & Bucholz, 2013: 685). In a study focusing on effects of being incarcerated by Denov and Campbell (2005: 236), a research participant who is an ex-offender said, "I still feel like a prisoner because of the trauma I went through, and it seems people still judge me even though I served my sentence". Mbuba (2012: 244) adds that, even after being released from correctional centres, ex-offenders still feel like they are inmates because of the way they are treated in their communities. Mingus and Burchfield (2012: 99) further postulate that a labelled and stigmatised individual perceives himself as worthless because of being labelled as

such and rejected by society.

In contrast, ex-offenders who manage to successfully reintegrate into their communities after release from correctional centres, were found to have a positive self-identification, self-esteem and self-efficacy, hence being able to realise their purpose and live meaningful lives (McNeil et al, 2012: 6). Such offenders start to value their goals (studying, being employed, starting a family etc.) that they want to achieve and they tend to desist from criminal activities and lead law-abiding lives (McNeil et al, 2012: 6).

- **Family**

Murray (2013: 442) postulates that the effect of incarceration on family members of the offender is neglected in academic research and media coverage. The stigma associated with being incarcerated is also attached to the offender's family, which results in family members being rejected, isolated and socially marginalised from the community (Farkas & Miller, 2007: 90; Mbuba, 2012: 239). The family of the incarcerated offender often lives, works and attends school in the same community that exposes it to judgement, labelling and discrimination because of the criminal behaviour of a member of the family (Farkas & Miller, 2007: 90). When family members are exposed to unequal treatment within the community, they develop anger and resentment towards the offender for bringing shame and negative exposure to the family (Farkas & Miller, 2007: 90-91).

For fear of being stigmatised, family members will often only inform the immediate family about the incarceration of a family member and the challenges they come across as a result of being in contact with the Criminal Justice System (Austin, 2004: 181). The family may also keep the whereabouts of an incarcerated family member secret from other family members and the community to avoid any potential stigmatisation from society in general (Massoglia et al, 2011: 135; Austin, 2004: 181).

Some families are relieved that the offenders are released from correctional centres (Matshaba, 2015: 72). However, the families may blame the released offender for all the trauma and challenges they faced because of his/her incarceration they find it difficult to provide adequate support to the released offender to lead a law-abiding life resulting in

the ex-offender persisting with criminal behaviour (Matshaba, 2015: 72). Jackson and Hay (2013: 302) emphasise that labelling could have less harmful effects on the offender and his family if the offender's family and social environments are characterised by warmth, attachment and support.

### **3.3.5 Evaluation of the Labelling Theory**

The labelling theory posits that offenders persist with criminal behaviour as a result of being labelled with deviant labels which they conform to. However, there are some critics of the theory. Abrah (2019: 195) conducted a study where he addressed the question of how labelling explains criminal persistence or desistance throughout adulthood. From the research findings, Abrah (2019: 195) indicated that labelling does not explain persistence in criminal behaviour because it is influenced by self-motivation. Jackson and Hogg (2010: 4) believe that offenders engage in criminal behaviour because of difficulties they face in their lives, not because they are labelled as deviant. Davis et al (2012: 447) indicate that, during incarceration, offenders learn attitudes and skills that they need for survival but are not adequate in equipping them for adjusting to life after their release. When released, if offenders have difficulties adjusting to the life outside correctional centres, they are more likely to reoffend than to desist from offending regardless of being labelled as criminals (Cobbina, 2010: 211).

Crossman (2019) argues that the labelling theory does not take into account that there are other factors that influence offending behaviour such as criminal opportunities, poverty and environmental factors. Of interest in the study is to determine if deviant labelling influences criminal behaviour and how a lack of support from families and communities during reintegration influences an offender's reintegration. Furthermore, to determine why some offenders who are labelled as deviant conform to the label whilst others do not.

### **3.3.6 Relevance of the Labelling Theory**

As indicated in Chapter 2, the government, specifically the DCS, does not have the ability

to successfully reintegrate ex-offenders into society however the ex-offenders and the community are able to assist with the reintegration process, with the support of the government (Magadze et al, 2017: 126). The rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders are a societal responsibility (Porporino, 2015: 1) however, due to labelling and stigmatising, offenders are at risk of reoffending. On a practical level, finding out where released offenders would live, and how would they would provide for themselves are pertinent for successful offender reintegration.

Theoretically, communities are responsible for uplifting and restoring the ex-offenders' dignity by refraining from labelling and stigmatising them due to their past criminal behaviours. Community members need to accept offenders as equal residents in communities and provide support for them by assisting them to desist from criminal behaviour (Magadze et al, 2017: 128). Instead of labelling and rejecting ex-offenders, society needs to support ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully and adjust to the law-abiding norms of the community (Clone & DeHart, 2014: 504). It is imperative for community members to have a better understanding of the reintegration process in order to assist ex-offenders to successfully reintegrate into communities (Davis et al, 2012: 447).

It is hypothesised that, during the period of incarceration, offenders should be rehabilitated which includes acknowledging that their behaviour was unacceptable and that they need to be forgiven after serving their sentences because they were punished for their misdeeds. They also need to be assured that the community forgives them for their criminal actions so that they reintegrate successfully and start to live law-abiding lives (Magadze et al, 2017: 135).

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

From the researcher's perspective, no theory is accurate in explaining criminal behaviour. Economic, social, physical and environmental factors influence criminal behaviour. This chapter explained in detail the theories behind reoffending behaviour.



The principle of the social control theory is based on broken social norms and relationships as the result of criminal behaviour. Ex-offenders relapse and reoffend after their release from correctional centres because of broken social bonds with families and society. Ex-offenders find it challenging to mend the broken relationships and end up having strong social bonds with delinquent others who provide a sense of acceptance and belonging. However, should the bond between the ex-offender and the community become stronger, which includes accepting back ex-offenders, providing adequate support after their release and sharing community's facilities and resources as they are also residents, the lower the chance that the ex-offenders will reoffend. When the social bond between the ex-offenders and the community is stronger, then ex-offenders will be treated as residents of the communities and they will not be labelled and stigmatised. Therefore, ex-offenders will adjust and reintegrate successfully into society. The successful reintegration of an offender means that the cycle of crime will be broken as the offender will become a productive law-abiding citizen in society. The next chapter explains the methodological strategy used to complete the research study.

## **CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Research methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem. It is the science of studying how to carry out research and the methods by which information is gained. Methodology involves the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting the phenomena (Chinnathambi, Philominathan & Rajasekar, 2013: 05). The purpose of this chapter is to outline research guidelines that were adhered to and practical steps taken in completing the methodology phase that is described below.

### **4.2 METHODOLOGY**

It is important to follow a scientific research methodology to conduct research in a realistic way and determine if the research plan is achievable. Maree (2007: 70) and Creswell (2014: 70) propose that a research design is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of the respondents, data gathering techniques to be used and data analysis to be done. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2011: 34) postulate that a research design should provide a plan that specifies how the research is to be implemented and the research process that consists of five stages which are: defining the research question, designing the research, collecting data, analysing data and writing a research report. Terre Blanche et al (2011: 34) further elaborate that the planning stage of research is defining the research question and designing, while the implementation stage involves collection, analysing of data and the publication stage is writing a research report.

#### **4.2.1 Research purpose**

The purpose of a research study can be either basic or applied. Basic research is aimed at advancing general knowledge in a specific discipline and, more precisely, for generating new information to develop, support, modify or innovate theory (Bachman &

Schutt, 2014: 343; Dantzker, Hunter & Quinn, 2018: 11). Dantzker et al (2018: 11), regard applied research as useful in the criminal justice field as it aims to address, investigate and explain identified problems. Applied research has a practical application and aims to contribute towards problem solving, decision making, policy analysis and community development (Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 45). The study is therefore basic in nature since it aims to answer questions about which reintegration support system is delivered by NGOs to ensure that released offenders achieve a successful reintegration into society in order to avoid relapse.

#### **4.2.2 Research goal**

The study is exploratory in nature since very little recent research is available in South Africa and elsewhere on offender reintegration strategies (Muntingh, 2001: 3; De Vos et al, 2011: 95). The purpose of exploratory research is to gain insight into the situation, occurrence, community or individual (De Vos et al, 2011: 95). The researcher chose exploratory research in order to understand the challenges reintegrated offenders face and support strategies available in their communities from NGOs to help them to avoid relapsing and reoffending.

#### **4.2.3 Research approach**

There are two main approaches, qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Qualitative research is non-numerical and is used to study a research problem and follows a narrative approach while quantitative research generates numerical data (Dantzker et al, 2018: 61). Researchers who follow exploratory research use qualitative data because exploratory research has a basic research goal (De Vos et al, 2011: 96) therefore a qualitative approach was followed for this study because it allowed the researcher to identify issues from the perspective of the participants thereby understanding the meanings and interpretations that the participants gave to behaviour, events or objects (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011: 9). Terre Blanche et al (2011: 287) and Dantzker et al (2018: 106) highlight that qualitative researchers strive to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations or phenomena as they occur in participants' life worlds. In

order to achieve this, Hennink et al (2011: 9) state that a qualitative researcher needs to be open minded, curious and emphatic, flexible and able to listen to people telling their own stories.

### **4.3 SAMPLING STRATEGY FOR THE STUDY**

When research is conducted, the researcher gathers information about the population that is relevant for the study (Dantzker et al, 2018: 68). Terre Blanche et al (2011: 49) regard sampling as the selection of research participants from an entire population and involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours, or social processes to observe and collect data from. Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for the study (Creswell, 2014: 79; Maree, 2007: 79). There are two primary sampling methods, namely, probability and non-probability sampling. Creswell (2014: 79) and Maree (2007: 79) propose that qualitative research is based on non-probability sampling rather than probability or random sampling approaches. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to recruit participants for this study. Within the context of this study, subject experts were identified as the most appropriate group to collect data from. In line with the qualitative approach followed in the study, non-probability sampling using purposive sampling was deemed to be most appropriate for the study concerning the selection of research participants.

- **Unit of analysis**

De Vos et al (2011: 93) and Dantzker et al (2018: 58) define a unit of analysis as people or things whose characteristics social researchers observe, describe and explain. The unit of analysis for the study was experts working in the field of offender reintegration from NGOs (Khulisa, NICRO, Hlumelisa and Just Detention International South Africa) in Gauteng. The experts' professional experiences working with offenders and their opinions concerning the effectiveness of reintegration services and programmes were of relevance to the study.

- **Purposive sampling**

Purposive sampling was used to select participants for the study. The researcher had to identify characteristics that define the population that were relevant for the study (Cronin, Coughlan & Smith, 2015: 88). Dantzker et al (2018: 73) agree that it is important for the researcher to use skills and knowledge to select an appropriate sample. For the purpose of the study, the characteristics that defined the relevant population were: experts in the field of offender reintegration, who are employees of NGOs, engage often with offenders and provide reintegration services to offenders with the aim of preparing them for their reintegration into the communities.

An approach in qualitative research is to purposefully select participants who will best help the researcher understand the problem and answer the research question (Creswell, 2014: 189). According to De Vos et al (2011: 392), particular cases are chosen in purposive sampling because they illustrate some feature or process that is of interest for a particular study while Dantzker et al (2018: 73) believe that the cases are chosen because they best fit the need of the study. Cronin et al (2015: 89) confirm that purposive sampling is used in narrative or word-based research where participants are selected based on their experience in the field investigated, which, in this case, was offender reintegration. Purposive sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics, representative or typical attributes of the population that best serve the purpose of the study (De Vos et al, 2011: 392). In this study, experts working in the field of offender reintegration were the participants considered for the study. The population chosen was appropriate to explore the impact of services provided by NGOs (Khulisa, NICRO, Hlumelelisa and Just Detention International South Africa) on the reintegration of offenders to empower them to desist from criminal behaviour and lead law-abiding lives.

During the sampling process, it came to the researcher's attention that Khulisa does not offer rehabilitation and reintegration services to offenders any longer, as indicated in Chapter 2 section 2.8. Notwithstanding this, an employee from Khulisa, who had experience working in the field of offender reintegration, was interviewed because of his

experience pertaining to offender reintegration.

- **Snowball sampling**

Snowball sampling was used to identify NGOs that are not well known in the field of offender reintegration. Through this sampling method, members from an NGO recommended other NGOs that were suitable for the research study (Cronin, Coughlan & Smith, 2015: 89). Subsequently, an employee at Aurum Institute introduced the researcher to the founders of the NGO called Hlumelelisa and employees at Just Detention International South Africa. Both are NGOs that offer offender reintegration services in Gauteng.

Gatekeepers within NGOs assisted with recruiting potential participants to participate in the research study. A gatekeeper is a person who has a prominent and recognised role in the institution, such as manager of the organisation, who can suggest possible candidates for the study (Hennink et al, 2011: 68). Noaks and Wincup (2004: 56) and Singh and Wassenaar (2016: 42) describe a gatekeeper as an individual within the organisation who has authority to grant or withhold access to people or situations that the researcher wants to study. The researcher contacted Ms Betzi Pierce, the national operations manager at NICRO and Mr Zain Halle, a senior project manager at Khulisa Social Solutions to assist with the recruiting of the research sample. Ms Sasha Gear was contacted from Just Detention International South Africa and, from Hlumelelisa, Mr Paul Bruns and Mr Christo Read were contacted to suggest potential participants. Permission was received from the respective NGOs to interview employees after the ethical clearance was received from the College of Law Ethical Review Committee.

The gatekeepers who assisted with the recruitment of participants explained the aim of the study to prospective participants which enabled them to make an informed choice about whether they wanted to participate in the study. The researcher met with potential participants who indicated interest in participating in the study in order to explain their rights and obligations. They were also requested to sign an informed consent form before data collection commenced.

- **Sample size**

The preliminary sample size for the study was 20 participants. Dantzker et al (2018: 76) highlight that there is no ideal sample size in qualitative studies. Due to the in-depth nature of qualitative research, few study participants are needed as the purpose is to achieve depth of information rather than breadth (Hennink et al, 2011: 17, 88). Creswell (2014: 189) states that the sample size depends on the qualitative design being used. However, practical considerations like time (the duration it will take the researcher to complete the study) and budget (cost of the research study such as travelling costs to the NGOs) of the research study had to be taken into account by the researcher (De Vos et al, 2011: 179; Dantzker et al, 2018: 76). However, the number of participants depended on the availability of NGOs and the number of experts who were willing to participate in the study.

Saturation is important when determining the sample size in qualitative research. Mason (2010) defines saturation as a process whereby the researcher collects data from a large number of research participants until the new data collected do not convey any new information on the issue under investigation. Mason (2010) emphasises that samples for qualitative research are smaller because more data do not lead to more required information. There are various elements that the researcher took into consideration regarding the sample size. Dantzker et al (2018: 76) provide the following elements which should be taken into consideration for the sample size: how accurate the sample will be, the amount the researcher can spend for the study, the availability of variables and the accessibility of the target population. Resultantly, 13 staff members who are knowledgeable about offender reintegration from NICRO, Khulisa, Hlumelelisa and Just Detention Intentional South Africa in Gauteng Province were included in the sample. Of added value was that five of the participants were also ex-offenders who contributed by sharing knowledge from their professional and personal experiences.

#### **4.4 DATA COLLECTION**

Prior to the commencement of data collection, the researcher visited NGO's offices for formal introductions. The researcher collected data at offices of the NGOs where

participants who are experts employed in the field of offender reintegration shared their experiences of providing reintegration support to offenders.

Semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews making use of an interview schedule (Appendix B) were used to collect data. The interview schedule was prepared by the researcher to maintain focus during interviews; it included questions which were designed to engage the participants in telling their stories regarding their reintegration experiences and the services rendered by the NGOs (De Vos et al, 2011: 352). The interview guide was helpful in terms of shaping the data collection process and guiding the participant back to the purpose of the interview as some participants diverged from the questions asked.

The original strategy was to collect data through face-to-face interviews however telephone interviews were also used due to operational challenges experienced during data collection. Dantzker et al (2018: 146) assert that there are times when face-to-face interviews are challenging to conduct and that other data collection methods could be used as long as the interview method does not change. The reason for telephone interviews was because, during the period of data collection, the Johannesburg region was afflicted by xenophobic attacks and the majority of NGOs are located in Johannesburg. Hence, telephonic interviews enabled data collection to continue whilst, at the same time, ensuring the safety of the research participants and the researcher.

The goal of an interview is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the participants' backgrounds, assertiveness and actions by listening to them while they tell their stories and describing their understanding of the environment they are employed in (Bachman & Schutt, 2014: 255). The interviews allowed the researcher to collect data about the challenges ex-offenders face when released from correctional centres and the role that NGOs play in assisting with offender reintegration.

During interviews, researchers can collect data by making hand-written notes, audiotaping and videotaping (Creswell, 2014: 194). Although writing notes during an interview is regarded as one of the techniques to collect data, the process can be time



consuming and distracting. An audio recorder can be used to collect data provided that permission is granted to record the interviews in advance (Creswell, 2014: 89). The researcher requested permission from participants to audio record the interviews and the request was clarified on the informed consent letter (Appendix A).

#### **4.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

The aim of data analysis is to make sense out of the data collected for the purpose of answering the research questions (Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 322). Data analysis commenced with the transcription of the interviews. The researcher immediately transcribed data collected after each interview while waiting for data collection appointment dates with other research participants. Data analysis proceeded simultaneously with the data collection and write-up of findings, meaning that while interviews were being conducted, the researcher analysed data collected earlier, wrote memos to be included as narratives in the research findings and organised the structure of the final report (Creswell, 2014: 195).

Coding of data commenced after the interviews were transcribed. Hennink et al (2011: 216) identify a code as an issue, topic, idea or opinion that is evident in the data. Maree (2007: 116) explains that coding happens when a researcher carefully reads the transcribed data to identify ideas or opinions. Themes that emerged from the interviews with participants were identified and recorded from the data collected. The researcher used hand code analysis by identifying key elements, formulating categories by grouping similar items in the information and formulating themes by grouping similar categories and linking themes with the aims and objectives of the study (Maree, 2007: 132). The themes that appeared as major findings were used as headings for the research findings of the study that displayed participants' perspectives supported by quotes and scientific evidence (Creswell, 2014: 200).

## **4.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY**

A researcher must ensure that the measurement procedures and instruments used for the study have acceptable levels of reliability and validity (De Vos et al, 2011: 172). The research design executed for the study was practical, acceptable and provided valid answers to the research questions (Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 70). The validity and reliability of the study were assured by means of the measuring instrument which was used (interview schedule). The validity of the study was interpretative because the conclusion of the study was drawn from literature and data findings (Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 90). The researcher ensured the reliability, credibility, dependability and conformability of the study because the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher and the data collection procedures are explained in detail (De Vos et al., 2011: 419-421).

- **Credibility**

Credibility means that the study should be conducted in a manner that ensures research subjects are accurately identified and described (De Vos et al, 2011: 419-420). Credibility also determines if the research findings were drawn from the data collected from participants and ensures the correct interpretation of the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018: 121). Research subjects for the study were experts working in the field of offender reintegration and employed by NGOs who offer reintegration services to offenders. The engagements with the participants (through email and telephone conversations) ensured the credibility of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018: 121). The credibility of the study was achieved because the researcher engaged with prospective participants through open and in-depth discussions. The credibility of the study was furthermore ensured by the inclusion of verbatim quotes from the interviews in order to substantiate the findings presented.

- **Transferability**

Transferability is a process whereby the research findings can be generalised and transferred to a similar study (De Vos et al, 2011: 420; Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 91; Korstjens & Moser, 2018: 122). The data and findings are applicable to social settings

instead of laboratory experiments (Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 91). Transferability of research findings can only be accurate in a context where offender reintegration strategies are explored through services delivered by NGOs. The study was furthermore exploratory in nature and the aim was therefore not to generalise the findings but to add knowledge in an under-researched field of study.

- **Dependability**

Dependability is when the researcher ensures that the research process is logical, well documented and reviewed (De Vos et al, 2011: 420). Dependability measures the consistency or reliability of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018: 122). The research findings of this study are an accurate reflection of the data collected. The reliability of the study was ensured because the same results were obtained repeatedly from the data (Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 93). For example, the findings from the study concurred with the literature findings. Findings are also substantiated by the inclusion of verbatim quotes from participants.

- **Conformability**

Conformability refers to the point where the research findings of the study can be confirmed by other researchers and experts (De Vos et al, 2011: 421; Korstjens & Moser, 2018: 122). Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that the interpretations of findings are not based on the researcher's perspective but are derived from the data collected (Korstjens & Moser, 2018: 121). The conformability of the study is assured because the research findings and interpretations of the study are outlined in Chapter 5 with particular quotes from participants. The literature supports the findings of the studies.

## **4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethics is the reflective process of analysing and examining moral issues and problems (Berglund, 2012: 227). The essential purpose of research ethics is to protect the welfare of research participants and is the guideline for collection of data without causing any form of harm to research participants (Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 61). Dantzker et al (2018:

22) add that conducting research and data collection should be conducted in a legal, acceptable and moral manner.

Research should be based on mutual trust, acceptance, cooperation, promises, well accepted conventions and expectations between all parties involved in a research project (De Vos et al, 2011: 113). Because research involves collecting data from people and about people, researchers need to anticipate ethical issues that may arise during their studies. Researchers need to protect research participants, develop a relationship of trust with them, promote the integrity of research, and guard against misconduct and offensiveness that might reflect on their organisations (Creswell, 2014: 92).

The Belmont principles, which are respect for persons, beneficence and justice, are used as tools to identify and examine further key ethics concerns in research (Berglund, 2012: 241; Dantzker et al, 2018: 24). According to Dantzker et al (2018: 24), the principles were developed after identifying unethical conduct during research practices. Mathipa and Gumbo (2015: 88) regard the three Belmont principles as the main ethical principles that apply to research involving people.

#### **4.7.1 Respect for persons**

The principle implies respect for the rights, wishes and individuality of the research participants and that research participants should be aware of the research process from start to finish (Berglund, 2012: 216; Dantzker et al, 2018: 24). Research participants were treated with courtesy and respect, and they voluntarily participated in the study after receiving information regarding the research study (Hennink et al, 2011: 63). Respect for persons requires that participants be given the opportunity to choose what shall or shall not happen to them (De Vos et al, 2011: 117; Mathipa & Gumbo, 2015: 88). Bachman and Schutt (2014: 52) mention that ethical research practice begins with the acknowledgement that research procedures involve people who deserve as much respect for their well-being as researchers do for theirs. The researcher respected experts working at NGOs and their right to autonomy through ensuring that participants made voluntary decisions to participate in the research study without being coerced. The

researcher allowed participants to ask for clarity when they felt confused by the interview and participants were not pressured to answer questions. They were also free to withdraw from the study at any stage.

#### **4.7.2 Beneficence**

Beneficence means that the research must not harm participants (Mathipa & Gumbo, 2015: 88; Dantzker et al, 2018: 24). Beneficence is the principle of doing good for the benefits of others which is claimed as a justification for the research (Berglund, 2012: 216). The study should therefore benefit both the participants and the broader community. Possible risks in the research study should be clearly acknowledged and recognised, and the researcher should organise how those risks will be managed (Berglund, 2012: 215).

Experts working in the field of offender reintegration were given the opportunity to share their professional opinions and add to the knowledge about good practices to ensure the successful reintegration of offenders. No risks were foreseen for the experts who participated in the study since they shared their professional opinions. Findings from the study will also be shared with participants, and the NGOs they work for after completion of the study to ensure that they will benefit from the study.

#### **4.7.3 Justice**

The principle of justice involves considering the fair distribution of the benefits and the selection of research participants within society (Berglund, 2012: 217; Mathipa & Gumbo, 2015: 88; Dantzker et al, 2018: 24). According to Berglund (2012: 217), research should not be regarded as ethical, no matter how great the community benefit, if participants suffer in the conducting of that research. Researchers need to assess the social benefits of the research and various parties who will potentially benefit from that research. Released offenders, experts working at NGOs that offer reintegration services to offenders, the Department of Correctional Services and the community is foreseen to benefit from this research.

#### **4.7.4 Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality**

Researchers should always protect the identity of research participants and ensure that all data records are always kept confidential (Hennink et al, 2011: 63). Confidentiality refers to not disclosing information that is discussed between the researcher and the participant and that the information should be held in confidence (Berglund, 2012: 216). Ensuring informed consent to research and maintaining the confidentiality of the data are processes that uphold the dignity and individuality of research participants (Berglund, 2012: 216).

Privacy was ensured by making use of gatekeepers (staff members working at the NGOs) to recruit participants for the study. The researcher was only informed of the participants' identities after they consented to participation in the study. The researcher ensured anonymity by removing identifiable information from the interview transcript or quotations used (Hennink et al, 2011: 71). The researcher ensured anonymity of research participants by referring to participants using pseudonyms when reporting the research findings. This ensured that the research information was collected, analysed and reported anonymously so that participants cannot be identified or linked to any research data (Hennink et al, 2011: 71). The transcribed data and presented findings of data were anonymised in order to ensure confidentiality and protect the participants' identities.

#### **4.7.5 Voluntary participation**

The fundamental ethical standard in research is that people should take part with free will and research should be carried out with the informed consent of the participant (Berglund, 2012: 216). Research participants have the right to determine their own participation in research including the right to refuse to participate without negative consequences (Hennink et al, 2011: 63; Mathipa & Gumbo, 2015: 92). The researcher and gatekeepers emphasised to the participants that their participation was voluntary and that they were under no obligation to participate in the study. The researcher emphasised the voluntary nature of participation during the signing of the informed consent forms. In addition, the researcher explained the instructions of the consent form in order for participants to

decide whether to participate in the study (Creswell, 2014: 97; Terre Blanche et al, 2011: 72).

#### **4.7.6 Informed consent**

Informed consent is the agreement given that depends on the information and understanding of the proposed process, significance of their decision and potential benefits and risks (Berglund, 2012: 228). When introducing the research study to participants, the researcher requested their written consent to participate before data collection commenced (Hennink et al, 2011: 71). Mathipa and Gumbo (2015: 92) state that obtaining informed consent implies that adequate information on the goal of the study, the expected duration of the participant's involvement, the procedures which will be followed during the interview, advantages, disadvantages and dangers which respondents may be exposed to as well as credibility of the researcher be presented to potential participants or their legal representatives. Participants are informed that they would be at liberty to withdraw from the research study at any time and they will not be coerced into participating in the study (De Vos et al, 2011: 117). Participants signed the informed consent forms, agreeing to the provisions of the research study prior to data collection. The form contained a standard set of elements that acknowledges the protection of human rights (Creswell, 2014: 96). The informed consent form is attached as Appendix A.

#### **4.8 CONCLUSION**

Chapter 4 outlined the practical plan which was followed for the methodology of the study. The research design, sampling and data collection techniques are explained in detail. Ethical elements which were adhered to are also outlined and there were guidelines during data collection to ensure that the researcher did not cause any form of harm towards the participants. The next chapter will outline research findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study. The chapter commences with a summary of the participants with regards to their designation and experience in the field of offender reintegration. This is followed by the presentation of findings in accordance with the aim and objectives of the study. The purpose of the research was to explore offender reintegration strategies and the support available for offenders after release from correctional centres. Furthermore, challenges that offenders face after release within their communities during reintegration were explored. Interviews were conducted with 13 subject experts who have experience working in the field of offender reintegration.

### **5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Data were collected making use of face-to-face and telephonic semi-structured interviews. Interviews were divided into four focal points in accordance with the interview schedule. Section A concentrated on biographical data, including the qualifications, positions of participants at NGOs, years of experience and duties of participants. Offender reintegration is a broad field of study which includes offender counselling, equipping offenders with educational and vocational skills and after care support within communities. Therefore, the purpose of section A was to establish research participants' expertise in the field of offender reintegration.

Section B focused on reintegration challenges faced by ex-offenders. The section answered the research question dealing with the types of challenges that impact on reintegration processes of offenders. Section C, in turn, focused on reintegration services offered by NGOs and requirements for enrolment. In light of this, the reintegration services offered by NGOs are meant to equip offenders with skills and competencies to be able to lead law-abiding lives after their release from correctional centres. The purpose of Section C was to answer a research question stated in Chapter 1 section 1.4 about whether offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration into their communities.



Lastly, Section D focused on the preparation of offenders and the community for reintegration and on the types of resources/facilities/organisations/institutions that are available in communities to ensure the successful reintegration of offenders. The biographical data of participants is presented below.

### **5.2.1 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF EXPERTS**

Interviews were conducted with 13 subject experts. The biographical data of these experts are outlined in the table below.

**Table 1: Biographical information of research participants**

Participant	Qualifications	Designation	Duties	Years of experience within the NGO	Ex-offenders Yes/No
A	BA in Sociology and English	Co-Director of an NGO and facilitator of offender reintegration programmes	Facilitating training programmes to DCS officials about sexual abuse in correctional centres and how officials can assist incarcerated victims of sexual abuse	17 years	No
B	BA in Social Work	Social worker working at an NGO	Conduct Assessments of incarcerated offenders and facilitate offender reintegration programmes	1 year 3 months	No
C	Auxiliary Social Work level 4	Auxiliary Social Worker at an NGO	Client intake, co-facilitate reintegration programmes to pre-release offenders	7 years	No
D	Horticulture level 4	Vocational programme facilitator at an NGO	Facilitate horticultural programmes to empower offenders with the development of vocational	4 years	Did not state

			skills		
E	BA in Social Work	Social Worker supervisor	Previously facilitated reintegration programmes to incarcerated offenders, currently supervising Social Workers who facilitate reintegration programmes to incarcerated offenders.	10 years	No
F	Horticulture level 1-2	Vocational programme facilitator at an NGO	Facilitate horticultural programmes to empower offenders with the development of vocational skills	2 years	Yes
G	BA in Social Work	Social Worker and facilitator of offender reintegration programmes	Facilitating reintegration programmes to pre-release offenders	3 years	No
H	Grade 9	Technical assistance at NGO	Ex-offender and documented/recorded documentaries and podcasts on his experiences of being sexually victimised during incarceration	Months	Yes
I	Horticulture	Vocational programme facilitator at an NGO	Facilitate horticultural programmes to empower	7 months	Yes

			offenders with the development of vocational skills		
J	Horticulture	Vocational programme facilitator at an NGO	Facilitate horticultural programmes to empower offenders with the development of vocational skills	5 years	Did not state
K	Did not specify	Founder of NGO	Previously facilitated reintegration programmes to offenders but currently oversees the management of the NGO	15 years	Did not state
L	Matric	Former facilitator of reintegration programmes at NGO	Previously facilitated reintegration programmes to incarcerated offenders, however due to lack of funding the NGO could not afford to provide reintegration services to offenders	9 years	Yes
M	Diploma in HR, Horticulture and Landscaping level 4	Vocational programme facilitator at an NGO	Facilitate horticultural programmes to empower offenders with the development of vocational skills	4 years	Yes

The subject experts interviewed consisted of one founder of the NGO, a Co-Director, three social workers, one auxiliary social worker, six programme facilitators, one technical assistant and five vocational training facilitators. The majority of participants have qualifications in their field of work, four have BA degrees of which three of them are BA in Social Work, one has an Auxiliary Social Work qualification and five have horticulture qualifications. The participants therefore have diverse education and training backgrounds.

Eleven of these participants are involved in the facilitation of pre-release offender reintegration programmes, while five of them present horticultural vocational programmes to offenders. In addition, two of the participants facilitate training programmes for correctional officers to train them on how to assist offenders who are sexually victimised within correctional centres. Each participant brought a unique perspective based on their individual experiences as well as on their qualifications and areas of expertise.

Of specific interest for purposes of the study are the five research participants who mentioned that they are ex-offenders. These participants added valuable information based on their work with offenders as well as their own personal experiences of challenges they faced during their reintegration into society after their release from a correctional centre.

### **5.2.2 SECTION B: CHALLENGES IMPACTING ON REINTEGRATION FACED BY EX-OFFENDERS**

Section B focused on challenges faced by ex-offenders within communities after their reintegration from correctional centres. In Chapter 2, social, economic, physical and psychological factors impacting on offender reintegration were identified and various challenges related to those factors were explained in detail (Griffiths et al, 2007; Bakken & Visher, 2018; Ngabonziza & Singh, 2012; Davis et al, 2012; Sumter et al, 2013; Valera et al, 2017). Participants were asked about challenges that ex-offenders face within communities as a result of their incarceration. The findings from the study concurred with the literature in Chapter 2 that, after reintegration into society, ex-offenders face social,

economic, physical and psychological challenges that could influence their relapse and reoffending. These challenges are reflected in the themes and subthemes that emerged from the findings of the study.

### **5.2.2.1 Challenges associated with social reintegration and functioning**

In Chapter 2 section 2.5, Benda (2005), Winters et al (2017) and Haney (2002) assert that incarceration causes social withdrawal from family and community and that the social bond between the community and offender is broken. The authors also emphasised that, after reintegration into the community, it becomes challenging for the offender to mend social relationships with the community as a result of his/her incarceration. Specific challenges associated with the social interaction and functioning of released offenders found in the study include labelling and stigmatisation as well as rejection and discrimination.

- **Labelling and stigmatisation**

Literature in Chapter 3 section 3.3 (Robbers, 2009; Hadjimatheou, 2016; Bryant, 2011; Lemuel et al, 2017; Geiger & Fischer, 2005) indicated that, after release, ex-offenders are labelled as criminals and they are stigmatised due to this label. Participants B, C, D, G, F, I, G, J, K and L concurred with the abovementioned research, namely, that ex-offenders are labelled and stigmatised within their communities. These participants' opinions are as follows:

*“The challenge that they face most of the time when they are outside is that immediately when they are released, they are still being labelled or stigmatised as a criminal, which also have a bad impact on them. And also, some of them end up losing their self-esteem because of being labelled” (Participant D).*

*“When a person comes back naturally, he struggles to fit in within the particular community to an extent that even when a person gets released as an ex-offender within a specific community, that person prefers to go somewhere where he is not known as an ex-offender” (Participant G).*

*“Finding it hard to adjust, even to relate to people because after incarceration offenders are regarded as untrustworthy” (Participant I).*

Participant J who is an ex-offender, shared his personal experience and said,

*“The stigma, every move you do, everyone is looking at you and you can see their eyeing that you are not welcomed ... The community will label you in everything you do.”*

*“There are multiple challenges I suppose, the first one is the re-acceptance by your community” (Participant K).*

*“Being stigmatised and called a bandit” (Participant L).*

Research conducted by Sun (2013: 51) and Jackson and Hay (2013: 303) (Chapter 3 section 3.2.4) outlined in detail how ex-offenders who adopt a criminal label are at risk of reoffending as a result of being labelled and stigmatised.

- **Rejection and discrimination**

The Social Control theory (Chapter 3 section 3.1.3) specified that, when ex-offenders do not have a strong attachment with family and community, they will become attached to delinquent peers who would influence reoffending (Williams & McShane, 2014; Brown et al, 2010; Booth et al, 2008; Craig et al, 2017). Participants B, C, I, J and M concurred with the Social Control theory and highlighted the rejection of ex-offenders by families and communities as a significant challenge experienced by released offenders. Participants B and C commented as follows:

*“Some people’s background and situations make them to make prison their home because someone will tell you that even when I get out of here (correctional centre), I don’t know where I will stay because my family doesn’t want me, they don’t even want to accept me” (Participant B).*

*“Some of the family members they still put them at the back or giving them the untidy room because they don’t want to associate with them. Some people are unable to accept that they are unwanted, so they end up reoffending because of the way they*

*are accommodated, the way people treat them, the way the community sees them, the way family members see them, the way they are identified” (Participant C).*

In addition, Participants G and M added that offenders also experience rejection within communities:

*“They are also discriminated, there is a lot of discrimination in terms of getting employment, so, for example, your informal structures like your stokvels, those ex-offenders even though they have been taking courses like accounting, auditing and what not within prison, the fact remains that when a person comes back to the society, [he/she] is still regarded as an offender. All those informal structures, a person (ex-offender) can’t be given a position like being a treasury, chairperson or a leader basically” (Participant G).*

*“Is the rejection from the community, especially those who committed crime where they stay” (Participant M).*

Furthermore, Participants A and F highlighted that offenders are neglected and face a lack support from families during their incarceration and this makes it difficult for ex-offenders to reintegrate into the community after their release:

*“If people who believe in me and are willing to give me a chance and that can happen in the family, it can happen amongst other supportive people through organisations etc. But if there is no support and no positive belief, it makes it more difficult for reintegration to be achieved” (Participant A).*

*“Their background issues and lack of support from home are the main problems that offenders face. Because even when you are still incarcerated, they struggle to support you, so it’s even much worse when you are released, and you don’t have that kind of support” (Participant F).*

Findings from the study highlighted that ex-offenders often lack emotional and social support from their families. Offenders are also rejected by both their families and the community during incarceration and after their release from correctional centres. Hence, they are no longer regarded as significant people within the community so, after release,



they are rejected as a result of their previous criminal behaviour.

### **5.2.2.2 Economic challenges associated with offender reintegration**

In Chapter 2 section 2.5, Geldenhuys (2017) argues that ex-offenders do not reoffend because they were not adequately rehabilitated, but they reoffend because of challenges meeting their daily basic needs after release. Findings from the study (Participants A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H and J) concur with Geldenhuys (2017) by identifying unemployment and a criminal record as economic factors hampering successful reintegration.

- **Unemployment**

Dissel (2008) in Chapter 2 section 2.5 indicates that many ex-offenders were employed prior to their incarceration therefore, as a result of being institutionalised in correctional centres, they lost their employment. Although unemployment is a generally recognised challenge faced by many South Africans, Participants A, C, I, F and H viewed unemployment as a significant risk factor for reoffending:

*“So certainly one of them (challenges) as I have mentioned is unemployment, the lack of marketable skills as well as the stigma of being an ex-convict which many companies don’t want to go near” (Participant A).*

*“The challenge that they are going through is lack of finance, they have to look for employment and it’s not easy for them” (Participant C).*

*“To get a job, it’s hard because my neighbour would fear to take me to his job or his work place because of I have got this stigma” (Participant I).*

*“Finding work is not easy, people will always remind you that you are not supposed to work in the company because, according to the law, the state doesn’t make space for offenders to work” (Participant H).*

Participant F mentioned that offenders face a lack of financial support from their families. Unemployment is recognised as a significant risk in both the study and literature. Participants indicated that the lack of employment after release from correctional centres

is due to limited vocational skills and stigmatisation due to imprisonment. Findings from the study concur that unemployment is a significant challenge because, as Khwela (2015: 410) emphasises, when ex-offenders are faced with poverty, they will commit further crimes in order to provide for themselves and their dependents. Ahmed and Lang (2017: 1) concur with Khwela (2015) that the challenge of not obtaining employment may encourage ex-offenders to relapse and fail to reintegrate into society. This means that unequal treatment of ex-offenders within the labour market could increase the risk for them to reoffend.

- **Criminal record**

The majority of participants (A, B, D, E, J, F, G and M) were of the opinion that the reason that ex-offenders have difficulties finding employment after incarceration is because they have obtained a criminal record:

*“Having a criminal record and the stigma of being an ex-convict which many companies don’t want to go near” (Participant A).*

*“They will call him and tell him that they can’t employ him because he has a criminal record” (Participant D).*

A criminal record and the associated discrimination marginalises ex-offenders and decreases their ability to find and be employed in the labour market. Lam and Harcourt (2003: 242) and Ahmed and Lang (2017: 1) emphasise that, when ex-offenders are excluded from the labour market, their bond to society becomes broken which, in turn, may lead to reoffending. Participants E and F emphasised that, even though offenders may have relevant qualifications, a criminal record still hampers their employment opportunities:

*“Even though you can educate yourself in prison, employers can’t employ you because you have a criminal record” (Participant F).*

*“Most companies do not employ ex-offenders because of their criminal records. When they advertise their posts, they will state that they don’t need someone with a criminal*

*record, so that makes it difficult for ex-offenders to apply or get the job” (Participant M).*

From the above findings, it appears that the criminal record hinders ex-offenders from joining the labour market. The challenge is that, after release, ex-offenders are not considered as suitable candidates for employment regardless of the skills and qualifications they might have or have acquired during incarceration.

### **5.2.2.3 Physical challenges associated with offender reintegration**

Findings from the study identified the lack of accommodation and loss of property as a challenge for offender reintegration.

- **Lack of accommodation**

When participants were asked about various challenges that ex-offenders come across after their release from correctional centres, Participant C highlighted that, after release from correctional centres, many ex-offenders have no accommodation:

*“Some they don’t have accommodation, or their families can accommodate them for a shorter period, some of them when they come back from prison, their rooms are no longer available, they don’t know where to sleep” (Participant C).*

Literature also verifies that ex-offenders have challenges with obtaining accommodation. According to the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998, an offender cannot be granted parole if he or she does not have a monitorable address. Resultantly, many offenders are dependent on family members, who themselves battle financially, to provide such accommodation (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 55).

In addition, the lack of family support may also result in offenders not having accommodation after release from correctional centres (also refer to section 5.2.3.5). Although the Department of Correctional Services formed partnerships with Non-Profit Organisations to establish halfway houses, there are not enough halfway houses to provide for all released offenders (DCS, 2016: 50). As mentioned, about 54 225 parolees

were released from correctional centres in 2018 of which only approximately 676 offenders have been accommodated in the halfway houses (DCS, 2018a: 8). The lack of accommodation increases the risk of offenders finding accommodation with deviant groups that will cause them to relapse and reoffend in order to survive.

- **Loss of property**

In addition to the lack of accommodation, Participants E and I identified losing property during incarceration as a risk factor hampering reintegration. Participant E referred to this as “*property grabbing*”, meaning that, after release from correctional centres, ex-offenders find their property taken, sold or misused by their family members: “During incarceration, your family will misuse your stuff” said Participant I. Participant E added that “I had a house; the wife divorced me and sold my house. Maybe I had cars, you sold those cars”.

Ex-offenders therefore do not only experience challenges with regards to accommodation and their living arrangements but are at risk of losing their belongings while imprisoned which may negatively impact on their ability to reintegrate.

#### ***5.2.2.4 Psychological challenges associated with offender reintegration***

Findings from the study highlighted that released offenders also experience psychological challenges to adjust and reintegrate into communities. These challenges hamper their ability to mend their relationships with family and community members after release.

- **Difficulties in adjusting to community life**

Participants H and A highlighted the psychological difficulties that ex-offenders experience when they attempt to reintegrate and adjust to their communities after their release from correctional centres. Participant H, an ex-offender stated that:

*“When a person is serving a 20 years sentence, I think for the whole 20 years, over the years things change, our community change. For me, when I came out of prison so many things have changed, I didn’t know simple things like how to work with the phone. When you are incarcerated in the DSC facility, things are different from the*

*society, so it is quite hard to adjust when you come out of prison ... When you have been in prison and when you come out of prison things have changed, technology have changed, people have changed and it's different for offenders."*

Literature (Chapter 2 section 2.5) reiterates that the psychological trauma of being incarcerated has a negative impact on adjusting to the community after reintegration. For some ex-offenders, it is difficult to keep up with changing lifestyles within communities and that might influence relapsing and reoffending behaviour (Boxer et al, 2009; Listwan et al, 2010).

Participant A considered the psychological trauma caused by being in prison, unhealthy coping mechanisms learned during incarceration and the trauma experienced during incarceration as challenges that hampers offender reintegration:

*"... but, on the other hand, and from our perspective, is the psychological trauma of being in prison. And many of our prisoners have history of where they have been violated or abused and have very unhealthy coping mechanisms. And that stuff is not adequately dealt with at all in prison. On the other hand, the experiences of being in prison created all sorts of new traumas like if you are a victim of sexual violence in prison, that is a huge barrier to reintegration and to try to come to terms with that where there is incredibly little support and help to do so" (Participant A)*

In addition, Participant K also mentioned that offenders find it difficult to restore the broken trust caused by the crime they committed between them and the community, more especially if the crime was committed in their own community, as Participant K said: "To develop or rekindle the trust".

As indicated in Chapter 3, section 3.1.3, Brown et al (2010) recapped that, because of their previous involvement in criminal behaviour, the social bond between the ex-offender and the community becomes broken and that ex-offenders regard themselves as not belonging to society. Therefore, they will be motivated to form social bonds with other delinquent groups where they will feel accepted (Brown et al, 2010) and this will have a negative impact on offender reintegration.

### **5.2.2.5 Challenges associated with relapsing and reoffending**

Although ex-offenders face various challenges after their reintegration, some of the challenges have such a significant negative impact on ex-offenders that they are deemed to be causal risk factors which could predict future reoffending behaviour (Mingus & Burchfield, 2012: 98; Bernburg & Krohn, 2003: 1298; Besemer et al, 2017: 2). In order to understand what makes ex-offenders relapse and reoffend, participants were asked which challenges have most negative impact on offender reintegration that could influence relapsing and reoffending. Participants had various professional and personal opinions regarding the challenges that have the most negative impact on offenders. For instance, Participants A and M were of the opinion that unemployment has the most negative impact by increasing the risk of reoffending:

*“Lack of opportunities to earn an income” (Participant A).*

*“Unemployment, I think if offenders can be given the opportunity to work, because most of offenders have acquired skills when they were inside and when they come out no one wants to use them so that is the major problem” (Participant M).*

In addition, Participants A and I added lack of support from family and community members as a causal risk for reoffending.

*“I mean I would say all of them, especially lack of support system” (Participant A).*

Participant I specifically emphasised the lack of support system from family, community and the government stakeholders.

On the other hand, Participants F and L argued that obtaining a criminal record is the biggest challenge for reintegration but also a risk factor for reoffending:

*“Difficulty in obtaining employment due to the criminal record” (Participant F).*

*“Having a criminal record, because it limits an offender. Just imagine you have served the sentence in prison and you rectify your life, you get the skills of being a plumber or electrician and, when you come out, you don't have capital to start*

*entrepreneurship. Obviously, you have to start by working, so no one will employ you” (Participant L).*

Participant H added that being unable to fit to the community is another challenge that could result in reoffending:

*“The community will look at you like you are still an inmate, you are still a criminal, you are still committing a crime and they will still say harsh words towards you or remind you of what you have done” (Participant H).*

These factors mentioned that can act as causal risks for reoffending correlate with challenges discussed previously in this chapter. This confirms the causal link between reintegration challenges experienced by ex-offenders and recidivism. In addition to the mentioned risk factors, participant K identified peer pressure, drugs and alcohol abuse that could influence relapsing and reoffending of the ex-offender:

*“Well, you know, the first is a lack of financial resources. The second thing is peer pressure because there are so many people hanging around and doing nothing. And the worst thing, of course, without any doubt, is drug and alcohol abuse” (Participant K).*

Participant J differed from other participants by stating that, just being an ex-offender has a negative impact on the offender when they reintegrate to the community: “To be an ex-convict on its own it’s a bad thing in the community”.

Although participants expressed their varied opinions regarding challenges that have the most negative impact on offenders, of importance to this study is the realisation that should these challenges not be addressed after release from correctional centres, then there are higher chances that offenders will reoffend.

### **5.2.3 SECTION C: REINTEGRATION SERVICES OFFERED BY NGOS TO OFFENDERS**

The Draft White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (RSA, 2005) indicates that the objective of the DCS is to break the cycle of crime by rehabilitating and successfully reintegrating ex-offenders into society. Section B above outlined various challenges that ex-offenders come across after their release from correctional centres, however, DCS cannot address all of these challenges alone because of the lack of infrastructure and its limited mandate to deliver services in society. Reintegration programmes presented by DCS are limited to pre-release offenders and generally, with the exception of halfway houses, not focused on post-release support for offenders. Hence, the NGO's assistance in offering reintegration services for released offenders is of significance in this study (Muntingh, 2008; DCS, 2015; Singh, 2016).

The focus of Section C was to explore the nature of NGOs' involvement in offender reintegration services and the types of programmes they present. The discussion commences with the exploration of NGOs' role in offering offender reintegration services.

#### ***5.2.3.1 The role NGOs play in offender reintegration***

Muntingh (2008) and Langa (2017) (Chapter 2 section 2.8) indicate that, due to DCS not having adequate resources to deliver offender reintegration programmes, NGOs are important role-players in the field of offender reintegration. It was also reiterated in Chapter 3 section 3.1.1 by Booth et al (2008: 439), Williams and McShane (2014: 169) and Brown et al (2010: 302) that, when ex-offenders are involved in conventional organisations or activities, they create a social bond with society which, in turn, reduces their delinquency. In the light of this, participants were asked if they think NGOs should deliver offender reintegration services to ex-offenders. In this regard, findings indicated that the majority of participants (A, B, C, D, H, I and K) concurred that NGOs play a pivotal role in offender reintegration:

*"I think it's a very important part for NGOs to play towards offender reintegration"*  
(Participant A).



*“NGOs play a huge part in terms of reintegrating offenders into their communities. So, they are playing a very, very big part” (Participant B).*

*“It is very important for NGOs to be there for ex-offenders, because, when an ex-offender is coming out of prison, there is no place where he can go when there are complaints or certain questions or issues that bother him. So I think it’s important for NGOs to help ex-offenders when they come out of prison” (Participant H).*

Participants E, M, J, K and L were of the opinion that NGOs provide ex-offenders with opportunities and resources to assist them to live a law-abiding life:

*“I actually believe that we are the ones (NGOs) who need to link them (offenders) with the resources and the community at large. It is the duty of the NGO to do that” (Participant E).*

*“NGOs are giving opportunities to the ex-offenders. I think they are doing a great job because if you are not giving ex-offenders an opportunity, what message are you sending to them? What should they do? Should they go back to crime?” (Participant M).*

Participant J asserted that programmes offered by NGOs equip ex-offenders with vocational training and skills, thereby increasing their employability. Participant J reiterated that it is therefore important for NGOs to offer services to ex-offenders:

*“Most NGOs, they are offering services which DCS could not offer and those services tend to be very helpful, upon those inmates’ release.”*

Participant K concurred that the vocational programmes offered by NGOs empower offenders and that the certificates they receive after completing the programmes give them hope and make them more enthusiastic about their future when they are released from correctional centres.

*“NGOs offer programmes in prison so that the offender can be equipped with skills needed to reintegrate successfully to the community” (Participant L).*

Other participants (C, D and H) felt that, during reintegration, offenders experience

challenges with adjusting to the way of living within communities, hence NGOs play an important role to prepare offenders to reintegrate successfully. This shows the importance of the role of NGOs within communities, with the aim of providing support to released offenders:

*“The process of adjusting into their communities has various challenges therefore, they need support from NGOs” (Participant C).*

Participant C emphasised that offenders who have been in incarceration for longer periods find it challenging to adapt to the community. He furthermore stated that

*“for someone who has been in custody for 15 to 20 years, it’s not easy for them to go back to the society. Therefore they (offenders) need NGOs to empower them to go back and face the society again.”*

*“I think it would be wise for NGOs or other people to be involved in cases of preparing for self-reintegration of the offender so that, when they go outside, they are fully prepared, they are aware of what is happening there, what they can expect and what is expected from them as well” (Participant D).*

In addition, Participant H focused on the challenges ex-offenders face after being released from correctional centres by stating that NGOs should support ex-offenders upon release from correctional centres.

Participants C, K and I highlighted the important role NGOs play in offender reintegration in the light of the Department of Correctional Services’ lack of capacity to deliver offender reintegration services and subsequent deficient support for offenders after their release from correctional centres:

*“I think it is important for NGOs to render services to offenders and prepare them for their return to the community” (Participant C).*

*“I do think that NGOs should equip offenders with skills because the government on its own, I don’t think it can but collectively, yes, we can make a difference” (Participant I).*

*“I think a lack of NGOs in the field of offender reintegration is a real gap because DCS does not have uhm enough resources to support these offenders” (Participant K).*

In addition, all participants also emphasised the important role NGOs play in maintaining and re-establishing social integration as offenders lose contact with society while imprisoned. In this regard, Miklósi and Juhász (2019: 108) emphasise that NGOs could assist to re-establish trust and build relationships between offenders and the community while also providing emotional and psychological support to ex-offenders during their reintegration. Both literature and findings from this study are thus in accord that the services NGOs provide are imperative to assist and empower ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully into their communities.

### **5.2.3.2 When NGOs deliver offender reintegration services**

It is important that reintegration services are offered to offenders during and after release from incarceration to adequately help them with managing potential challenges that they may face within communities as was stated in Chapter 2, section 2.8, by DCS (2015), Singh (2016), Muntingh (2009), Langa (2017) and NICRO (2016). Participants were asked at what stage they delivered reintegration services for offenders with the aim of preparing them for their release. The majority of participants (Participants C, D, E, F and L) indicated that they offered reintegration programmes prior to release:

*“We have been working with those who are about to be released, the pre-released. Those ones who are waiting for the parole board to approve their paroles ... Its prior to their release because we don't usually engage with the ones that are just incarcerated. Remember, those (the recently incarcerated) are the very dangerous ones, they can't even adapt to the environment and it's not easy for them” (Participant C).*

*“So usually we check those who are about to be released from correctional centres from five years downwards, to empower them with skills for their reintegration” (Participant D).*

Participants B, G, J and K indicated that their NGOs offer reintegration programmes to

offenders who have served most of their incarceration and who are left with less than two years to be released from correctional centres:

*“After serving half of their sentences, they (DCS) refer them (offenders) to us” (Participant B).*

*“In most cases, I work with people who are left with a year or few months to be released” (Participant G).*

*“We prefer people, who are left with two years or one year to be released because our course runs for one” (Participant J).*

*“They should have served most of the prison sentences; they should be within two to three years of their release” (Participant K).*

Above findings indicate that the majority of offenders are prepared for reintegration prior to their release from correctional centres. In addition, Participant E suggested that it would be effective if rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are offered to offenders throughout their incarceration, not only prior to their release from correctional centres:

*“If these programmes can start from the beginning of incarceration, when we go there is only the pre-release programme, it is not the beginning of the programmes (there are no programmes offered immediately after incarceration e.g. preparation programmes for their sentences), then I think the education can be well received by the ex-offenders or inmates that are going out” (Participant E).*

The findings indicated that NGOs (NICRO, Hlumelisa and JDISA) offer reintegration services to offenders prior to their release from correctional centres. This implies that, although reintegration programmes are delivered by NGOs while offenders are incarcerated, limited to no services are delivered by these organisations after offenders are released from correctional centres. Post-release services are only delivered by an NGO to some individual offenders who participated in their programmes while incarcerated. There is a lack of reintegration support for ex-offenders within the society that they are released into. Khwela (2015: 412) postulates that, in order to ensure

successful reintegration of ex-offenders within communities, the DCS should establish after care programmes for offenders and their families until the offender is self-sufficient. Within the context of the study, it is proposed that NGOs should also offer community-based reintegration services.

### **5.2.3.3 Number of offenders receiving reintegration support from NGOs per year**

As discussed previously, 36 911 offenders were incarcerated in Gauteng correctional centres (DCS, 2019: 46). Participants were unable to indicate the number of offenders they delivered reintegration services to during 2019. The majority of participants reverted to guessing and estimating in order to answer the question. It therefore seems as if there is no formal verifiable statistical information on the number of offenders that NGOs render reintegration services to. The estimated totals are outlined in the table below.

**Table 2: Estimated number of offenders who received reintegration services from NGOs**

Participant	B	C	D	E	F	G	I	J	K	L
Estimated number of offenders	70	45	70	100	24	24	100	100	165	20

From the above estimates provided by participants, 718 offenders received reintegration services offered by NGOs. It should also be taken into consideration that some of the participants may be from the same NGO, hence resulting in duplications of numbers. Notwithstanding this, 718 is a small number of offenders compared to the 54 225 parolees and 16 131 probationers that were released in 2018 (DCS, 2018a: 8).

DCS experiences shortage of professional experts to render rehabilitation and reintegration support to offenders (Hesselink-Louw, 2004: 11; DCS, 2019: 26). Mnguni and Mohapi (2015: 54) also indicate that, as a result of overcrowding, it was challenging for offenders to complete programmes they were enrolled for as they were locked in their cells most of the time. It can therefore be deduced that only a small number of offenders

receive offender reintegration services. The literature in Chapter 2 section 2.2.1 (Goyer, 2001: 3; Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 39; Singh, 2016: 3) confirms that many offenders are released from correctional centres without attending any programmes either because their sentence term has expired and or they were paroled before being able to access services due to a lack of resources. Against this background, the study focused on factors that could influence offender access to reintegration services.

#### **5.2.3.4 Requirements for enrolling for the programmes**

Participants were asked if there are any admission requirements for ex-offenders to enrol for offender reintegration programmes offered by NGOs. Findings indicated that not all offenders qualify to enrol for programmes offered by NGOs as there are certain requirements they need to meet before they can enrol. These requirements, discussed below, can be categorised in terms of referrals, citizenship and level of education.

- **Referrals**

From the research findings, it was specified that, in order for offenders to receive services from an NGO, they need to be referred by practitioners such as psychologists or social workers who are employed by the Department of Correctional Services. Participants B, C and E revealed that the ex-offenders who enrol in their programmes are referred to the NGO by staff members employed within the correctional centres:

*“They (offenders) are referred to us from correctional centres and we conduct assessments to check if they are suitable for our programmes or not” (Participant B).*

*“That requirement procedure is being determined by their professionals, such as their case workers, social workers and psychologists. Those are the people who identify them, whether they are suitable for the programme or not” (Participant C).*

Participant E also mentioned that they continue to deliver reintegration services to offenders who participated in programmes they delivered in prison:

*“They go through the correctional services’ social workers; they are the ones who*

*refer clients to us. However, ex-offenders are usually our clients from inside prison, when they go out then they still come to us for help” (Participant E).*

According to the above findings, clients who are offenders are referred to NGOs by case workers, psychologists and social workers. This means that offenders who are not referred by the mentioned experts, may not qualify to enrol for reintegration and support programmes offered by the NGO.

- **Level of education**

Participants D, J, K and M emphasised that, in order to enrol for programmes offered by their NGOs, offenders need to have acquired a minimum level of education or at least be able to read and write:

*“We are not specifically saying they must have grade 12 but at least they must have an idea of how to write” (Participant D).*

*“They also have to be reasonably literate. So, they've got to be able to read and write” (Participant K).*

In contradiction to Participants D and K, Participants J and M emphasised that it is important for offenders to have at least an ABET level, in order to be eligible for their programmes:

*“The course requires of writing not only the practical but also theory. So, usually we prefer people who have ABET level four as a minimum requirement, eh, matric is an advantage” (Participant J).*

*“We need people who can read and write English because it's difficult for someone who don't understand English. So, our requirement is we need people with matric certificate or ABET level 4” (Participant M).*

Dissel (2008) and Crabbe (2016) (Chapter 2 section 2.5) emphasised that most offenders within correctional centres have no qualifications and are illiterate. This implies that these offenders will therefore not qualify for enrolling in the particular programme. In his analysis

of the importance of educating offenders, Crabbe (2016: 3) affirms that the release of educated offenders from correctional centres does not only reduce re-offending, it also benefits society. Ahmed and Lang (2017: 15) concur with Crabbe (2016) that, after release from correctional centres, ex-offenders face difficulties obtaining high-skilled occupations as a result of their lack of education. This shows the importance of educating offenders so that, after their release, they qualify for skilled employment which will influence them to desist from a criminal lifestyle and contribute to the labour market and society.

- **Citizenship**

Only two participants (D and I) identified South African citizenship as one of the requirements for enrolling for programmes. As discussed previously, 36 911 offenders are incarcerated in Gauteng correctional centres (DCS, 2019: 46). There are no statistics available regarding the number of offenders who are foreign nationals. The Draft White Paper of South Africa on Corrections (RSA 2005: 81) indicates that the Department of Correctional Services is unable to offer rehabilitation and reintegration services to foreign offenders incarcerated in South African correctional institutions. Hence, priority is given to offenders who are South Africans as the programmes implemented focus on the challenges they face within their communities. In addition, the Department of Correctional Services' primary mandate is to invest in South African citizens (RSA, 2005: 81). The Draft White Paper of South Africa on Corrections (RSA, 2005: 81) concludes that offenders who are foreign nations should be returned to their own countries to serve their sentences there. Therefore, according to research findings, South African citizens are eligible to enrol for programmes offered by NGOs. Participants D and I gave their views as follows:

*“What we require from them (offenders) is the South African ID” (Participant D).*

*“We need only South African, the ones with the South African ID books, so that we can register them on our database and they will be able to get certificates” (Participant I).*



Findings from the study thus indicated that the admission criteria for participation in offender re-integration programmes are literacy skills and being a South African citizen. It was indicated that offenders are enrolled for services through referrals by correctional services' staff members or if they continue with services they received whilst in prison after release.

### **5.2.3.5 Programmes assisting with offender reintegration**

As stated in Chapter 2 section 2.8 (DCS, 2015; Singh, 2016; RSA, 2005), DCS has engaged in a partnership with various NGOs with the aim of preparing offenders for reintegration. Khwela (2015: 410) suggests that if programmes offered by NGOs and the Department of Correctional Services within correctional centres do not address the needs of released offenders, then offenders will reoffend instead of reintegrating into society. In light of this, participants were asked which programmes they offer as offender reintegration interventions. Three focus areas for programmes were identified, namely, life skills, vocational training and skills development and entrepreneurship programmes.

- **Life skills programmes**

The purpose of life skills programmes is to equip ex-offenders with the social skills they need to function in society and be law-abiding citizens. Findings indicated that life skills are a key component in the majority of programmes even though some programmes target specific groups of offenders or have a specific focus in mind. Participants B, C and D specified that life skills programmes aim to equip offenders with skills that are required in everyday life:

*“They (NGOs) empower them (offenders) with life skills programmes. We allow them to get together so that they can get advice from one another. It’s a discussion, there is this saying that says ‘an iron sharpens another’ so us, as the organisation, we open the platform for them to talk and advise each other” (Participant B).*

Participant C is an expert in domestic violence, who presents a programme for the Programme for the Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence (PPIP) which is only

offered to offenders who were incarcerated for gender based and domestic violence offences. The programmes include life skills specifically focused on addressing causal risks associated with gender-based violence. She explained that,

*“the programme covers lots of topics such as conflict management, management resolution skills, communication skills and anger management skills, therefore offenders are equipped and empowered with these skills before they are released to the society” (Participant C).*

The following programmes are also presented.

*“We offer a programme called ‘New Beginning’ which covers everything in terms of anger management, how do they calm themselves when they have anger after they are released to the society” (Participant D).*

In comparison to the above, Participants F, I and J emphasised that the purpose of the horticultural programme is to change the offenders’ characters:

*“We also teach life skills. The horticultural programme is not only based on growing plants, but we grow people (offenders) and restore hope of leading law-abiding lives” (Participant F).*

*“The programme teaches you to love people, to love life because of now you understand that even plants got life, even soil got life so now you tend to respect nature and also we tend to respect the humankind” (Participant I).*

*“We offer a programme called ‘New Beginnings’, which teaches offenders about communication skills and enables offenders to identify their purpose in life” (Participant J).*

Findings highlighted that the majority of programmes presented by NGOs includes a life skills component. As indicated in Chapter 2, section 2.7, it is important to offer life skills programmes to incarcerated offenders to prepare offenders for successful reintegration to society (Chin & Dandurand, 2012).

- **Vocational training and skills development**

According to the Draft White Paper on Corrections in South Africa, (RSA, 2005: 68), vocational training and skills development have positive impacts by equipping offenders with employment skills during their incarceration. The Draft White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (RSA, 2005: 68) emphasises that empowering offenders with employment skills decreases their chances of relapsing and reoffending only if they are employed after release from correctional centres. Equipping offenders with skills to improve their employability is also one of the mandates of the Department of Correctional Services (Dissel, 2008: 170).

Participants B, E, J and K indicated that vocational training programmes offered by NGOs, such as enhancing their employability skills by teaching them how to grow and produce products that they can sell and referring them to employment resources, increase ex-offenders' employability. Support services, such as informing them about places where they can apply for employment, also increase potential employment opportunities:

*“We link them with relevant resources like Department of Labour and when they come here, we assist them with drafting CVs, refer them to places and even encourage them to volunteer in schools and other places nearby” (Participant E).*

Participant E further explained that the training programmes they offer to offenders equip offenders with vocational skills that they did not have prior to their conviction, such as how to grow and produce fruits, vegetables and plants that could be sold to generate an income for them. Participant J said that, because of skills acquired throughout the horticulture programme, offenders can get employment in fields such as City Parks or places like Garden Centres. In addition, offering vocational training, NGOs also employ ex-offenders:

*“We offer employment to graduates (who are ex-offenders) and, as you can see, we probably got four or five of our students, so they become permanent employees of the NGO” (Participant K).*

- **Entrepreneur skills**

In addition to life skills and vocational skills, Participants D and J were of the opinion that it is also important for offenders to be equipped with entrepreneurial skills so that they can open their own businesses after being released from correctional centres:

*“We also show them lots of opportunities once they are outside, not only just to grow crops. They can also do their own farming or open the farming to train their communities, showing them how to start the garden so that they can alleviate poverty in their communities” (Participant D).*

*“We offer horticulture. Horticulture is art of the garden, it includes beautifying ornamental plants as well as food gardening. So, it would be like planting of spinach, tomatoes, cabbage which sometimes can bring food on the table or even financial income, but also more on beautifying plants, like roses, your hydrangea. So it’s actually giving them skills that can empower them to do something on their own” (Participant J).*

In this regard, the Department of Arts and Culture provides support to offenders who want to open their own businesses as a way of earning a legitimate income (DCS, 2013: 5; Khulisa, 2016: 2; DCS, 2016: 17). From the above findings, the horticulture programme could assist offenders to alleviate poverty by growing crops which can be used to feed their families and also be sold in the neighbourhood to generate income that can provide for their basic needs.

Findings therefore indicated that no uniform reintegration programme exists, but that offender reintegration is rather an intervention that consists of various programmes each with a unique focus. As mentioned, the majority of participants (B, C, D, E, F, G, I, K, L and M) are facilitators of offender reintegration programmes.

#### **5.2.4 SECTION D: OPINIONS ABOUT THE EFFICACY OF OFFENDER REINTEGRATION SERVICES**

As mentioned, multiple role players (governmental and non-governmental) are

responsible for offender reintegration. Amongst others in, Chapter 2, section 27, various government departments are identified that include the Departments of Health, Basic and Higher Education, Arts and Culture, and Social Development (DCS, 2013; Chin & Dandurand, 2012). The important role NGOs play to ensure successful offender reintegration is also acknowledged in the findings of the study. In addition, it is also recognised that offender reintegration is a societal responsibility as communities also need to provide support to released offenders (DCS, 2019: 19; Griffiths et al, 2007; Porporino, 2015; Dissel, 2008; Dufour & Brassard, 2015).

Section D focused on participants' opinions whether offenders and communities are prepared for offender reintegration. It also focused on the types of resources/facilities/organisations/institutions that are available in communities to ensure the successful reintegration of offenders.

#### ***5.2.4.1 Effectiveness of offender reintegration services***

Chapter 2, section 2.7 indicated the importance of providing support and preparing offenders for reintegration (Chin & Dandurand, 2012: 31). Section 2.7, in turn, outlined various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders that are involved in all aspects of offender reintegration. Lastly, section 2.8 outlined the role NGOs play in offering reintegration programmes and support services (DCS, 2015; Singh, 2016; Muntingh, 2009; Langa, 2017).

To understand professional opinions of participants considering whether offenders are adequately prepared for their release from correctional centres, participants were asked whether offenders are adequately prepared for reintegrating back into their communities.

- **Opinions about the effectiveness of offender reintegration services**

Divergent opinions were noted when participants were asked if they think offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration. Although no studies could be found that explored the effectiveness of offender reintegration, it can be concluded from the literature and from the findings in this study that offender reintegration services are not effective

because of the high level of recidivism and the fact that the challenges offenders experience during integration are not effectively addressed. In contrast with the literature and high rates of re-offending, the majority of participants (C, D, F, G, I, and L) were of the opinion that offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration. Participants C, D and F based their opinions on their experiences delivering offender reintegration services to offenders prior to their release from correctional centres:

*“Yes, they are. I can hear during the engagement, during the communication while we are in the group that these people have plans. They already have plans about their release, some of them they can tell you that ‘I would like to start a business’. Some of them, the correctional facilities have empowered them and they are now qualified, they have the qualifications that they never had before they were incarcerated so they are looking forward for the future” (Participant C).*

*“Mostly yes. I am saying this because, after going to most of the programme, that’s when offenders are to be reintegrated to the community and they are able to face the challenges outside the prison” (Participant L).*

Participants G and I concurred that offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration. Participant G, a social worker and facilitator of programmes, said:

*“Based on my experience, I can say they are. They are adequately prepared because, I will actually refer back to my group now and then because they have acknowledged their mistakes and working on taking responsibility. I can say they are adequately prepared.”*

Participant I, an ex-offender, also agreed that offender reintegration services are effective.

*“Yes, because of inside (correctional centres), they participate in our programmes that change their lives. I’ll take for instance, for me, before I went to school while I was still in maximum, those programmes played a huge role in me being who I am today” (Participant I).*

Contrary, to the above, Participants A and H disagree that offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration:

*“No, absolutely not. I can say that with absolute certainty, I think our prisons are not at all equipping prisoners for reintegration; they are not rehabilitative spaces at all ... The conditions in our prisons for the majority are absolutely horrific and the opportunities to do things that grow oneself and help oneself to better interact with other members of the society and to make a productive way forward for oneself are very few and far between” (Participant A).*

*“Not really, you know, DCS don’t do that much, you know. For me, when I came out of prison, it was the prelease programme for one or two days. On those two days again, it doesn’t prepare you for when you come out of prison, what will you speak, what will happen with you, what to do when you come out, what challenges you are going to face when you come out of prison” (Participant H).*

With regards to the divergent opinions noted above, on the one hand, participants were of the opinion that offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration because they pick up positive changes from the offenders during the facilitation of programmes, such as acknowledging the harm caused by criminal acts and taking responsibility, reflecting on what they will do after their release and how they conduct themselves during incarceration. On the other hand, the participants who believed that offenders are not adequately prepared based their opinions on the conditions of correctional centres and the reintegration programmes that are offered to offenders shortly before they are released from correctional centres. According to participants, the conditions of correctional centres discourage offenders from participating and focusing on rehabilitation and reintegration programmes offered. Literature in Chapter 2 section 2.3.2 concurs with participants that, during incarceration, it is difficult for offenders to prepare and focus on rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to counteract the negative impact incarceration has on offenders (Labrecque et al, 2018). In reality, the effectiveness of reintegration services will only be apparent once research is done to determine if the services are effective or not.

- **Rehabilitation and reintegration are a choice**

In addition to the above opinions, when participants answered the question whether

offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration, participants also emphasised that rehabilitation and successful reintegration is a personal choice that offenders must make:

*“It begins with an individual. Even at school, we cannot pass all, some will fail, some will drop out. Even at prison, some will be rehabilitated, some will still be justifying even after 20 years, some will see the necessity of meeting their victims, some will never see it, some will keep on saying: ‘I was right, she was wrong, she was not supposed to do that, I would rather be sentenced, I would rather be in prison, I will never forgive them or I will never want to engage with them’. You see, that’s how it is, it is how life is” (Participant C).*

*“Not all of them, that one depends on actually upon an individual. Correctional services and ... (Name of NGO) can do everything to prepare a person but, if a person is not prepared (willing) to do that, it becomes very difficult for them to be ready for the outside world ... Offenders need to be educated and given more skills and programmes before they could enrol for pre-release programmes then, I think, that could be effective, that will assist them. Even when they go out of prison, they can also come to NICRO and continue with the programmes. I think that can help with rehabilitation and reintegration into the community” (Participant E).*

Participant F alleged that it depends on the individuals to decide if they want to be rehabilitated and that NGOs are doing a meaningful job in preparing the offenders. He said:

*“I could strongly say yes, but it will depend to oneself in taking the decision. But because of the role that we (NGO) have played, we believe that we have significantly (meaningfully) done the job” (Participant F).*

Munnion (2007), Khwela (2015) and Hesselink-Louw (2004) concur with the participants’ opinions stating that, during incarceration, some offenders further their criminal knowledge and skills rather than making use of opportunities to be rehabilitated. Khwela (2015: 407) emphasises that offenders form relationships with other offenders and learn to adopt a pro-criminal lifestyle. Miklósi and Juhász (2019: 101) add that, during incarceration, offenders adopt pro-criminal values and norms instead of pro-social ones



needed for effective reintegration back into society. Other participants (B, J and L) felt that not all offenders are prepared for reintegration. They emphasised that some offenders are successfully reintegrated into the community while others relapse and reoffend after release:

*“Some they are prepared, some they are not. Because you find some of them reoffending, repeating one and the same offence. But some, you find them being rehabilitated” (Participant B).*

*“It’s not everyone who is prepared, it depends on a person, you know” (Participant J).*

*“Some of them, not all of them are prepared for reintegration” (Participant L).*

Following up on the responses, participants were asked when they think that offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration. To answer the question, participants had to explain that, during incarceration, offenders are prepared for release from correctional centres. Research participants shared that their NGOs offer reintegration programmes and support to offenders only prior to their release from correctional centres with the aim of preparing offenders for their reintegration. This highlighted the lack of integration services after offenders are released from prison.

#### **5.2.4.2 Community’s approach towards offender reintegration**

As indicated in Chapter 2 section 2.1 (Nathan, 2015: 12), it is a reality that all offenders will be released back into their communities after serving their sentences. Participants were asked how the community’s attitude and perceptions impact on offender reintegration. From the findings, two themes, namely, negative attitudes towards ex-offenders and a lack of community support towards offender reintegration were identified and participants expressed their views regarding the community’s approach towards ex-offenders.

- **Negative attitudes towards ex-offenders**

Chapter 3 section 3.2.4 (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003; DCS, 2015) indicated that society’s

negative attitudes towards ex-offenders make it challenging for ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully and live a law-abiding life. The negative attitudes ex-offenders are exposed to within their communities contributed to persistence with offending. The research findings correlate to the previous finding where participants viewed labelling and stigmatisation as a challenge faced by offenders. Participants E and L indicated that the community does not trust ex-offenders as a result of their criminal past:

*“The community contribute a lot towards recidivism, because they lose trust in the offenders as soon as they get arrested or convicted and they don’t believe in the correctional services” (Participant E).*

*“It starts with the prison warders. Because they will tell you that once a prisoner, always a prisoner. That means they don’t have the belief that a person can change, even in the outside, in the community. They will say ‘he will behave for six months, after six months he will relapse” (Participant L).*

In addition to what Participants E and L said, Participants H and J highlighted that the community always views ex-offenders as criminals regardless of whether they are rehabilitated or not. They mentioned that:

*“The community will look at you like you are still an inmate, you are still a criminal, you are still committing a crime and they will still say harsh words towards you or remind you of what you have done” (Participant H).*

*“The community thinks once you were in prison therefore you are still a criminal, sometimes you can even get the beating even die, you know, because of being in prison” (Participant J).*

Participant A mentioned that it is difficult for ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully because of the unequal treatment they experience within their communities. She shared a colleague’s personal experience regarding the harsh treatment he receives in the community as a result of his criminal past:

*“I think it’s incredibly difficult for people to come out and then to be stigmatised, to be*

*humiliated by people who make fun of them or deride them or tell them they don't deserve anything, you know, they should still be behind bars. I can tell you that one man we are working with now, he has been out for over 10 years, he's never done anything wrong again since coming out and the abuse he gets from ... it's certainly not all members but from one or two of the neighbours in the community he lives at come very close to think over the edge sometimes, you know. He gets so affected by it and follows horrific abuse, you know, screaming names at him uhm, saying the most terrible, terrible things to him and because of the fact that he was previously in prison"* (Participant A).

Participant E added that the community's negative attitudes towards released offenders is as a result of a lack of information about offender reintegration:

*"Communities are a bit worried about these half sentences whereby people go to prison, maybe they were sentenced to eight years then they will only be in prison for four years and the other four years they are outside. The community doesn't know/understand the meaning/procedure of that, and they feel that the justice system is not on their side but on the ex-offender's side"* (Participant E).

However, Participant A acknowledged that many communities have been devastated by violent crimes and that, often, attacks on former prisoners are a form of coping with their own stress and trauma. She also emphasised that communities are not prepared to address offender related reintegration issues.

The research findings indicated that many communities have challenges in accepting ex-offenders back which results in negative treatment of offenders within communities. According to Law and Padayachee (2012), there are misconceptions about correctional centres which influence the community's attitude towards rehabilitated and reintegrated offenders. The community's perception of ex-offenders is that offenders should be put in prison since it is where they belong. Resultantly, in most cases, offenders are forgotten and do not receive support from their families and the community during their incarceration and reintegration.

- **Lack of community support towards offender reintegration**

Many offenders are released and have to go back to neighbourhoods and communities that do not provide services and support to assist with offender reintegration (Khwela, 2015: 410). According to Wright and Cesar (2013: 376-377) in Chapter 2 section 2.4, social support from the community plays a crucial role in ensuring successful offender reintegration. It is important that, after release, offenders receive support from the Department of Correctional Services, NGOs and the community in order to reintegrate successfully (Khwela, 2015: 410). In this regard, participants were asked whether there is sufficient support in communities towards offender reintegration. Findings indicated that the majority of participants felt that there is a lack of support for offenders after their release from correctional centres as expressed by Participants B, D and H:

*"I don't think there is enough support, other than the NGOs who are supporting these offenders. I think the community is still angry. So there is not enough support ... During incarceration, offenders are equipped with skills so that they can get jobs when they come out but, when they come out, you find out that they have a criminal record which takes 10 years for expiring. So, you see there is a discrepancy, I mean how can you empower someone to get the skills and after that there is this issue of criminal record which is the hindrance for that particular person to get a job?" (Participant B).*

*"In my professional opinion I don't think there is enough support towards ex-offenders within communities" (Participant D).*

*"I don't think there is sufficient support from the community for reintegration to society" (Participant H).*

Adding to that, Participants A, E, G, I, J and L were also of the opinion that there is not sufficient support towards reintegrated offenders within their communities:

*"There is not enough support of people to reintegrate successfully. My understanding that there not enough NGOs to cover everybody who needs them and for the length of time the people (offenders) need their support and understanding" (Participant A).*

*"Not at all, there is very little support from the communities because we (NGOs) also*

*become enemies of the community because they think we are on the offenders' side and we don't see/understand the serious crimes that the offenders did before they go to prison, that we are doing injustice to them because we encourage them to accept offenders back and most of them also makes it difficult for other offenders who are rehabilitated because they come back to reoffend and then people will continue to lose trust on them" (Participant E)*

*"Honestly, the support is lacking, the support is very lacking when coming to offender reintegration. I can start by the local government which is the first stop for most of the community members. At local government, there are few people who are knowledgeable when coming to offender reintegration. People are not knowledgeable about offender reintegration, so how can they support people (ex-offenders) without that particular knowledge?" (Participant G).*

*"The community does not support ex-convicts at all and rejection doesn't start outside, it starts while you are still inside (correctional centre) and you come out bitter" (Participant I).*

*"There is no support towards reintegrated offenders" (Participant J).*

*"There is lack of support because the community is not educated about people who come out of prison" (Participant L).*

However, Participant F's opinion differs from other participants. According to him, ex-offenders do receive enough support within communities after their release from correctional centres:

*"Significantly, there is enough support for ex-offenders within communities, but it also depends on the person if they want to change" (Participant F).*

Miklósi and Juhász (2019: 109) support the views of the majority of research participants by stating that the community isolates themselves from ex-offenders and that the lack of trust towards ex-offenders is caused by a lack of knowledge regarding the importance of offender reintegration. Haney (2002) indicated in Chapter 2 section 2.9 that the goals of successful reintegration will not be achieved unless the community changes the way it

treats ex-offenders.

#### **5.2.4.3 Preparing the community for offender reintegration**

In Chapter 1, section 1.1, Chin and Dandurand (2012) agree with Haney (2002) that if the community has enough capacity to offer support, resources and supervision to reintegrated offenders, then the goal of successful reintegration of offenders will be achieved. Khwela (2015: 4) alleges that the community fails to accept the offender because the Criminal Justice System fails to communicate and prepare the community for the release of the offender. As indicated in Chapter 2 section 2.9, Chin and Dandurand (2012) emphasise the importance of informing and preparing the community about the release of the offender. Research participants emphasised that it is ineffective for offenders to be released from correctional centres without preparing the community for their release. Two subthemes were identified, and the opinions of the participants are outlined below.

- **Educating the community to understand the importance of offender reintegration**

Participants were asked whether it is important for the community to understand the importance of offender reintegration. All of the participants concurred with this statement. In answering the question, participant H emphasised that the community needs to change its attitude towards ex-offenders:

*"I think the community have to change their mind-set towards inmates because, at the end of the day, they are people and they can change, people can change" (Participant H).*

In addition, Participants C, E and I were of the opinion that it is important to educate communities about offender reintegration so that they can understand it:

*"The community members, I think, they need to be knowledgeable, they need to be educated that this person went to correctional facility, he has been empowered with a lot of programmes and now he is a changed person. I don't know how we can*

*engage with the community and inform them about the release of the offender coming back to the community, so that they must understand that he is part of the community and they must treat him well because I think they have wrong perception about correctional facilities” (Participant C).*

*“I think education is needed and more organisations/NGOs to be opened regarding that particular programme or problem. I think courts need to involve victims and their families in the sentencing and releasing of ex-offenders, because, if they are clear about what is going to happen and what is happening at that particular time (the procedures), it will make the community understand” (Participant E).*

*“I think the society need to be taught how to handle the ex-offenders. The community need to be empowered about ex-offenders in order for them to know what kind of people they are dealing with” (Participant I).*

In addition, Participant A mentioned that the community understanding and preparedness to give ex-offenders another chance is critical:

*“It is important for the community to understand what offender reintegration consists of and how critical it is for people to earn respect again” (Participant A).*

Participant C proposed having therapeutic sessions with the offenders, their families and the victims prior to the release of offenders:

*“I think it is very much important for the professionals, the social scientist, even the psychologists, to consider the fact that, before the release (of the offender), they must call the perpetrator’s family, victim and family several times, not only for one session, to involve them and to address them on some of the issues that are very much important on the perpetrators release” (Participant C).*

The findings indicate that it is important for the community to receive knowledge and be educated about the process of successful offender reintegration and how to deal with the process of welcoming them back into the community.

- **Community based interventions**

In addition to the above findings, research participants raised concerns that communities are not knowledgeable about offender reintegration. In light of this, participants were asked what services could be implemented within communities to ensure successful reintegration of ex-offenders. Participants B, D, G and H suggested that workshops should be presented to educate communities about offender reintegration:

*“The community must also be equipped, educated, they must also be prepared and heal first. And healing goes with time, so they need to be prepared and made aware of this person who is an ex-offender” (Participant B).*

*“I think if also some NGOs can also be close to the community and render some of the workshops as well making them aware what to expect from people who are coming from DCS or correctional centres. So, I think the community as well can give them the support based on what they have learned on those workshops. We can do some research as well and see which NGO can help the community in order to be ready for those offenders so that they help them when they are outside to ensure that they don't re-offend” (Participant D).*

*“I think the community should work hand in hand with the Department of Correctional Services. They can conduct workshops within the community regarding offender reintegration” (Participant G).*

*“Having more workshops, educating communities about when an inmate has been reintegrated into a society, what can they expect, how can they love him to become a better person except provoking them or helping to commit more crime, because the inmate feel out, you know, it's like this is a different world” (Participant H).*

In addition, Participants B, G and L emphasised the importance of raising public awareness about offender reintegration:

*“I think NGOs must be equipped with enough resources so that they can be able to go out there and do the awareness. NGOs, the community and also the Department of Correctional Services, because they are the people that engage with offenders on*



*daily basis, must play part in helping these ex-offenders for reintegration” (Participant B).*

*“I can actually emphasise that more awareness campaigns should be done in terms of sensitising the community with the fact that there is a process of offender reintegration. If you can just go ask the random average community member, you can ask that person ‘what is offender reintegration?’. Most people are not knowledgeable when it comes to offender reintegration” (Participant G).*

*“We are approaching December, the 1st of December is awareness day of HIV/AIDS, people, they are being aware. So people are not educated about people who come out of prison. They think if you come out of prison, you come out worse. If we can teach people that it doesn’t mean that if I am coming from prison, I am still the same person who was in prison or who went to prison, I am a different person. So, people need to be educated” (Participant L),*

Participant J suggested the establishment of activities and projects to reintegrate offenders into the community:

*“If activities could be done continuously to reintegrate these offenders within the community so that the community can accept them, you see. I think maybe, there have to be projects that will engage the offenders as well as the community to showcase what offenders are capable of (in terms of skills acquired during incarceration)” (Participant J).*

Participants A, D, E and K proposed that, in order to ensure successful reintegration, various stakeholders, such NGOs, DCS, the government and the private sector, need to cooperate. Participants suggested:

*“Preferably it would be great if the government and the private sector were also more involved, but it’s a crucial role of NGOs. It is crucial for educational and work opportunities to be implemented [and] established. And obviously, the private sector can play a huge role there and I do understand that there are so many other important groups in our societies as well and there are young people who are also desperate to find work opportunities but I think we haven’t seen enough of the private sector at all*

*in relation to the vulnerable groups in our society” (Participant A).*

*“I think if other stakeholders can be more involved than now, definitely we will have a crime free South Africa” (Participant D).*

*“NGOs need to be in touch with our communities, be the ones who introduce the process of offender reintegration to the communities. The NGOs can be in the forefront, introduce reintegration strategies to our stakeholders so that they can spread the word, then they will work for the ex-offenders” (Participant E).*

*“A reintegration programme should be introduced within communities, which leads from when they leave those doors (prison doors) just to give them a softer landing within communities and various stakeholders need to play a role just to ensure that offenders return successfully within their communities” (Participant K).*

Participant M highlighted that, regardless of challenges offenders face after release from correctional centres, some ex-offenders manage to reintegrate successfully and succeed in life. However, the problem is that successfully reintegrated offenders are not acknowledged and applauded. Their stories are also not used to inspire other offenders and to prove to the community that, with their support, ex-offenders can lead law-abiding lives:

*“Another problem is that the media don’t showcase/ broadcast ex-offenders who are doing good things; they wait until one ex-offender commit crime again and that’s when the media will broadcast the story but when ex-offenders are becoming successful in life, they don’t talk about them” (Participant M).*

The findings concur with literature in Chapter 1 section 1.1 (Minnaar, 2005: 88; DCS, 2015: 11) highlighting the importance of educating the community about the process of offender reintegration. It also emphasises that reintegration is a multi-sectoral process which requires the collaboration of various stakeholders.

### **5.2.5 Challenges faced by NGOs**

Although participants were not asked to identify challenges NGOs experience, data about

the challenges NGOs face during the delivery of reintegration services emerged during the study. The two challenges identified are a lack of funding and resources and no partnerships or relationships between NGOs.

- **Lack of funding and resources**

According to Participants A, K and L, NGOs do not have enough funding to provide services to offenders:

*“One of the biggest problems that is preventing NGOs from doing more is funding because we all depend on donor funding and it’s not easy to find money for many causes, but former prisoners and working in prison are one of the difficult areas to find money to support the work” (Participant A).*

*“Lack of funding; if your type of work is not addressed and given support, it's no matter how hard we try” (Participant K).*

*“The challenge that NGOs face is lack of funding. Like with (Name of NGO), we used to offer reintegration programmes to offenders however, due to lack of funding, the NGO didn’t have the capacity/resources to render those services anymore” (Participant L).*

Miklósi and Juhász (2019: 108) agree with the research participants that NGOs play an important role in offender reintegration however they face challenges such as insufficient resources to provide their services to offenders.

- **Lack of collaboration between NGOs**

Findings from the study indicated that, although NGOs offer similar services to released offenders, they did not cooperate with each other, and tend to work independently and are generally unfamiliar with each other’s work. In this regard, during the interviews, Participants C, D and K shared how they are not familiar with the work of other NGOs that deliver offender reintegration services to offenders:

*“According to my knowledge, NICRO and KHULISA, we are doing the same*

*programmes. I don't think there are other programmes (NGOs) running at prisons besides ours" (Participant C).*

*"We need additional resources and NGOs, not only we as ... (Name of NGO) can render reintegration services to offenders" (Participant D).*

*"The challenge is that people do not want to cooperate or share funding to offer reintegration support to ex-offenders" (Participant K).*

In this regard, as a result of a lack of cooperation between NGOs, offender reintegration is not as effective as it should be. The inability of NGOs to cooperate with each other hampers the effective use of available funding to assist offenders during offender reintegration.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

Findings presented in Chapter 5 concur with the research presented in Chapter 2 regarding the challenges that ex-offenders face upon their release from correctional centres. The research participants, who are employees of NGOs that offer services to offenders with the aim of preparing them for successful reintegration, shared how economic, social and psychological factors have a negative impact on the reintegration of offenders to an extent that they relapse and reoffend. They also supported the findings of Chapter 2 regarding the challenges that families and the communities have in accepting the offender back into society and also suggested effective ways of ensuring that ex-offenders reintegrate successfully into their communities and various government and non-governmental stakeholders that need to cooperate towards offender reintegration. Three gaps were identified from the research findings.

The first one is that there are limited NGOs to provide support and services to ex-offenders who are released from correctional centres to empower them to deal with reintegration challenges and issues. The initial research plan was to conduct interviews with NGOs that offer reintegration services and support to ex-offenders within communities however, during the study, it became clear that few NGOs provide services

to incarcerated offenders who are about to be released from correctional centres.

The second gap identified is that the NGOs that are involved in preparing offenders prior to release are not familiar with each other. They all visit correctional services to provide services, programmes and equip offenders with skills but they do not know which other NGOs facilitate programmes, the content of the programmes and how they can be helpful to offenders. It means that the NGOs are uncertain where to refer offenders for services and it raises questions in terms of how they are they referring offenders to other NGOs that could help them with challenges they are facing or skills they need to reintegrate successfully.

The third gap identified is that NGOs are struggling to provide enough resources to empower offenders with skills and resources needed to reintegrate successfully into communities. As a result of overcrowding within correctional centres, NGOs encounter challenges as a result of a lack of funding and support from other stakeholders to provide offenders with resources and skills needed for their reintegration.

The goal of successful reintegration is for ex-offenders to live productive, law-abiding lives (Louw, 2013: 208). However, Louw (2013: 208) emphasises that successful reintegration of offenders can be achieved if there is a balance between prioritising the safety of the community and providing rehabilitation and after release support to ex-offenders within communities.

The last chapter outlines the conclusion of the study and suggest recommendations for successful reintegration

## **CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions and recommendations of the research study. This chapter includes an outline of how the aim and objectives of the study were achieved. It presents the conclusion of the study and the recommendations made by the researcher based on the summary of the research findings from the objectives of the study which were outlined in Chapter 1.

The chapter commences with a summary of the methodology followed in the study.

### **6.2 BRIEF REVIEW OF METHODOLOGY**

The aim of the study was to explore offender reintegration strategies and the support available for offenders after release through services delivered by NGOs. The aim was achieved through objectives which are discussed in more detail below.

An exploratory qualitative approach was followed for the research study. The researcher used purposive and snowball sampling to select a sample of 13 participants from four NGOs. Two of the NGOs offer reintegration services to offenders and one NGO previously offered reintegration services to offenders. Gatekeeper permission was obtained from the NGOs' management for staff members to participate in the study and gatekeepers at the respective NGOs assisted with the recruitment of participants. Formal introduction sessions were held at each NGO with research participants prior to the collection of data. The purpose of the introductory session was to get to know the participants, explain what the study was about, their role in the research study and give participants a platform to ask questions where they needed clarity. Informed consent was obtained from participants prior to data collection.

Semi-structured, face-to-face and telephonic interviews were used to collect data. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interviews were analysed, themes and subthemes were identified, and findings presented.

### **6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Limitations experienced during research could include theoretical, practical and/or methodological issues which could have an impact on the research process and outcomes (Hall, 2018:163). A limitation of the study was that there is a dearth of research that has been conducted and published in this field of study. Another limitation was that the data collection process was delayed because of xenophobic attacks that took place in Johannesburg where most of the NGOs are located. The xenophobic attacks delayed the data collection resulting in the need for telephonic interviews, which were suggested by participants, as opposed to the planned face-to-face interviews, as they were concerned about the researcher's safety.

Methodological limitations include a small sample size. The sample size was small because, as stated previously, there are limited NGOs that offer reintegration services to offenders in Gauteng. Although the sample size was small, data collection was continued until saturation was achieved. It should furthermore be noted that the study was exploratory and the purpose was therefore not to generalise the findings. The way the objectives of the study were achieved is discussed next.

### **6.4 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Five objectives of the study were achieved, and the researcher will briefly discuss how each objective was achieved and the predominant findings per objective.

#### **6.4.1 To determine the challenges experienced by offenders after release from imprisonment**

The purpose of the objective was to determine challenges that ex-offenders face after their release from correctional centres to the community. The objective was accomplished through the literature study in Chapter 2 where these challenges were discussed in detail. Findings from the study in Chapter 5 (Section B) correlated with the literature in Chapter 2 (section 2.5). Both the literature and findings from the study indicated that ex-offenders face physical, social, economic and psychological challenges that have a negative impact

on their reintegration back into society.

Findings from the study and literature review concurred that ex-offenders experience physical challenges associated with a lack of accommodation and loss of property. Social challenges that ex-offenders experienced after their release from correctional centres were associated with labelling, stigmatisation, rejection and discrimination from both their families and society in general. The conclusion drawn is that ex-offenders lack reintegration support from their families and society, making it difficult to maintain social relationships because they are rejected and stigmatised. Resultantly, ex-offenders experience difficulties feeling part of society and adjusting to their families and social norms of society.

The economic challenges offenders experience was predominantly associated with unemployment, because of incarceration and a criminal record. Findings furthermore highlighted that vocational training offered in correctional centres is not beneficial if employment opportunities are not created for ex-offenders.

Lastly, psychological challenges were associated with difficulties in adjusting to communities after incarceration due to broken and weak social bonds between the offenders and significant others as well as the community at large. The conclusion drawn is that, when offenders fail to adjust to society after their incarceration, they feel neglected, isolated and lose their sense of belonging. The inability to adjust to society and feeling like an outsider is a greater risk for reoffending because ex-offenders might return to correctional centres because of the social bonds formed with other offenders.

It is concluded that the challenges mentioned above are a causal risk for relapse and reoffending. It is important that various stakeholders (government, NGOs, private sector, community) join forces and cooperate to provide adequate pre- and post-release interventions and support for ex-offenders to ensure that successful reintegration is accomplished. It is also important to understand that, when the goal of offender reintegration is not achieved, ex-offenders relapse and are caught up in the cycle of offending. Effective offender reintegration will only be possible if the challenges



mentioned are acknowledged and addressed.

#### **6.4.2 To determine if reintegration strategies assist offenders to deal with challenges associated with reintegration**

The objective aimed to understand whether current reintegration strategies are effective in ensuring that offenders reintegrate successfully into their communities. It was achieved through research findings in Chapter 2 section 2.6 and Chapter 5 section 5.2.4.1. Opposing findings regarding the effectiveness of offender reintegration services offered to offenders were noted in the study. Some participants were of the opinion that offenders are prepared for reintegration and that reintegration strategies are effective while others indicated that offenders are not adequately prepared for release from correction centres because reintegration services are only offered for a short period prior to offenders before they are released.

Literature findings in Chapter 2 section 2.6 emphasised that correcting and preparing offenders for reintegration is a process and that various stakeholders have a role to play in ensuring that offenders reintegrate successfully into their communities. Findings from the literature also indicated that, for those offenders who do not have stable accommodation when they are released, the DCS places them in halfway houses where they receive reintegration support and programmes. In this regard, the limited number of halfway houses was identified as one of the challenges hampering effective offender reintegration. In addition, participants were also of the opinion that offenders are personally responsible for making use of reintegration opportunities and that some choose to make use of the opportunities while others do not.

Literature in Chapter 2, section 2.8 indicated that NGOs offer various pre-release rehabilitation and reintegration services/programmes to offenders with the aim of equipping them with skills to empower them to reintegrate successfully into their communities. Findings highlighted that limited organised post-release interventions exist, outside of individual assistance to a few ex-offenders. Challenges NGOs face, which hampers their ability to deliver offender reintegration services highlighted in the findings

from the study, included both the lack of capacity and funding to fulfil this mandate.

The conclusion drawn for this objective is that, although research findings provided opposing opinions regarding the efficacy of offender reintegration services delivered by NGOs, they agreed that successful reintegration of offenders remains offenders' individual choice. Notwithstanding this, it remains the responsibility of governmental and non-governmental organisations to offer effective pre- and post-release offender reintegration services. The effectiveness of offender reintegration services will only be clear if research is done to determine this.

#### **6.4.3 To determine if communities are prepared and equipped with resources to receive offenders and empower them not to reoffend**

The objective intended to understand whether communities are equipped with enough resources so that they are adequately prepared for the release of the offenders to ensure successful offender reintegration. The objective was achieved through research findings in Chapter 5, section 5.2.4.3, where findings from the study indicated that communities are not adequately equipped with resources to facilitate offender reintegration. The importance of adequate infrastructure to facilitate offender reintegration is emphasised in the literature (Chapter 2, section 2. 9) and should include health care, employment opportunities, counselling and restorative justice interventions such as victim/offender dialogues. Findings indicated that it is also important that the community should be informed and prepared for the release of the offender. Offender reintegration services should be aimed at addressing the challenges offenders face after release from correctional centres.

The findings (Chapter 5 section 5.2.4.2) also indicated that communities are not well-informed about the process of offender reintegration and the role they have to play to ensure that offenders reintegrate successfully. From the findings, participants also recommended practices that could be implemented to empower communities to be well-informed about the importance of successful offender reintegration.

In conclusion, it is important for the community to be prepared and well educated about

the processes of the Criminal Justice System such as rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. Communities need to be aware that, after serving sentences, offenders will be released and that they will need emotional, social, psychological and economic support in order to desist from crime. It should be highlighted that, when offenders are not reintegrated successfully into the community, they are at risk of relapsing and reoffending and they will be incarcerated again at the expense of law-abiding citizens through taxes.

#### **6.4.4 To determine if communities are willing to accept community members back who have violated their rights and victimised them**

It is of importance to highlight that the objective did not feature predominantly in the findings of the study however the objective was anticipated to explain whether communities are willing to accept ex-offenders back after their release from correctional centres. The findings (Chapter 5, section 5.2.4.2) indicated that the community has negative attitudes and misconceptions about correctional centres and ex-offenders, and that has a negative impact on the successful reintegration of offenders. This objective is linked to objective 6.4.1, which explained challenges (physical, social, psychological and economic) that ex-offenders face after their release from correctional centres. The conclusion drawn from the findings is that community members are reluctant to accept ex-offenders back after incarceration, and this leads to offenders facing rejection and isolation within communities. It is important that the community needs to be informed about the importance of successful offender reintegration, what the process entails and possible challenges that both the offenders and residents of communities might come across and, most importantly, how to manage those challenges and where to ask for help should there be a need. When ex-offenders are not accepted and supported within their communities, it becomes difficult for them to manage and overcome challenges that they come across after their release from correctional centres and it becomes easier for them to relapse and reoffend.

#### **6.4.5 To explore the nature of facilities and support systems available to assist with the reintegration of offenders**

The objective aimed to discover if there are adequate facilities and support systems within the communities to provide enough support for the ex-offenders and residents to ensure that ex-offenders reintegrate successfully with the support of the community. The objective was accomplished through research findings indicated in Chapter 5, section 5.2.4.3. The findings indicated that there is lack of resources and support systems within communities to assist ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully. However, as indicated in Chapter 4, the majority of NGOs offer services to incarcerated offenders while only a few offer services post-release. Research findings indicated in Chapter 5, section 5.2.4.3 outlined various methods that could be implemented within communities to ensure the successful reintegration of offenders. Pre-release findings indicated that NGOs deliver life skills, vocational training and offender reintegration programmes in correctional centres. Literature in Chapter 2 section 2.6 identified halfway houses as one of the methods that are implemented within communities to provide support to offenders who lack accommodation after their release from correctional centres. However, due to the limited facilities of halfway houses across the country, only a few offenders can be placed at those facilities. Literature findings in Chapter 2, section 2.8 indicated that four NGOs, namely, Khulisa, NICRO, Hlumelelisa and Just Detention International South Africa, offer support to offenders to prepare them for their release. Only two of the NGOs are based in Gauteng and only one, NICRO, still offers reintegration support to offenders while Khulisa does no longer specialise in the field of offender reintegration. From the findings, the conclusion drawn is that many offenders return to their communities where there is lack of post-release programmes to equip them with skills to manage the challenges that they face in communities.

In conclusion, the findings indicated that there is a general lack of support towards ex-offenders after their release from correctional centres except for the halfway houses indicated in Chapter 2, section 2.6 that are only meant for offenders who have no accommodation after their release from correctional centres. The lack of adequate support for released offenders was recognised in this study as a gap that needs to be

rectified to achieve effective offender reintegration.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations are aligned with the objectives of study outlined in detail above. The recommendations are based on the research findings and are intended to be acknowledged and adopted by the Department of Correctional Services, NGOs and society to improve the successful reintegration of offenders into communities.

### **6.5.1 Establishing mentoring programmes for ex-offenders**

It was concluded from the literature and research findings that, after release, ex-offenders face social, physical, psychological and economic challenges. Findings explained that, due to inabilities and a lack of support, many ex-offenders fail to reintegrate successfully because they cannot manage challenges that they come across in communities once released. Ex-offenders would then feel isolated and rejected to an extent that they do not regard themselves as significant members of society and they will eventually relapse and reoffend.

Therefore, it is recommended that mentoring programmes be established with the aim of mentoring and life coaching ex-offenders pre- and post-release. NGOs can coordinate such a mentorship programme and recruit community members, such as business owners, academic scholars, and former employees of SAPS, SANDF, DCS, education, community forums, law as well as those in private sectors, to register as mentors for the initiative. Such a mentorship programme will not only serve to support ex-offenders but also to educate and create awareness in communities. The role of the mentors would be to provide social and psychological support to ex-offenders as well as create employment opportunities in the case of business owners. The mentors should also monitor the reintegration journey (challenges faced, how they are managed and overcome them and achievements) of the mentees (ex-offenders).

## **6.5.2 Creating employment opportunities for ex-offenders**

The conclusion drawn from the literature and findings is that, after release from correctional centres, ex-offenders have challenges finding employment as a result of their incarceration and a criminal record. The literature concluded that, during incarceration, offenders enhance their educational and vocational skills with the aim of desisting from criminal behaviour and living a law-abiding life after release. Some inmates, who are still young and/or low-risk offenders, and who have hopes of reintegrating successfully after incarceration, may become demoralised due to the challenges they face after release. After release, they are stigmatised in the employment industry, they lose hope and reoffend because, during incarceration, they were awarded opportunities to enhance their skills which are not recognised after their release.

The recommendation is that ex-offenders should also be eligible for employment. Literature findings in Chapter 2 section 2.1 concluded that offenders are restricted in terms of accessing services provided for citizens, such as getting employed or getting houses. Research findings (Chapter 5, section 5.2.3.2) concluded that some ex-offenders do not reoffend not because they are rehabilitated but because, after release, they are offered opportunities to provide for themselves and their families. Therefore, what is the point of offender incarceration and rehabilitation if the offender cannot be reintegrated into the community and be treated like any other citizen of the country? The government and the employment sector need to have trust in the mandate of DCS (rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders) and believe that ex-offenders deserve a second chance within communities to lead law-abiding lives.

## **6.5.3 Interventions DCS can facilitate within communities**

### ***6.5.3.1 DCS to raise public awareness concerning offender reintegration***

The conclusion drawn from the findings is that community members are not knowledgeable or prepared for the release of offenders which results in the stigmatisation and marginalisation of ex-offenders. It is recommended that DCS should form partnerships with NGOs that liaise with communities to educate the communities about

the importance of offender reintegration and the role they need to play in supporting ex-offenders after release from correctional centres. DCS should raise public awareness regarding offender reintegration and this could be implemented through workshops, community engagements and media broadcasts.

It is also recommended that offender reintegration awareness strategies should be implemented through various media platforms. Ex-offenders who have successfully reintegrated into communities could share their stories and the importance of supporting ex-offenders after incarceration. However, the programmes should also have a restorative component and acknowledge the harm caused by offenders towards victims and the community at large. Restorative justice interventions, such as victim-offender mediation, could be facilitated by NGOs. Some ex-offenders have engaged with their victims before or after their release resulting in reconciliation between victims and offenders. The recording of such stories could be used and broadcasted in the media to create awareness for the importance of offender reintegration.

### ***6.5.3.2 Establishing offender visitation programmes in schools***

The findings in Chapter 5 concluded that communities are not willing to accept ex-offenders back into the community. With the high rate of offending among youth and minors, it is recommended that offenders should be encouraged to give back to their communities by educating vulnerable groups (pupils and youth) of society about the dangers and repercussions of a criminal lifestyle. A programme could be established where schools with at risk learners could be identified and ex-offenders could visit those schools to educate them about the dangers of their criminal lifestyles, how the lifestyles led them to be incarcerated, what they have learned and what the target group members should do differently so that they do not end up in incarceration. It was concluded through literature findings (Chapter 2, section 2.3.1) that, during incarceration, offenders cannot choose their daily routines as they are regulated by DCS. It is also recommended that offenders should be encouraged to share their daily routine within correctional centres and the effects these routines had on their psychological, social and physical wellbeing. The goal of the programme should be to discourage pupils from engaging in criminal

activities and focus on their studies. The programme will also create a platform for offenders to engage with their community members and change the perception about offenders and correctional centres. The community could also learn to forgive offenders and be willing to accept them back after incarceration. A proverb states that it takes a village to raise a child, and it is proposed in this study that offenders should form part of that village to discourage children from the delinquent life.

#### **6.5.4 Establishment of NGOs that offer support to released offenders**

Literature in Chapter 3 and findings in Chapter 5 indicated that there is lack of support for ex-offenders within their communities. The literature explored how ex-offenders face labelling and stigmatisation and that their social bond becomes broken during incarceration. When the bond is broken, it becomes challenging for ex-offenders to restore the trust and they are often labelled as criminals.

As indicated, after release from correctional centres, ex-offenders face challenges which make it difficult for them to reintegrate successfully. It is recommended that NGOs should be established within communities where offenders could visit should they feel overwhelmed because of the rejection they face in communities. These NGOs could offer workshops and programmes to released offenders to educate and enhance their life skills, and provide counselling and group support.

It is also recommended that call centres be established so that ex-offenders will have an emergency support if needed. When ex-offenders are unable to cope within their communities as a result of challenges they face, the call centres should provide reintegration advice, support and refer ex-offenders to NGOs for further help and support.

### **6.6 FUTURE RESEARCH**

As indicated in Chapter 1, there is lack of research conducted on offender rehabilitation and reintegration especially on aspects like coping strategies for successful reintegration and challenges communities face in accepting ex-offenders back. It is also important to investigate why some ex-offenders relapse and reoffend while others manage to lead law-



abiding and productive lives within their communities. Research targeting ex-offenders who successfully reintegrated should be done asking them to advise, suggest and recommend how offender reintegration services can be improved in order to be more effective.

In the light of the above, further research targeting DCS, community, ex-offenders and the employment sector should be done, as outlined below.

### **6.6.1 Department of Correctional Services**

#### **Effectiveness of current rehabilitation and reintegration strategy**

A study should be conducted on whether the current strategy implemented to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders is effective. It is also important to investigate whether offenders engage in various programmes to prepare them for rehabilitation and reintegration throughout their incarceration or prior to their release from correctional centres.

### **6.6.2 Community**

#### **How well informed are communities regarding the process of offender reintegration?**

It is important to explore if communities are well informed about the practice of offender reintegration and the importance of accepting ex-offenders back into communities.

#### **Effective methods to be used in educating communities about offender reintegration**

A study should be conducted to explore measures put in place to educate the community about the importance of offender reintegration and to adequately prepare them for the return of the offender. It is also important to investigate preferable methods of educating the community about offender reintegration.

#### **Why communities are reluctant to receive ex-offenders back**

An investigation should be done to understand the reasons behind the reluctance of

communities to accept offenders back into society and whether the community feels that the CJS failed them or that offender rehabilitation is not effective.

### **The perception of community members regarding ex-offender relapse and re-offence**

Research should be undertaken to understand the communities' perceptions regarding reasons why ex-offenders relapse and reoffend after their release into the community.

#### **6.6.3 Ex-offenders**

Research should be conducted to examine whether offenders are sensitised about challenges they will face upon reintegration into their communities and how to manage those challenges in order to reintegrate successfully.

#### **6.6.4 Employment sector**

A study should be conducted to explore potential employment opportunities for ex-offenders. As indicated in the study, even though, during incarceration, some offenders are equipped with skills, education and resources to prepare them for employment after release, they might still not find employment after release. A study should be conducted in the public and private sectors to explore the steps that can be taken in order to increase employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

### **6.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter outlined how the objectives of the study were achieved as a result of the research findings. Recommendations were advocated based on the objectives, literature and findings from data interpretations. The recommendations are meant to be adopted and implemented by DCS and NGOs to ensure successful reintegration of ex-offenders.

It is acknowledged in the study that offenders have caused harm and victimised victims and the community, but the reality is that correctional centres are not permanent residences of offenders. After serving their sentences or through parole, offenders will be

released back to society. The phase of offender reintegration is challenging for both the offender and the community. However, in order to ensure that ex-offenders do not relapse, re-offend and re-victimise the community, ex-offenders need social, psychological and economic support to reintegrate successfully. The goal of successful reintegration can only be achieved if reintegration strategies focus on challenges ex-offenders face during their reintegration back into society. It is important for the community to be educated about the purpose and practice of offender reintegration, the process of the successful reintegration of ex-offenders and the vital role it plays in breaking the cycle of crime.

Awareness campaigns need to be introduced to inform the community and the ex-offenders about advantages of reintegrating successfully and disadvantages of relapsing and reoffending.

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## ANNEXURE A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

University of South Africa

College of Law

Department of Criminology and Security Sciences

**Researcher:** Nomalanga Ellen Mnisi

Title of study: An analysis of post-release offender reintegration strategies delivered by Non-Governmental Organisations

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Nomalanga Ellen Mnisi and I am doing research in the Department of Criminology towards a Master of Arts at the University of South Africa. You are invited to participate in a study titled: *an analysis of reintegration strategies for offenders*.

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

I am conducting this research to examine reintegration strategies and the effectiveness of support and services available at Non-Governmental Organisations for ex-offenders after they are released from correctional centres. I also want to collect information about your opinion of challenges faced by ex-offenders' and strategies that needs to be in place to assist them during reintegration.

## WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are chosen to participate in the research study because you have experience in working with offenders that has been released from correctional centres and are in the process of being successfully reintegrated back into society. The purpose of the study is to share your professional opinion on reintegration of offenders, challenges they face after being released from correctional centres and if services offered at NGO's focuses on challenges that ex-offenders face in order to empower them to desist from criminal behaviour.

I got your contact details from \_\_\_\_\_(Name of NGO) that you are employed at.

## WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves face to face interviews. The interview will focus on your experiences of working with ex-offenders and will focus on the challenges you think they face upon being released from correctional centres, the impact of the support and services from the NGO's on reintegration processes of ex-offenders and if the services offered at the NGOs focusses on challenges that ex-offenders experience during their reintegration stage.

During interviews, data will be collected by making hand written notes and audio recording. Therefore the researcher request permission to audio record the interview which will be later transcribed in a document format on the computer. The interview will take a maximum of one and a half hours to complete. However the researcher might contact you should there be a need for a follow up interview.

## CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO

## PARTICIPATE?

Participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participating. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time and do not need to give a reason for your decision. However, it may not be possible to withdraw the information you provided if it has already been transcribed since all identifying particular will be removed from transcribed interviews.

## WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The benefit of participating in the research is that:

- You will have the opportunity to share your expert opinion about services available to ex-offenders and the impact that the NGO's services have on their reintegration
- Your participation in the study could make a valuable contribution to improve services and programmes that the Department of Correctional Centres and NGO's present to assist with the reintegration of offenders
- You will have an opportunity of making any recommendations, suggestions and advices on the effectiveness of offender reintegration services.

## ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

As an employee in the NGO, you might feel uncomfortable to raise an opinion about the effectiveness of the services/programmes offered at the Department of Correctional Services and within the NGO where you are employed. However, keep in mind that the information you are going to disclose will be kept confidential and that the findings will also not be linked to a specific NGO but will comment in general about services provided by NGOs on offender reintegration.



## WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to anonymity and confidentiality when you participate in this study. Your name will only be recorded on the informed consent form that you have to sign but it will not be recorded on the data that will be collected and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number (participant 1 or A) or a fictitious name and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. The researcher (Nomalanga) and her supervisor are the only people who will have access to the data and they will to the best of their ability take all foreseeable steps to ensure that the information remains confidential. Please note that the data from the research may be used for journal articles and/or conference proceedings. Your anonymity and confidentiality will also be protected in a similar manner as described previously; it is only the researcher who can link the data to research participants.

## HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard for future research or academic purposes and electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. Hard copies will be destroyed by being shredded and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no form of payment for your participation in the study.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

This study has received ethical clearance from Unisa College of Law Ethical Review Committee. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you would like to see it.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS\RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

The researcher will provide a hyperlink to the NGO when the research is published on the university's database. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Nomalanga Mnisi at 0607049997/ 0846572975 or [mnisi.ne@gmail.com](mailto:mnisi.ne@gmail.com).

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact the researchers' supervisor, Professor Marelize Schoeman at 012 433 9491 or [schoemi@unisa.ac.za](mailto:schoemi@unisa.ac.za).

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Yours sincerely

Signature:



Name : Nomalanga Mnisi

#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (participant name), confirm that the researcher asking my consent to take part in this research study has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience I can expect if I participate in the study.

I have been informed in writing and understood the purpose of the study and what will be expected of me.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the audio recording of the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname..... (Please print)

Participant Signature.....Date.....

Researcher's Name & Surname.....

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

## **ANNEXURE B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Interview guide

### Section A: Biographical details

Date:

NGO:

Name of participant:

Position/ occupation:

### Section B: Data collection tool

1. May you please share with me how long have you been employed at Khulisa/NICRO?
2. May you briefly discuss your daily duties?
3. In your line of work how often do you interact with reintegrated offenders?
4. Does offender reintegration deal with challenges faced by ex-offenders? Please motivate your statement.
5. How many ex-offenders does the NGO render services to per year?
6. How do ex-offenders know about such NGO's and which criteria is followed to recruit them to join the NGO?
7. What is the procedure that ex-offenders need to follow in order to receive services from the NGO?
8. How many of these services include assistance with issues relating to reintegrating offenders into a community?
9. How long after reintegration do you offer services or programmes to ex-offenders?

It is immediately after their release from correctional centres or is there a time frame before enrolling for reintegration programmes?

10. Do you think offenders are adequately prepared for reintegration?
11. What types of challenges do you think ex-offenders face upon their release?
12. In your professional opinion, amongst the challenges that you mentioned, which ones' impact on the reintegration processes of offenders that could influence relapse and reoffending?
13. Do you think the current reintegration strategies are effective in addressing the challenges ex-offenders experience during their reintegration back into the society?
14. How does the community's attitude and perceptions impact on offender reintegration?
15. What kind of services and support does the organisation offer to reintegrate ex-offenders?
16. How do these services empower ex-offenders to desist from their criminal behaviour?
17. Do you think there is sufficient support in communities towards offender reintegration?
18. What other types of services could be implemented in your field of work/within the NGO or community to ensure the successful reintegration of ex-offenders?

## ANNEXURE C: ETHICS APPROVAL



### UNISA CLAW ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date 20190527

Reference: ST42 of 2019

Applicant: NE Minisi

Dear NE Minisi

**Decision: ETHICS APPROVAL**

FROM 01 May 2019

TO 01 May 2022

**Researcher:** Nomalanga Ellen Mntsi

**Supervisor:** Prof M Schoeman

**An analysis of reintegration strategies for offenders**

**Qualification:** MA Criminology

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa CLAW Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for 3 years.

*The CLAW Ethics Review Committee reviewed the **Low risk application** on 27 May 2019 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment. The decision was ratified by the committee.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the CLAW Committee.



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3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No research activities may continue after the expiry date 1 May 2022. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

*Note:*

*The reference number ST42 of 2019 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,



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**ANNEXURE D: EDITOR'S LETTER**

*Barbara Shaw*

*Editing/proofreading services*

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*Full member of The Professional Editors' Guild*

**To whom it may concern**

This letter serves to inform you that I have done language editing, formatting and reference checking on the Master's thesis **AN ANALYSIS OF POST-RELEASE OFFENDER REINTEGRATION STRATEGIES DELIVERED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS**

by **NOMALANGA ELLEN MNISI**



Barbara Shaw

26 August 2020.