

**THE CHARACTERISTICS OF VIOLENT YOUTH OFFENDERS AND THE  
NATURE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THEIR CRIMES**

by

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# DECLARATION

## DECLARATION

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**THE CHARACTERISTICS OF VIOLENT YOUTH OFFENDERS AND THE  
NATURE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THEIR CRIMES.**

I declare that the above dissertation 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.

  
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19/06/19  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

## **DEDICATION**

This master's dissertation is dedicated to my father, Mr. Rambheri Singh and my late mother, Shalawathie Singh who always encouraged me to work hard and stay positive to achieve my dreams and my wonderful family, Sheritha, Reshika, Shikhar, Sivanah, Malcolm, Terrel and Peyton for all the love, encouragement and support.

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## SUMMARY

The study sought to identify characteristics of youth male offenders, the situational context of their crime, and determine whether offender characteristics differentiated the types of violent crime committed using a quantitative cross-sectional study with secondary data. Descriptive statistical methods were used to determine characteristics of violent offenders and to describe the situational context of crimes. Subgroup analysis was used to derive four major crime categories: assaultive violence (18.1%), robbery (54.8%), sexual violence (17.4%) and robbery/sexual (7.1%). A multinomial regression analysis was used to determine if offender characteristics differentiated the types of violent crimes committed within these subgroups. The majority of offenders didn't complete high school (90.4%) or have stable employment (88.6%). The situational context of their crimes involved the use of firearms (37.7%) or sharp objects (35.9%); and often resulted in death (35.9%) or serious injury (33.8%) for the victims. Further analysis showed a positive association between gang affiliation and robbery.

### **Keywords:**

Violent youth offenders, violent crime, youth crime, offender characteristics, situational context of violent crime, risk profile of youth offenders

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDC	Centre for Disease Control
CJCP	Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
CSRV	The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
ISS	Institute of Security Studies
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYRB	National Youth Risk Behaviour
SAPS	South Africa Police Services
STATS SA	Statistics South Africa
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO	World Health Organisation
USA	United States of America

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

South Africa has exceptionally high levels of violence. In the 2017/2018 fiscal period approximately 35.8 per 100 000 South Africans died due to violence (South African Police Service [SAPS], 2018) while the global rate for violent deaths was reported at 7.50 per 100 000 population in 2016 (Mc Evoy & Hideg, 2017). The South African numbers equate to 56 violent deaths per day in the country (Africa Check, 2018) which affirms South Africa as one of the 10 most violent countries in the world (Gould, 2018). The overall homicide rate in South Africa increased by 6.9 % in the 2017/2018 fiscal (SAPS, 2018) from the year before, with the number of women killed during this period increasing by 11.0%, the number of boys by 20.4%, and girls by 10.0% (Gould, 2018). The total number of men killed was 16 421, which was a 6.4% increase from the previous fiscal (SAPS, 2018). The most number of reported homicides (21.7%) occurred in KwaZulu-Natal. Although violence affects all South Africans, it has the greatest impact on poor, black citizens with young black men having the highest rate of homicide victimisation in the country (Gould, 2018).

Globally, at least 84% of homicide victims were men and boys in 2016 (Mc Evoy & Hideg, 2017). In South Africa, research on homicide has emphasised the predominance of men, particularly young black urban men, as victims of homicide in the country (e.g. Kramer & Ratele, 2012; Ratele, 2010). For instance, the homicide victimisation rate for South African males aged 15 – 29 in 2009 in metro areas was 69.9 per 100 000 compared to 47.2 per 100 000 in non-metro areas (Matzopoulos et al., 2015). Globally, approximately 95% of homicide perpetrators are male, and 8 out of 10 homicide victims are also male (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime [UNODC], 2014a).

The high levels of violence in South Africa are also evident in the high number of youth, especially male youth, incarcerated for violent crime. At the end of March 2018, the South African Department of Correctional Services (DCS) reported a total of 160 583 sentenced and un-sentenced offenders, of which 156 433 (97.4 %) were male (DCS, 2018). Although recent reports do not provide information on the specific number of youth (in the age group as defined by the *White Paper on Corrections*, [2005]), the report does indicate that 125 of male offenders were under the age of 18 years and 3 239 of incarcerated male offenders were between the ages of 18-20 years (DCS, 2018).

While recent studies have documented the incidence and epidemiological characteristics of youth victims of violence and homicide (Gould, 2018; Matzopoulos et al., 2015; World Health Organisation [WHO], 2014) less information is available on the youth perpetrators of violence including their characteristics, the nature and circumstances of their crimes and their victims' characteristics. This study investigated the characteristics of young male offenders in a correctional facility in the country with the purpose of generating a profile of young male offenders and the nature and circumstances of the violent crimes they commit to inform prevention. The Introduction chapter begins by defining violence, violent crime and youth violence. This is followed by a brief overview of the period of youth and the status of youth in South Africa. The consequences and impact of youth violence and violent crime are presented followed by the public health approach to violence prevention. Thereafter the chapter offers a description of the aims and objectives of the current study and concludes with an outline of the dissertation.

### **1.1. Violence, Violent Crime and Youth Violence**

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) *violence* can be defined as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” (WHO, 2014, p. 2). This definition embraces all types of *violence*: including self-inflicted violence, interpersonal violence and group violence. Interpersonal violence refers to violence inflicted on one person by another person or by a small group of people and occurs between intimate partners, family, friends, acquaintances, and strangers and includes, for example, intimate partner violence, child maltreatment, and youth violence (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lazano, 2002; WHO, 2014).

*Violent crime* can be viewed as a breach of the rule of law in which a person intentionally threatens, attempts to, or actually inflicts physical harm on another person and is typically punishable by a governing authority (Stevens, 2009; Williams & Donnelly, 2014). In South Africa, different government departments define *violent crime* differently. For example, the SAPS (SAPS, 2017) define crimes that are violent in nature as contact crimes. Contact crimes are those crimes committed against a person and involve physical contact between the victim and the offender; and includes murder, attempted murder, sexual offences, common assault and robbery. The DCS (DCS, 2009) classifies offenders into five major crime categories, namely, aggressive, economical, sexual, narcotics and other. The aggressive crimes category

incorporates murder, attempted murder, culpable homicide, child murder, aggravating robbery, common robbery, serious assault, common assault and other aggressive crimes not included in the aforementioned (DCS, 2009).

*Youth violence* can be defined as intentional use of physical force or power by a young person against another person, group, or community (Haegerich & Dahlberg, 2011; Krug et al., 2002). *Youth violence* typically occurs among peers who are unrelated and who may or may not know each other, and generally takes place outside of the home (WHO, 2015). *Youth violence* includes various behaviours ranging in severity, from psychological aggression (e.g. social exclusion) to homicide (Haegerich & Dahlberg, 2011; WHO, 2015). However, definitions of the age group that constitute youth differ through the different societies across the world. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines youth as being between the ages of 10-29 years (Krug et al., 2002) while the United Nations (UN) places youth between the ages of 10-24 years (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UNDESA], 2005). Definitions also differ within South Africa with the *South African Youth Policy 2015-2020* placing youth between the ages of 14-35 years, consistent with the *African Youth Charter* that defines youth between the age of 15-35 years (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa & National Youth Development Agency, 2015) and the DCS, as outlined in the *White Paper on Correctional Services* (2005), that defines youth offenders as being between the ages of 18-25 years.

## **1.2 Youth and the State of Youth in South Africa**

Globally, all youth face developmental challenges that exposes them to risk. Normative physical, cognitive, emotional and sexual development may impose challenges to youth. Youth is the period of social, mental and physical maturation and also involves the formation of identity and the determination of roles within community and society (UNDESA, 2005). Physical maturation and the emergence of their sexuality present more challenges with new physical and emotional feelings and new social expectations (UNDESA, 2005). The period of late adolescence (18-21 years) into early adulthood (22-35 years) is characterised by achieving independence from others, especially parents and being self-sufficient. Arnett (2000) proposed the stage of emerging adulthood to define the stage of development between the ages of 18-25 years. This period is symbolised by exploration, instability, new possibilities and self-focusing. Youth is a period of preparing for adulthood which includes experimentation and less adult supervision, which while necessary for development also increases vulnerability of youth. Although the specific age group that defines youth may vary

across societies, youth is the period of transition from dependence in childhood, to independence in adulthood (UNDESA, 2013).

In South Africa, youth also face local or contextual challenges that exacerbate the risk for violence. Poverty and unemployment are major challenges for both youth and government. The results of the *Statistics South Africa Midyear Population Estimates 2017* (Statistics South Africa [Stats SA], 2017) reported a total of almost 15.1 million (approximately 27%) South Africans falling within the age profile of 15-29 years in South Africa and a further 16.7 million (approximately 30%) falling within the 0-14 year's category thereby creating an overall youth bulge in South Africa. A 1.45% increase in the adolescent population was observed from 2011 to 2016, and therefore an overall increase in the youth population in South Africa can be anticipated, thereby increasing the existing youth bulge in the country.

Further analysis of the report (Stats SA, 2017) indicated that the adolescent population (10-19 age group) made up 17.1% of the total South Africa population and mostly consisted of black African (84.4%), followed by coloured (8.6%), white (5.1%) and Asian/Indian (1.8%) adolescents. An overview of a report on the *Demographic Profile of Youth in South Africa* (Stats SA, 2018a) showed that more adolescents, resided in households with their mother present (73.1%) than with a father present (41.8%), 51.5% lived in 3-5 person household followed by 42.3% that lived in crowded households, that is with 6 persons or more. Most (77.1%) adolescents lived in households that were owned, 78.6% lived in formal dwellings, 80.6% of adolescents had access to water, 89.6% had electricity connected to their houses, however only 50.7% had access to a flush toilet while 36.4% still used pit-latrines systems. The report also found that 88.8% of adolescents attended an educational institute and only 24.2% travelled less than 15 minutes to such an institute (travel time is a socio-economic status indicator).

The South African Government has endeavoured to develop a youth policy, that is the *Integrated Youth Development Strategy* and in 2008 sanctioned the *National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) Act 54 of 2008* (The Presidency: The Republic of South Africa, 2008). The purpose of the agency is to tackle the challenges faced by South African youth. The mandate of the NYDA is to advance youth development through guidance, and to support initiatives across various sectors of society and spheres of government.



Despite efforts by government, South African youth still face numerous challenges. The youth population group is subjected to various socioeconomic factors relating to rapid social change, poor rule of law, unemployment, and long term poverty combined with economic inequality. Poor parenting and poor schooling have been attributed to the level and degree of youth violent crime both internationally and nationally (Burton, 2006; Ward, Dawes, & Matzopoulos, 2012; WHO, 2014). Poor schooling and high school dropout rates have long plagued the youth of South Africa. A Stats SA report on the *Social Profile of Youth* (Stats SA, 2016a) reported that 57% of unemployed youth have less than matric and this percentage point had remained unchanged from 2009 to 2014. A dysfunctional education system together with an increasing youth population within which substantial numbers of youth are unprepared for the demands of a technologically advanced workplace result in youth being unemployed and living in poverty (Foster, 2012).

Stats SA (2016a) reported an astounding 3.7 million youth who were unemployed in 2014, of which only 1.3 million had been previously employed and had work experience. Data also showed a 2.8 % decrease in youth employment from 2009 to 2014. The report further outlined that over 70% of unemployed individuals during the past decade were between the ages of 15-34 years. In South Africa, Stats SA measures poverty levels against the South African Multidimensional Poverty Index (SAMPI) which consists of four dimensions, namely health, education, standard of living and economic activity (Stats SA, 2016a). The majority of youth (81%) lived in households that earned below R15 000 per month in both rural and urban settings and just over 50% of those households that had a youth residing with them depended on a monthly salary as a source of income. A total of 54.4% of youth lived below the poverty line from 2010 to 2014 and 16.2% lived in households that experienced hunger as reported in 2014 (Stats SA, 2016a).

The precarious situation of youth in South Africa is evident in the high levels of violence and violent crime youth are exposed to. *The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Youth Risk Behaviour (NYRB) Survey* (Reddy et al., 2013) investigated risk-related behaviours for school learners in Grades 8 to 11 and the questionnaire related mostly to behaviours exhibited and experienced within a six month period. Key findings derived during the time of the study that were related to behaviours involving injury and trauma and that focused on violence as intentional and unintentional injuries, stated that 13% of learners reported carrying weapons and 16% had belonged to gangs in the six months preceding the study. On school property, 7% of learners reported carrying weapons and 17% were involved in physical fights within a six month

period preceding the study. The study also found that 32% of school learners admitted to having drunk alcohol and 25% had engaged in binge drinking in the preceding month. Furthermore, illegal substance use varied from 13% for ever having smoked dagga, 12% for use of inhalants, 5% for cocaine, 6% for 'tik' and 5% for mandrax (Reddy et al., 2013).

From a victim perspective, the 3<sup>rd</sup> *NYRB Survey* (Reddy et al., 2013) also indicated that 12% of Grade 8 to 11 school-going youth were threatened or injured by someone with a weapon in the past six months. The survey found that 34% of learners reported having been bullied, 9% had been forced to have sex and 21% felt unsafe at school during the preceding month of the study.

Violence is also one of the leading causes of injury-related death among youth, aged 15-29 in South Africa (Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla, & Ratele, 2009). An average of 42.8% of youth males between the ages of 15-29 died as a result of non-natural causes, that is accidental, homicidal or suicide-related deaths, in 2016 of which 24.7% of non-natural deaths were assault-related (Stats SA, 2018b).

### **1.3 Consequences and Impact Youth Violence and Violent Crime**

From an individual perspective, violence can impact at a psycho-social and physical level. Psycho-social impact may manifest as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety while physical impact may be actual physical wounds or injuries on a person (Kaminer & Eagle, 2012). Kaminer and Eagle (2012) stated that in order to understand the relationship between violence exposure and violence perpetration amongst youth, the impact of psychological trauma caused by experiencing or witnessing violence should also be explored. The impact of trauma on the adolescent can lead to withdrawal and non-communication, or the display of defiant, aggressive or reckless behaviour patterns that may increase their risk for development of substance abuse, criminal activity and violence perpetration (Kaminer & Eagle, 2012). Apart from injury and untimely death, violence during adolescence can also negatively impact on identity formation (Stevens, 2009). Violence may be associated with increased health risk behaviours and problems with mental, physical and reproductive health (WHO, 2014). Interpersonal violence can also lead to serious and life-long health effects including physical disabilities, depression, high-risk sexual behaviour and substance abuse (WHO, 2014). Researchers in South Africa have found that early abuse is a risk factor for emotional dysregulation and aggression (Van Der Merwe, Dawes, & Ward, 2012). Adolescents who are “victimised by severe violence are more likely to approve of aggression

as a social response, to have problems interpreting social cues and to have deviant social goals” (Van Der Merwe et al., 2012, p. 59).

Youth violence not only causes harm to the victim, but permeates into the lives of their families, friends and communities. Research pertaining to the psychological effect that incarceration has on the families of offenders has been neglected at an academic level. The perpetration of a crime and the subsequent events that follow from the arrest, to the trial, conviction and incarceration impacts both the families of the offender and the victim at a psychological and financial level. Psychologically, the families of the offender may face shame that can result in social isolation and have to deal with separation from a child, partner or even parent (Betz-Hamilton, 2016). There is also the possibility that the offender may have perpetrated their crime against another family member leading to further psychological issues within the family unit (Betz-Hamilton, 2016). The parents of younger offenders may also feel anxiety for a child that has been incarcerated. There is also a potential financial strain as the offender may possibly be a family breadwinner. The compounded effects of loss of income, social isolation, difficulties in maintaining contact, deterioration in relationships and the extra burden of childcare can lead to the offenders’ partners experiencing a sense of loss and hopelessness (Murray, 2013). Children of offenders may experience mental health problems such as depression, heightened aggressive behaviours, withdrawal and may even runaway (Murray, 2013).

The families of victims may face traumatisation and experience a sense of hopelessness. They may have to deal with the victims’ inability to perform in their roles, such as that of parent or partner, the functional impact on their quality of life as well as the feeling of anxiety and the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Hanson, Sawyer, Begle, & Hubel, 2010). Families of victims may also experience grief and loss if the victim was killed.

Communities can be considered to be the secondary victims of violence and further experience the social effects of violence such as loss of social fabric or cultural support and social isolation (UNODC, 2014a). Community perceptions of safety and security may be distorted due to differing benchmarks for those communities emerging from a conflict situation (UNODC, 2014b). People may perceive high levels of crime as being low in comparison to the levels experienced during the period of conflict. Further psychological effects on the community also include dealing with the subsequent consequences of the acts of violence such as death and loss. Youth in the community that witness violence are at a

greater risk of engaging in violent behaviour thereby perpetuating the cycle of violence (UNODC, 2014a).

Violent crime also impacts a country on multiple levels. It places a strain on the health and criminal justice system and the social and welfare services. Nearly half of all nonfatal injuries in South Africa ensue from violence with an estimated 3-5 million people seeking health care for non-fatal injuries (Downie & Angelo, 2015; Seedat et al., 2009). Violence also impacts on costs related to health and welfare services, disrupts a range of essential services and undermines the fabric of society (Krug et al., 2002; WHO, 2014). Violence not only has a psychological effect on the citizens, it also increases the cost of living and prices of home insurance, homeowner's and tenants spend more on safety and security equipment and property values decrease (Krug et al., 2002; WHO, 2014). Crime and violence incur expenditures in government costs related to policing and the legal/judicial systems in a country (Krug et al., 2002). Personal and collective security destabilizes which consequently inhibits social development and economic growth decelerates (Seedat, Van Niekerk, Suffla, & Ratele, 2014). It has an economic impact on business and government and the overall economy of the country, including financial costs relating to economic health and social factors that are incurred (Krug et al., 2002). Economic development is also adversely affected with the impact of workforce absenteeism, loss of human capital and loss of productivity. (Krug et al., 2002; WHO, 2014). The *World Economic Forum's Global Competiveness Report 2016-2017* ranked crime and theft sixth in the sixteen most problematic factors for doing business in South Africa (Schwab & World Economic Forum, 2016).

In light of the above-mentioned reasons, it is critical that a better understanding of youth violence is gained in order to advance prevention and intervention measures. Understanding the complex correlations between risk factors and high crime and violence levels is vital for the effective implementation of safety strategies. "If we could confidently predict which youth would be prone to commit violent acts and at which stage in their development such delinquency was most likely to erupt, it would significantly strengthen our efforts to prevent juvenile violence" (Hawkins et al., 2000, p. 1).

#### 1.4 The Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention

In South Africa, violence and violent crime have been primarily tackled from a criminal justice approach. The characteristics of the criminal justice approach focuses on rehabilitation rather than primary prevention. The criminal justice approach is a more reactive approach that occurs at secondary and tertiary levels of violence prevention (Moore, 1995).

However, the public health approach focuses on primary prevention. The starting point of the public health approach is the scientific fact that violent behaviour and its consequences can be prevented (WHO & London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, 2010). The health and social sciences in South Africa view violence, particularly youth violence as a threat to national health rather than a criminal problem (Bowman, Stevens, Eagle, & Matzopoulos, 2015). The public health approach seeks to empower individuals and communities to view violence as a problem that can be understood and changed and also places strong emphasis on the prevention of death, injuries and violent behaviour (Krug et al., 2002).

The public health approach consists of a systematic and scientific approach to violence prevention and focuses on primary prevention measures with four key steps:

- i. Uncovering as much basic knowledge as possible about all the aspects of violence through systematically collecting data on the magnitude, scope, characteristics and consequences of violence at local, national and international levels.
  - ii. Investigating why violence occurs – that is, conducting research to determine the causes and correlates of violence; the factors that increase or decrease the risk for violence; the factors that might be modifiable through interventions.
  - iii. Exploring ways to prevent violence, using the information from the above, by designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating interventions.
  - iv. Implementing, in a range of settings, interventions that appear promising, widely disseminating information and determining the cost-effectiveness of programmes.
- (Butchart, Mikton, & Bartolemeos, 2010, p. 3-4).

Although the public health approach incorporates secondary and tertiary prevention, its focus is on primary prevention. This level focuses on action before there are symptoms categorised as risk factors for violence, and includes strategies aimed at eradicating violent behaviours before it transpires. From a public health approach, violence is the outcome of many interacting risk and protective factors operating at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels (Haegerich & Dahlberg, 2011; Krug et al., 2002). Guided by Bronfenbrenner's (1994; 2005) ecological approach to development (e.g. Rosenberg & Knox, 2005; Ward et al., 2012) the public health approach offers important insights into the determinants of youth violence, with a focus on prevention, and is consistent with psychological approaches that emphasise individual and contextual factors that may contribute to youth violence (Amodei & Scott, 2002). The theoretical foundations of the public health approach is interdisciplinary and science based and combines behavioural psychology, biomedical science and public administration (Potvin, Gendron, Bilodeau, & Chabot, 2005) and aims to address the causes and consequences of violence (Krug et al., 2002). It also views the psychological and behavioural processes in health behaviours with a social orientation that requires the involvement of multiple actors (Potvin et al., 2005).

### **1.5 Aims and Objectives**

In light of the lack of information on youth violent offenders in South Africa the current study seeks to contribute to the local evidence base by providing information that will contribute to an understanding of the characteristics of young violent offenders and the nature and circumstances of the crimes committed for the purpose of facilitating the development of appropriate locally based prevention strategies.

The overall aim of this study is to provide a profile of violent youth offenders who were incarcerated at a Correctional Facility in KwaZulu Natal from 2014 to 2017 and who were younger than the age of 25 years when convicted. This study specifically focuses on male youth offenders convicted for violent offences as defined by the *South African Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977* under Schedule 5 to Schedule 8 offences (Republic of South Africa, 1977) and had been incarcerated as aggressive or sexual offenders according to the DCS classification.

The objectives of the research are:

1. to describe the characteristics (demographic, socio-economic background, family and environmental background, and behavioural risk factors) of violent youth offenders,
2. to describe the nature and circumstances of the violent crime for which offenders were incarcerated, and
3. to determine whether offender characteristics differ in accordance with the type of violent crime committed.

## **1.6 Rationale for the Study**

This study was undertaken to contribute to the substantial gaps in knowledge relating to perpetrators of youth violent crime. Studies have focused mainly on the victims of violent crime and fewer studies, especially within the South African context, have focused on the perpetrators of youth violent crime. The practical implications of this study relate to assisting various sectors of government to make more informed decisions when designing youth violence prevention programmes.

## **1.7 Dissertation Outline**

Chapter one introduces the study by defining the key concepts of violence, violent crime, and youth violence which are associated with the study and provides an overview of youth, the state of youth in South Africa, the extent of youth violence, and the subsequent consequences and impact it presents. The aims and objectives of this study are also outlined.

Chapter two discusses literature relating to the global and national magnitude and distribution of youth violence by firstly studying the extent of youth violence and the characteristics of violent youth offenders. The chapter also reviews literature pertaining to different types of violent crimes, the nature and circumstances of violent crime, the victim's demographic details and the situational context of the criminal event.

Chapter three contemplates the use of the ecological framework as a heuristic tool to study youth violence at an individual, relational, community and societal level. The developmental pathways to violence and theoretical propagations of violence are discussed from an ecological framework perspective.

Chapter four deliberates the methodological approach for the study by discussing the research design, case identification process, data collection instruments and procedures and the various types of data analyses used for the study. Ethical considerations are also provided.

Chapter five presents the results of the research and the findings of the study according to the objectives outlined in chapter one. Statistical information pertaining to the profile of youth violent offender and the nature and circumstances of their crimes are presented. Further analysis to determine the relationship between the first two objectives is also presented.

The sixth and final chapter offers a discussion of the results, proposes recommendations for prevention and provides the limitations of the study and the conclusion to the thesis.



## **CHAPTER TWO: MAGNITUDE, DISTRIBUTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH VIOLENCE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews selected international and national literature on youth violence focusing on the magnitude and distribution of youth violence, perpetrator characteristics, incident characteristics and victim characteristics. The extent of youth violence at both a global and national level are reviewed. The chapter also explores the characteristics of young violent offenders, the types of crimes they commit and the circumstances of their crimes. Demographic characteristics of the victims' of youth violent offenders were also studied.

### **2.2 The Extent of Youth Violence: Global and in South Africa**

Although homicide represents only the tip of the iceberg of violent crimes, it is considered to be a useful indicator of the general levels of violent crime in a country. The figures reported are more reliable and easier to compare across countries and regions. Homicide is considered the most serious end in the spectrum of violent crimes and reliable statistical information relating to homicide rates are widely collected and reported as the killing of another person tends to be recorded more proficiently than other crimes (Malby, 2010). Homicide rates are generally reported from a victim perspective that details statistics relating to victim characteristics.

Homicide and non-fatal assault contribute largely to premature death, injury and disabilities amongst youth, with young people being mainly the perpetrators and victims of such violence (Krug et al., 2002). An estimated 200 000 homicides occur globally each year between youth aged 10-29 years which accounts for 43% of all homicides annually (WHO, 2014) and for each young person slain, another estimated 20-40 more incur injuries that require medical treatment. On a worldwide scale, homicide is the fourth leading cause of death within the 10-29 year age category, preceded by road traffic injuries, HIV/AIDS and self-harm (WHO, 2015).

International research has suggested that the highest levels of homicide occur in the Americas and Africa and the lowest levels in countries in Europe (Malby, 2010). Homicide rates show a substantial variation across different countries and different regions. WHO (2015) reported that the prevalence of youth violence counted by the rates of death of persons aged 15-29 are a hundred or more times higher in some countries of Latin America, Caribbean and Sub-

Saharan Africa than those of Western Europe and Western Pacific. *The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Annual Report 2014* (UNODC, 2014b) reported that the homicide rate in South and Central America among youth males aged 15-24 was four times higher than that of the global average with most deaths resulting from interpersonal violence, drug-related crimes and juvenile gangs (Atienzo, Baxter, & Kaltenthaler, 2017). Youth homicide rates tend to be lower in higher income countries of Europe, parts of Asia and the Pacific with a per capita rate of 0.9 per 100 000 persons, a rate of 17.6 per 100 000 in Africa and 36.4 per 100 000 in Latin America (Krug et al., 2002). *The Global Status Report on Violence Prevention 2014* (WHO, 2014) reported the rate of homicide of males between the ages of 15-29 as 18.2 per 100 000 which was the category with the highest rate of homicide in the world.

Epidemiological patterns of youth homicide in South Africa are similar to international patterns of victims being predominately males. Kramer and Ratele (2012) and Ward et al. (2012) indicated that the rate of violence amongst South African youth, especially young black men, is extremely high. Recent studies relating to the national homicide rates in South Africa revealed that mortality rates for males was significantly higher than that of females' equivalent to 4.2 male deaths per female death and most homicide related deaths occurred within the 15-29 year old age range at a rate of 69.9 per 100 000 population (Matzopoulos et al., 2015). Matzopoulos et al. (2015) presented their findings after conducting a retrospective descriptive study using routine data collected during post-mortem investigations in 2009. Another study carried out by Swart, Seedat, and Nel (2016) on cases drawn from the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS) to investigate the incidence and epidemiological characteristics of adolescent homicides (15-19 years) in Johannesburg, South Africa using a retrospective population-based study, indicated that the annual average rate of male homicides during the period 2001 – 2009 was 39.8 per 100 000 males.

### **2.2.1 Youth incarceration rates**

Another indicator of youth violence is the number of young offenders that are incarcerated for violent crimes. Incarceration rates are much lower than incident rates as these refer to those offenders that have been convicted for their crime/s and crime rates usually refer to the number of incidents or victims. While incarceration rates are not indicative of the number of crimes committed, it is a useful indicator for information pertaining to offenders of violence and violent crime.

The *World Prison Population List 12<sup>th</sup> Edition* (Walmsley, 2018) reported a total of 10 743 619 persons incarcerated globally, which excludes figures for Eritrea, Somalia and the Democratic People's Republic of (North) Korea and had incomplete figures for China and Guinea Bisseu. The figures indicated that the majority of incarcerated individuals were males, however, age groups and the types of crimes that individuals were incarcerated for was not indicated. While scant information is available globally on the conviction rates for violent crimes for youth offenders, studies carried out by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the United States of America (USA) indicated that the arrest rates for juveniles for the perpetration of violent crimes was 160.7 per 100 000 inhabitants. Overall, the manifestation of violent crimes occurred at a rate of 382.9 per 100 000 persons with 79.5% of persons arrested for violent crimes being male (Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Project, 2017).

The *United Nations Global Study on Children in Detention* which is proposed to be completed in September 2019 aims to assess the extent to which children are placed in detention at a global level as countless children worldwide are placed in inhuman conditions and adult facilities (UN Global Study on Children in Detention, 2018). This study will provide a better indication of the actual number of children and youth who are incarcerated globally.

South Africa presented the highest number of incarcerated persons for the African Continent at the end of September 2018 according to the *World Prison Population List 12<sup>th</sup> Edition* released by the *Institute of Criminal Policy Research* (Walmsley, 2018). Although the figures are excessive, it is difficult to determine the actual figures of those offenders incarcerated for violent crimes, the global total for youth incarcerated, youth incarcerated for violent crime and the global total for young males incarcerated. As reported in the preceding chapter, statistics released by the DCS in their *Annual Report 2017/18* (DCS, 2018) conveyed a total of 117 878 sentenced offenders with 125 offenders under the age of 18 and 3 239 offenders between the ages of 18-20 years. The statistics further showed that an average of 209 children were either in remand or sentenced from March 2017 to March 2018. The global pattern of predominate male population in incarceration is also emulated within South African jails with total of 114 909 of sentenced offenders being males.

While the SAPS releases crime statistics annually, their report does not indicate the exact number of crimes perpetrated by young people. However, the exceedingly high rate of violent crime in South Africa has been well documented internationally and nationally. The annual

crime statistics released by the SAPS (2018) has shown an increase in the number of murders (6.9%), attempted murders (0.2%) and sexual crimes (0.9%) committed from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018 within the contact crime categories. The number of murders increased from 17 805 in 2014/2015 to 20 336 in the 2017/2018 fiscal with the sharpest increase of 6.9% from the 2016/2017 to the 2017/2018 fiscal. The curiously high rate of crime in South Africa, endorsed by the annual crime statistics released by the SAPS (SAPS, 2018) are indicative that a problem does exist and more research is required into the determinants of violence and violent behaviour, especially amongst youth, in order for it to be further understood and prevented. Furthermore, the exceedingly high number of youth incarcerated within South African correctional facilities highlights the urgent need for preventive measures to be implemented and actioned. Further research is required on the risk profile and risk factors associated with youth violent offenders in order to develop effective preventative measures.

### **2.3 Characteristics of Violent Young Offenders**

Research has shown that individuals with certain demographic characteristics such as age, sex and race are more likely to become involved with or perpetrate violent crimes than other individuals. Research shows that males make up an overwhelming majority of offenders with almost 94% of the global prison population being male. Males and Brown (2014) purported that young black males in the USA between the ages of 15 - 24 were fifteen times more likely to be arrested for murder, ten times more likely to be arrested for violent crimes and thirty times more likely to die from gun violence than their white and Hispanic counterparts. A study done by Baglivio, Jackowski, Greenwald, and Howell (2014) to assess the prevalence of serious, violent and chronic (SVC) juvenile offenders showed that SVC offenders were younger than the age of 12 at age of first offence (53.9%), were roughly twice as likely to be male than female and more than twice as likely to be black than Hispanic and 2.5 times more likely to be black than white. A large majority (74%) of the victims in the USA who reported violent crimes by youth indicated that the offender was a male (McCurley & Snyder, 2004). Vaughn, Salas-Wright, DeLisi, and Maynard (2015) identified a severe 5% group that was 101% more likely to be black than white and 76% more likely to be male than female in a study carried out in the USA.

Youth violence in South Africa can be estimated by the rate of injury related cases among youth that are reported. Homicide in South Africa is predominately perpetrated by males against other males (Ratele, 2013) or males against their intimate female partners (Centre for the Study of Violence & Reconciliation [CSVR], 2007). Herrenkohl et al. (2000) proposed

that males are more likely to engage in serious violence due to the roles that they are socialised into that encourage higher levels of physical aggression.

## **2.4 Type and Situational Context of Youth Violent Crime**

### **2.4.1 Types of violent crime**

In terms of the criminal justice system, offences involving assault, rape, robbery and murder are categorised as violent crimes (CSVR, 2007), which is also incorporated into the definitions of contact crimes by the SAPS as outlined in chapter one. An offender can commit more than one type of crime in one criminal event, such as having a motive for robbery that ends in a homicide. The contact crimes categorisation in South Africa is similar to the definitions of violent crime outlined by the FBI in the USA which articulated four categories of violent crime that is, murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Project, 2016).

Studies in the USA indicated that the greatest percentages of youth offenders report property offences (burglary, arson, theft) (45%), person offences (homicide, rape, assault, robbery) (43%), and status offences (truancy, possession of illegal substances) (42%) (Sedlak & Bruce, 2010). Frisell, Lichtenstein, and Langstrom (2010) used a nested case-control design to differentiate violent crimes in Sweden into categories of homicide (0.5%), assault (29.5%), robbery (2.4%), threats and violence against an officer (9.3%), gross violation of a person's/woman's integrity (0.3%), unlawful coercion (0.8%), unlawful threats (9.3%), kidnapping (0.5%), arson (0.6%), intimidation (6.1%) and any other violent crime (40.7%). Lai, Zeng, and Chu (2016) conducted a study in Singapore and differentiated offenders into three subgroups, namely violent only offenders (13.0%) that had committed only violent offences such as assault and robbery; non-violent offenders (67.1%) who showed no intent to harm in their acts of crime, such as theft and drug use; and violent plus offenders (19.9%) that had committed crimes in both categories.

A USA study conducted by Baglivio et al. (2014) used existing data that classified all offenders entering the justice system into subgroups of serious violent chronic (SVC) youth offenders, non-SVC youth offenders and not S, V or C youth to determine the most prevalent types of crimes committed. *Serious* referred to any youth with a history of a felony offence (homicide, assault, sexual violence or kidnapping) offence, *violent* referred to any youth with a history with a felony offence against a person or an firearm/weapon charge and *chronic*

referred to youth with four or more official referrals, either misdemeanour or felony charge. SVC youth (8.9%) met the criterion for all three categories, non-SVC (47.6%) youth met the criterion for either serious (54.7%), violent (29.0%) or chronic (15.4%) or a combination of the three categories and not S, V, or C (43.5%) didn't meet any of the three criterion.

A study in the Netherlands identified four distinct subgroups of serious juvenile violent offenders that is, seriously violent offenders (15.7%) that commit violent offences, albeit on a low frequency, such as assault, manslaughter and homicide; violent property offenders (45.9%) who commit violent and property offences such as assault and robbery at a high frequency; property offenders (29.4%) that commit high frequency property crimes such as theft and breaking and entering; and sex offenders (9.0%) who almost exclusively commit sexual offences (Mulder, Vermunt, Brand, Bullens, & Van Marle, 2012).

Although information on the type of violent crimes specifically committed by young offenders in South Africa is lacking, the annual crime statistics released by the SAPS provide some indication of the types of crimes that are committed overall. For instance, for the 2017/2018 fiscal, contact or violent crimes accounted for more than a third (36.2 %) of crimes committed annually in South Africa (SAPS, 2018). The severity of contact crimes can be further analysed to a daily occurrence rate of almost 1 648 reported cases of contact crimes perpetrated per day in South Africa. The daily incidence rate of the most serious crimes equate to 56 murders, 50 attempted murders, 137 sexual offences, 458 serious assaults, 428 common assaults, 139 common robberies and 379 cases of robberies with aggravating circumstances (SAPS, 2018). From an incarceration perspective, 55% of the incarcerated offender population were placed in the aggressive crimes category, 20% in the economic crimes category, 18% in the sexual crime category, 3% in the narcotics category and the remaining 4% into the other crimes category (Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority, 2016).

The research shows that youth offenders who commit crime in European countries such as Netherlands and Sweden are more likely to commit violent type crimes. The USA shows a very small difference for the property crime and person crime offences which falls into a violent type crime category. However, Singapore, an island country in Southeast Asia consisted of majority non-violent offenders. South Africa presented findings similar to those of the European countries and the USA with more than a third of crimes committed being violent type crimes.

#### 2.4.2 The nature and circumstances of violent crime

The situational context of the violent event including the use and type of weapon, use of illegal substances, accomplices, preferred locations and the degree of harm inflicted on their victims as well as victim characteristics are discussed briefly. Homicide is the type of violence most often studied therefore the literature reviewed contains mostly aspects of homicide.

The use of weapons plays a significant role during the commission of a homicide. Globally, the use of a firearm accounted for 40% of homicides, while the use of physical force or a blunt object accounted for 33% and sharp objects were used in approximately 25% of homicides (UNODC, 2014a). The use of firearms in homicides committed in 2016 rose to 44% globally, and further analysis revealed 81% of firearms related deaths were intentional homicide, 15% were as a result of direct conflict and an estimated 4% was unintentional or as a result of legal interventions (Mc Evoy & Hideg, 2017). The use of firearms as a mechanism for homicide is also prevalent in the Americas, while the use of sharp objects is more prevalent in countries in Europe and Oceania (UNODC, 2014a). Firearms make up the largest mechanisms for youth homicides in the Americas. The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) in the USA found that an alarming 86% of youth victims were killed with a firearm in 2014 (CDC, 2016) and a Columbian study indicated that 80% of youth homicides were firearm related (Krug et al., 2002). Khoshnood (2017) inferred that the increase in the homicide rate in Sweden could be attributed to an increase in gang activities with the main *modus operandi* being firearms and the easy accessibility to firearms.

The trends in South Africa are generally similar to the global patterns of weapon use for homicides. *The Global Status Report on Violence Prevention* (WHO, 2014) detailed the most common weapons used for homicide in South Africa were firearms (33%), sharp force (32%) and blunt force weapons (27%). Studies carried out by CSVr (2008a) found that firearms were used in 54% of incidents of violent crimes investigated and knives or other sharp instruments were used in 32% of violent incidents. The overall crime statistics presented by the SAPS reported that 41.3% of homicides were committed with a firearm followed by knives (30.7%) during the 2017/2018 fiscal (SAPS, 2018). Other studies carried out by Stats SA (2016b) indicated that firearms were used in 78.4% of homicides that occurred in urban metro areas, while offenders used mostly knives for homicides that occurred in other urban areas (44.9%) and rural areas (33.3%). For the crime category of assault, knives were mostly used when the crime occurred on the street (32.2%), places of entertainment (31.4%) and the home (20.3%). In the instance of attempted murder, between the choice of firearm and knives,

firearms were used more often (86%) than knives (14%) (SAPS, 2018). For the category of robbery, firearms were mostly used (59.5%), followed by knives (28.6%) (SAPS, 2018).

The excessive use of alcohol was also related to multiple types of violence. The consumption of illicit drugs and alcohol increases one's risk to becoming a perpetrator of violence (UNODC, 2014a). Studies in the USA indicated that 44% of youth in custody admitted to having been under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs when committing an offence (UNODC, 2014a). A study undertaken by Souverein, Ward, Visser, and Burton (2015) in South Africa that investigated incarcerated offenders aged 12-25 years from eight different correctional facilities indicated that serious, violent youth offenders exhibited problems with alcohol abuse. Perpetrators of assault were also more likely to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs during the criminal event when the assault occurred at home (39.9%), in the street (32.8%) and outdoor areas (39.5%) (Stats SA, 2016b).

Peers can influence offending behaviour both directly through co-offending and indirectly by passing on information and advice (Lantz, 2018). Researchers have theorised that the presence of others during the criminal event possibly changes behaviour during the perpetration of the crime. The presence of accomplices or co-offenders may potentially increase violent behaviour during the criminal event (McGloin & Piquero, 2009) and allow for violent behaviour that may not have been engaged in if the offender was alone, also referred to as collective behaviour perspective (McGloin & Thomas, 2016). Individual violence is normalised within a group violence context through diffusion of responsibility and anonymity (Littman & Paluck, 2015). While groups were transient and temporary, offenders that engaged in group offences committed more offences and had longer offending careers (Lantz & Hutchinson, 2015).

Studies have been conducted to investigate the influence of co-offenders during a criminal event. For example Lantz (2018) found that offences carried out by a group were firstly, 1.64 times or 64% more likely to involve the use of a weapon than offences carried out alone and secondly 79% more likely to result in a serious injury for violent incidents including homicide. The study also demonstrated that an increase in offence severity was directly proportional to an increase in the number of co-offenders in a group. A similar study by McGloin and Piquero (2009) concluded that (1) violent offences were 2.65 times more likely to have a higher average number of offenders per event compared to nonviolent offences; (2) violence group offences increased by 9.6% for every additional co-offender (3) the odds of an individual's



first group offence being violent increased by 33% for every additional accomplice present during the event, independent of whether these co-offenders had a history of prior violence. In their studies of contact crimes, Stats SA (2016b) investigated the number of accomplices involved in a homicide and results indicated that perpetrators of homicide mostly acted alone (45.6%) while for 35.7% of homicide cases the perpetrator/s were unknown.

Globally, homicide occurs more frequently in urban locations with notably higher rates in urban areas of Central America, the Caribbean and most parts of Africa (UNODC, 2014a). Studies in South Africa are more in-depth when investigating the exact locations of homicide. For example, studies carried out by Swart, Seedat, and Nel (2018) on adolescent homicide victimisation indicated males were predominately murdered in public locations while female victims were predominately murdered at their domestic residence. Stats SA (2016b) reviewed data from cases involving contact crimes and found that the most common location for the occurrence of assault was the street, followed by the victim's domestic residence.

The degree of harm inflicted on victims of homicide is death. The degree of harm inflicted on victims of other violent crimes such as assault, rape and robbery with aggravating circumstances vary from serious injuries that require hospitalisation, serious injuries that require medical care but no hospitalisation, minor injuries or no physical injuries as distinguished in Figure 2.1 derived from Stats SA (2016b, p. 19). Most assaults that occurred at the victims homes required hospitalisation (37.2%), followed by injuries that required treatment but did not require hospitalisation (29.6%). For a larger percentage (40.5%) of assaults that occurred on the street the victim sustained injuries that required medical treatment but did not require hospitalisation for injuries sustained and for assault that occurred outdoors 38.1% required hospitalisation and 38.0% sustained injuries that required medical treatment but did not require hospitalisation. When assault occurred in places of entertainment 47.9% of victims sustained injuries that required hospitalisation followed by 32.6% of victims that required medical treatment but did not require hospitalisation.

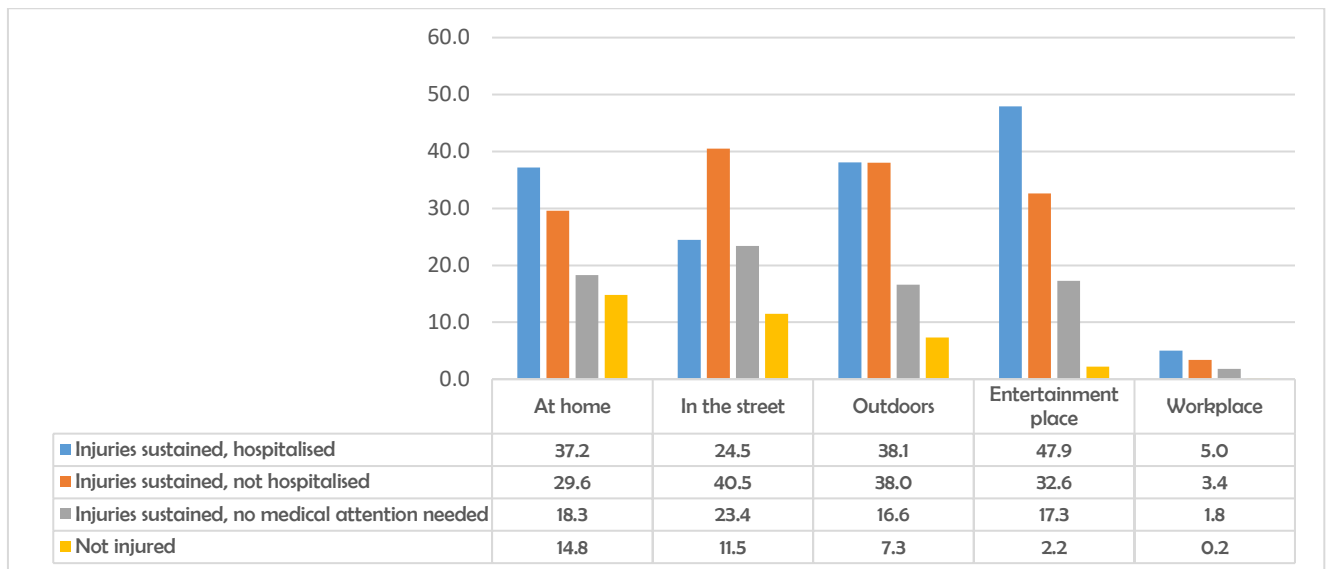


Figure 2.1. Percentage distribution of victims of assault who sustained injuries as a result of the assault. Reprinted from *Crime Statistics Series Volume IV: Exploration of the extent and circumstances surrounding housebreaking/burglary and home robbery. (In depth analysis of the Victims of Crime Survey Data 2015-2016). Report No. 03-40-04, (p. 19)* by Statistics South Africa (2016), South Africa: Statistics South Africa. Adapted with permission.

### 2.4.3 Victims' demographic characteristics

The CDC in the USA reported a total of 4 300 youth homicides in 2014, which is an average of 12 young persons aged 10 to 24 being murdered each day (CDC, 2016). Young males are the predominant victims of youth violence with an alarming 83% of deaths amongst youth males occurring due to youth violence (WHO, 2014). In the USA studies done by the CDC in 2014 (CDC, 2016) indicated that 86% of youth homicide victims between the ages of 10 to 24 were male. The homicide rate in Latin America was reported at 22 per 100 000 persons (Munyo, 2013).

Research carried out by the FBI in the USA reported that the majority (95%) of the victims of sexual assaults committed by youth were younger than 18, as were 53% of aggravated assaults, 61% of simple assaults, and 43% of victims of robberies (Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Project, 2017). McCurley and Snyder (2004) analysed data from the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System and reported that almost half (48%) of the victims of nonfatal violent crimes committed by youth were other youth who were acquainted with the offender and only 7% of victims of nonfatal violent crimes by youth were an adult who was a stranger to the offender

In South Africa, there is a lack of information on the characteristics of the specific victims of violent offender, although victimisation studies which focuses on victims in general (Stats SA, 2016b; Stats SA, 2018c; Stats SA, 2018d), provide some indication of who the victims of youth violent offenders are likely to be. South African youth are at particularly high risk for exposure to violence. Burton (2006) and Leoschut (2006a) asserted that youth between the ages of 12 and 22 years are twice as likely as adults to be victimized by crime and violence. Youth between the ages of 10 and 29 years account for 48% of all violent deaths in the country (Foster, 2012), with rates of youth murder being especially high in Cape Town's impoverished townships (Seedat et al., 2009).

A study carried out at Cape Town emergency and trauma centres during October 2010 and September 2011 reported that an astounding 70% of the injured were male and the most common age group treated for violence related injuries was the 18-30 year age group (WHO, 2015). The high rate of premature violent death amongst black South Africans is unnaturally high and disproportionate (Ratele, 2013, Seedat et al., 2009) with the highest rate amongst males aged 15-29 years old.

Ratele (2010) indicated that urban young black men are at a disproportionately higher risk for being victims of murder. Black males between the ages of 20 – 40 years of age are nine times more likely to die from violent murder than their female counterparts (Ratele, 2010). The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) conducted a *National Youth Victimisation Study* in 2005 and *National Youth Lifestyle Study* in 2008 to explore the nature and extent of youth victimisation and found that violence is a typical attribute of the social spaces of youth in South Africa (Leoschut, 2009). This research typically shows that victims have similar demographics to offenders, and are usually known friends or acquaintances.

#### **2.4.4 The situational contexts of violent crime by crime classification**

From the above information it is likely that the event and victim characteristics (situational context) differ according to the type of the crime committed. The situational characteristics of the criminal event generally consider the victim, offender and the event characteristics. Different researchers have defined types of violent crimes differently across their studies, and use different methods to assign crimes into different categories and offenders into different typologies. The classification strategies differ in accordance with the researcher and the degree of violence used by the offender within the situational context of the different subtypes of violent crime.

Carter et al. (2017) investigated the characteristics of violent firearm related conflicts among high risk youth in Flint, Michigan in the USA and found that firearm-related conflicts (48.2%) were more likely to involve unknown assailant(s) or stranger(s) while non-firearm conflicts (70.4%) were more likely with family/friends or known acquaintance(s). For fire-arm related non-partner violent conflicts offenders were more likely to be male (80.4%), black (70.6%) and used marijuana (98.6%) or have a drug use disorder (65.7%) and used marijuana (37.6%) prior to the violent conflict.

There is some evidence in South Africa that indicates that the circumstances of violent crime differ depending on the type of crime committed. For example, interpersonal homicide accounted for 57% of murders perpetrated and a sharp weapon was usually used on victims that were intimate partners, family members or acquaintances of the offender. 70% of homicides that were linked to disputes or arguments also indicated knives as the weapons of choice and the use of firearms was five times higher than that of knives when homicides were linked to criminal activities (Stats SA, 2016a).

Swart et al. (2018) used cluster analysis to categorise adolescent homicide into subtypes from a victim's perspective in Johannesburg, South Africa during the period 2001-2007. Using eight categorical variables namely, victim's sex, offender's sex, offender's age, victim-offender relationship, number of offenders, motive or precipitating circumstances, scene and weapon, Swart et al., (2018) identified three distinct subgroups that is (a) male victims killed by strangers during a crime-related event, (b) male victims killed by a friend/acquaintance during an argument, and (c) female victims killed by male offenders. The results of the study illustrates that the characteristics of homicides involving crime, such as robbery differ from those homicide involving arguments which differ from homicides perpetrated against females.

Similarly, CSVr (2008a) categorised 6 homicide types in their study of SAPS dockets from six different police precincts in South Africa namely, (a) argument-type homicides (26%); (b) homicides in the course of another crime (usually a robbery) (12%); (c) killings in self-defence (2%); (d) homicides related to conflicts between (formal) groups such as taxi associations or gangs (less than 1%); (e) various other types of homicide (7%); (f) homicides where the circumstances or motives are unclear (12%) and (g) homicides where the circumstances and motive are unknown (41%). Victims of argument-type homicide differ

from victims of crime related homicide in that they were younger age group (20-29) and knew the offender in some way (75%) as compared to victims from the crime-related homicide that were older (30-39) and the offenders were strangers to them (45%). The situational contexts differed in that argument type homicides involved a knife or sharp object (61%) and the majority of offenders in this category were sober (4% were under the influence of alcohol) while crime-related homicides involved a fire-arm (81%) and offenders mostly were under the influence of alcohol (48% tested positive for alcohol). The locality of both subtypes were similar with argument type homicides occurring mostly on the street (32%) or victim's home (24%) and crime-related homicide occurring mostly on the street (43%) or victim's home (18%).

An exploration into the characteristics of selected contact crimes in South Africa by Stats SA (2016b) showed that in the case of assault most (64.5%) of the offenders were young (between the ages of 15-34 years); victims consisted of friends / acquaintances or persons known to the victim (48.3%), intimate partners (13.1%), relatives (5.8%) and strangers (29.0%); the primary motive for the assault was usually anger (45.1%) followed by jealousy (22.2%); 30.8% of offenders were under the influence of alcohol at the time; common locations included the street (39.4%) or the victim's home (32.8%); and in most (51.2%) of instances the offender used no weapon, only physical force, followed by use of a knife (27.1%) and 30.1% of victims sustained injuries that required hospitalisation (Stats SA, 2016b)

Studies have also shown that sexual assaults differ from robbery related violence or violence as a result of arguments. A study by Vetten et al. (2008) utilised SAPS data in the province of Gauteng to investigate the characteristics of rape from a victim's perspective. The results indicated that almost three-quarters (71%) of rapes of young children took place at someone's residence, either the victim, perpetrator or residence of a friend / relative. Rapes directed against adult women were the most likely to involve weapons, force, threat and injury. Perpetrators were ten times more likely to be armed with some sort of weapon when they raped adult women (40.9%) than when they raped girls (4.7%) and in one in five cases (19.3%) the choice of weapon was a firearm. Different forms of bodily force was used against 70.1% of adult women and more than one in three (38.3%) was threatened with death or injury. An analysis of sexual crimes based on SAPS data by Stats SA (2016b) indicated that for the category of sexual assault, 62.0% of perpetrators were between the ages of 15-34 years and the victim-offender relationship showed that victims in 30.0% of instances was an intimate partner, 25.5% of victims were acquainted with the offender and for 28.1% of victims

the offender was unknown; the primary motive was mostly anger (69.9%); the most common location for the crime was either at the victim's home (40.0%) or outdoors (25.0%); for 28.1% of cases, both the victim and offender were sober and for 23.6% of the cases the offenders were under the influence of alcohol. For 80.0% of instances no weapon was used during the commission of the crime and 53.0% of victims reported no other physical injuries other than the rape.

The research above is indicative that categorical data obtained from the situational contexts of the criminal event is an important factor in the analysis of crime type. Although the studies discussed use different methodologies, they nonetheless suggest that different types of crimes can be distinguished within different situational contexts based on the specific combination of victim, offender, and event characteristics, and that types of crime differ within the situational context of the criminal event and therefore the risk profile of the offender may also differ for the different types of crime.

## **2.5 Summary**

This chapter reviewed the international and national literature on youth violence. The study reviewed the available literature on the extent of youth violence and youth incarceration rates and provided evidence of the fatal impact of youth violence. Youth violent offenders were characteristically of male gender and black. The characteristics of types of violent crime indicated that crime typologies differ in accordance with the event characteristic and victim characteristics showed that youth were mostly the victims of youth crimes. The situational context of the crime demonstrated that the risk profiles of offenders of violent crimes differed in accordance with the type of violent crime committed and a combination of event characteristics such as victim/offender relationship, weapon use and choice of weapon, and use of illegal substances. Most of the literature is based on studies from the USA, and other Southern American countries and Africa to a lesser extent. More research is required to ascertain the risk profile of the characteristics of violent young offenders in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER THREE: ECOLOGICAL FRAMING OF YOUTH VIOLENCE**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter uses the ecological model as a heuristic tool to examine the causal factors relating to youth violent behaviour and frame these factors into the different levels of the model. The ecological model provides a multi-level range within which risk factors and the extenuating circumstances that place youth at risk can be investigated. Research relating to the different pathways that lead to violence and a brief outline of a few theoretical propagations of violence is also presented.

### **3.2 The Ecological Model and Youth Violence**

Understanding the factors that place youth at risk or protect youth from engaging in violence, is an important step in the public health approach to violence prevention. Various studies have been conducted worldwide to investigate the risk and protective factors relating to violent behaviour and the epidemiology of violent offenders. Youth exposed to multiple risk factors are more likely to engage in violent activities. (Herrenkohl et al., 2000). Studies carried out by Herrenkohl et al. (2000) indicated that the odds of violent behaviour for youths exposed to more than five risk factors compared to the odds of violent behaviour for youths exposed to fewer than two risk factors at each age were seven times greater at age 10 years, 10 times greater at age 14 years, and nearly 11 times greater at age 16 years. Hawkins et al. (2000) conducted a longitudinal study on non-offending juveniles to ascertain if any association existed between risk factors and subsequent violence. Their results found that the larger the number of risk factors an individual is exposed to, the greater the probability that the individual will engage in violent behaviour. No single risk factor can be isolated to explain why youth engage in violent behaviour (Krug et al., 2002).

Research on the risk and protective factors for youth violence has been mainly guided by Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach to development (Krug et al., 2002; Ward et al., 2012). The ecological model provides a framework for the organisation and explanation of the various risk and protective factors that contribute to violence. Violence is regarded as the outcome of the interplay of a variety of factors operating at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. The factors that contribute to violence have been shown to differ in importance across the different stages of development.

The ecology of human development is the scientific study of the progressive, mutual adaptation of a developing human being and their mutable characteristics of their immediate environment, which is influenced by the interrelations between these environments and the larger contexts in which these environments are embedded (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The ecological model likens the ecological environment to that of a nested structure. The innermost structure enclosing the developing individual is referred to as the microsystem, the interconnections and interrelations between the individual and their immediate environment is the mesosystem while the predominant patterns of ideology and organisations are referred to as the macro-system. Research on youth violence, the prevalence of youth violence and the risk and protective factors of youth violence is conducted mainly in developed countries, the USA in particular. A presentation of the risk factors at each of the four levels of the ecological model follows in the next section.

### **3.2.1 Individual factors**

The first level of the ecological model focuses on individual factors such as demographic characteristics, behavioural characteristics, biological disposition and psychological characteristics that increase the likelihood of youth becoming either the perpetrators or victims of violence (Krug et al., 2002). WHO (2015) lists hyperactivity, impulsiveness, poor behavioural control, attention problems, history of aggressive behaviour, early involvement with alcohol, drugs and tobacco, antisocial beliefs and attitudes, low intelligence and educational achievement, low commitment to school and school failure, early age of onset of violent behaviour, previous experiences of violence and abuse as precursors to youth violence. Several biological factors and psychological factors that have been identified as risk factors for youth violent offending, including hyperactivity, concentration problems, restlessness and risk taking behaviour, show a positive correlation to later violent behaviour (Hawkins et al., 2000; Van Der Merwe et al., 2012). A number of individual factors that have been consistently linked to violent offending such as individual demographic, socioeconomic and behavioural risk characteristics are discussed in more detail as this forms the focus of this study.

#### ***Demographic characteristics***

Demographic characteristics such as age, gender and race were the focus of various studies relating to youth violent crimes carried out in recent years (Swart et al., 2018; Tisak, Tisak, Baker, Amrhein, & Jensen, 2017; Tisak, Tisak, Baker, & Graupensperger, 2016; WHO, 2015)



## Age

Research shows that a certain age group, that is youth, are more likely than other age groups in the population to be involved in violence. This vulnerability is probably linked to the developmental tasks associated with this age group and is theorised as the age-crime curve. The age-crime curve that relates age and crime has been much debated amongst researchers and academics. Godfredson and Hirshi (1990) proposed the age-crime curve that contends involvement in crime rises steadily during middle adolescence, and then peaks during early adulthood after which it declines sharply. Piquero, Farrington, and Blumstein (2007) found that offences develop rapidly from age 10 to age 21 years before tapering off steadily. Age has a direct effect on crime which can be attributed to multiple co-occurring developmental changes (Shulman, Steinberg, & Piquero, 2013; Sweeten, Piquero, & Steinberg, 2013) and crime involvement, especially violent offending that peaks in the ties across historical periods, geographic locations, and offence types (Steffensmeier & Ulmer, 2008). Previous research evidence has indicated that youth in older age groups engage in violent activities at a more frequent rate than youth in younger age groups. A study carried out in five Caribbean countries to establish if age differences existed when type of crime was considered revealed that older students were statistically more likely to engage in violence than the students in younger age groups with significantly higher scores shown in the 17-19 year old age group in comparison to the 14-16 age group and 11-13 age group (Gentle-Gennity et al., 2017). Fahlgren, Kleiman, Puhalla, and McCloskey (2017) looked for age differences in the perpetration of violent crimes in the USA and found that individuals in early adulthood (18-24) were more likely to engage in violence than other age groups. Sweeten et al. (2013) investigated serious youth offenders from adolescence into early adulthood in a longitudinal study that spanned seven consecutive years and established that crime drops by 69% from the age of 15 to the age of 25 when controlling for changes for the constructs of social control, procedural justice, learning, stain, psychosocial maturity and rational choice.

## Gender

Research from around the world consistently shows that males are more likely to be involved in acts of violence and violent crimes which can be linked to the social constructions of masculinity discussed later in the chapter. Fahlgren et al. (2017) investigated gender difference in violent crimes committed in the year preceding their study in the USA and found that males were more likely to perpetrate acts of crime over all age groups studied. A study of juvenile offenders at a juvenile facility in the USA found that male juvenile offenders were more likely to commit aggressive assault while female offenders were more likely to commit

simple assaults (Tisak et al., 2016). Recent studies by Gentle-Gennity et al. (2017) in five different Caribbean countries that sought to establish if gender differences were present in criminal activities found that more male students showed significantly higher scores in violent engagement than female students.

### Race

Trends in racial disparities show an overrepresentation of minority groups within the criminal justice system in most overseas countries. An earlier longitudinal study carried out by Huizinga et al. (2007) investigated if minority youth who are African American and Hispanic youth, were disproportionately represented in terms of race within the juvenile justice system in three different cities, Rochester, Seattle and Pittsburgh in the USA. The results indicated that African American youths were three times more likely to come into contact with the juvenile justice system than their Caucasian counterparts. Studies done in New Zealand indicated that 47.4% of youth apprehensions were Maori youth while 42.1% were European youth. The Maori in New Zealand are a minority that make up 19.5% of the population yet made up a larger portion of arrested youth. Minority ethnic groups may be more likely to commit crime due to marginalisation, socio-economic and socio-political factors such as differentiated structural conditions evident in segregated neighbourhoods that provides a setting for violent crimes (Peterson & Krivo, 2009).

In South Africa, black Africans are the majority of the population at 80.8% (Stats SA, 2017a) and unfortunately the annual crime statistics released by the SAPS does not provide demographic characteristics such as offender's race, nor does the DCS report on offender demographics in their annual reports therefore it is difficult to determine the exact proportions of the different race groups that perpetrate crime and those convicted for crimes. Also, reports released by Stats SA such as the *Victims of Crime Surveys* (2018c) and *Mortality and Causes of Deaths* (2018b) reports provides mainly victims' demographic details and not those of offenders. However there are studies on violence and homicide which show that certain race groups are more likely to be implicated as perpetrators of violent crime than other race groups (CSRV, 2007; CSRV, 2008b). While information on the offenders of adolescent homicides in South Africa is lacking, statistical studies conducted in the USA suggest that the demographics of the offenders are similar to those of the victims, with 51% of violent victimisations being intraracial between 2012 and 2015 (Morgan, 2017).

## *Socio-economic background*

### Educational attainment

Lochner (2008) analysed the relationship between educational attainment and crime and found that an increase in educational attainment and frequent school attendance significantly reduced engagement in subsequent violent criminal activities. Similarly, Jonck, Goujon, Testa, and Kandala (2015) explored the relationship between education and crime within a South African context and found that completion of Grade 12 education significantly decreased the likelihood of youth being incarcerated. An international review of the education/crime relationship showed 75% of inmates in the USA and Italy had not completed high school and the rate of incarceration for youth males between the ages of 21-25 was eight times higher for those males that didn't have an educational qualification compared to those that did have an educational qualification in the United Kingdom (Hjalmarsson & Lochner, 2012). Similarly, the CSVr (2008b) in South Africa also found a poor schooling experience to be a common factor amongst their sample of offenders. These studies echo observations made by Herrenkohl et al. (2000) that the individual's level of academic achievement and school experience are contributory factors that increases inclination to violence. Kaminer and Eagle (2012) also reported that youth who drop out of school have an increased risk of involvement in gang and criminal activity which subsequently leads to further exposure to violence and perpetration of violence.

Studies carried out by Na (2017) in the USA that focused on a sample of serious adolescent offenders with similar characteristics and prior official sanctioning experience that place them at risk for school dropouts and crime outcomes, investigated if school dropout status was related to the risk of subsequent offending and arrest among serious adolescent offenders. The study consisted of 1 354 adolescents between the ages of 14-17 years that had already been arrested and adjudicated. The findings indicated that while school dropout significantly increased the likelihood of rearrests, it was not significantly related to subsequent offending. However, the ex-offenders likelihood of going straight was significantly reduced due to labelling processes, as the label/stigma of school dropout facilitates future arrest, based on the assumption that police officers knew the adolescent's dropout status when they made the decision to arrest. The study also suggested that ensuring the continuation of education would be beneficial even to serious offenders.

### Employment Status

The cultural norm in the USA is that both academic and non-academic work provide juveniles with an important developmental context during their school years (Apel et al., 2007; Apel, Bushway, Paternoster, Brame, & Sweeten, 2008). In contrast to this, studies in South Korea showed that a job status change from non-worker to worker holding an informal job increased the chances of participating in crime and substance use, while a job status change from non-worker to worker holding a formal job was not associated with an involvement in crime and delinquency (Lee & Cho, 2018). The association between informal jobs and delinquency can be attributed to the less structured and less supervised nature of the informal job, which leaves juveniles with more opportunities to associate with peers in an unstructured environment (Lee & Cho, 2008). The results also showed that the effects of job type on crime and delinquency are not varied by gender except for an intensive female worker who holds a formal job (Lee & Cho, 2018). In South Africa, studies by CSVR (2008a) showed that 35% (n=242) of offenders were unemployed while the employment status of 34% (n=239) was not recorded.

### Poor socio-economic factors

Hawkins et al. (2000) performed a statistical analysis in their study to determine the strength of the association between particular risk factors and the nature of the violence incurred. The study identified poverty as a predictor of youth violence and found that children raised in households of low socio-economic status or in communities where the majority of the families are poor were more likely to participate in violence.

Males and Brown (2014) conducted a study to investigate the age-crime relationship and controlled for economic disadvantages. The key findings of their study were: (a) population groups with high-poverty rates generated disproportionately more violent crime arrestees, (b) African American and Latino youth were overrepresented in high-poverty populations, and (c) poverty status, not age, was the key predictor of a population's arrest proneness (Males & Brown, 2014).

### ***Behavioural risk factors***

Behavioural factors such as substance use, and criminal history also appear to be important risks for youth engaging in violent criminal behaviours.

#### Substance Abuse

Drug, school and mental health problems are characteristic in male adolescents that engage in persistent and serious delinquency (Leal & Meir, 2017). Age and drug use are known correlates of crime (Shulman et al., 2013; Sweeten et al., 2013). Leal and Mier (2017) conducted a study to investigate how age affects the relationship between drugs and crime with a sample of both adult and juvenile offenders. The results of their study indicated substantial differences between adult and juvenile offenders in relation to drug use and criminal involvement. The results showed that the odds for juvenile offenders being arrested for robbery increased with the use of alcohol, marijuana and heroin, and the use of illegal substances increased the odds of being arrested for violence in both the adult and juvenile populations. The use of cocaine increased the odds of being arrested for burglary for both juveniles and adults, while the use of cocaine and heroin increased the odds of being arrested for larceny (theft of personal property) for adults while alcohol and illegal substance use did not have an effect on the odds for juveniles being arrested for larceny. Vaughn et al. (2014) surveyed a national represented sample of adolescents and found that within the most severe 5% category, elevated substance abuse, delinquency and violence accounted for 14% to 70% of externalising behaviours.

Mulder, Brand, Bullens, and Van Marle (2010) conducted a study in the Netherlands aimed at identifying subgroups of serious juvenile offenders based on their risk profile characteristics. The severe 5% was identified and further categorised into six subgroups using a cluster analysis. Almost a third (32.6%) of the offenders in their study, that is in clusters 1 and 2 exhibited problems with substance abuse. Cluster 1 was characterised by *antisocial behaviours* (21.0%) such as displays of antisocial behaviour during treatment, lack of empathy and conscience and substance abuse; cluster 2 were *frequent offenders* (11.6%) with problems with substance abuse; cluster 3 was labelled as juvenile offenders with a *flat profile* (30.4%) and did not score high on any of the nine factors that were measured; cluster 4 presented juvenile offenders that had *sexual problems with a weak social identity* (10.2%); cluster 5 were offenders with *sexual problems* (7.8%) only and cluster 6 consisted of juvenile offenders with a *problematic family background* (19.0%).

The use of illegal substances may introduce children and adolescents to social environments where violent and criminal behaviour is modelled and rewarded. The use of illegal substances poses a significant public health problem to youth in South Africa. The *South African National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey 2013* (Reddy et al., 2013) found that nationally 49.2% of the learners within their sample had ever drunk one or more drinks of alcohol; 32.3% had drunk alcohol on one or more days in the month preceding the study and a total of 25.1% had indulged in binge drinking or had five or more drinks within a few hours or more days in the month preceding the survey.

## Criminal History

### History of violent crime

Research shows that individuals that have committed a violent offence previously are more likely to commit future violent crimes. “The earlier a child develops an aggressive pattern of behaviour, the more likely s/he is to continue to be aggressive” (Van der Merwe et al., 2012, p. 58). Recidivism studies are an effective mechanism of determining if previous violent behaviour are a precursor of future violent behaviour. Gilman, Hill, and Hawkins (2015) conducted a study on the long terms effects of juvenile incarceration and found that offenders incarcerated during adolescence were four times more likely to be incarcerated as adults. McCuish, Cale, and Corrado (2018) studied youth homicide offenders and found that youth homicide offenders had committed crimes more frequently prior to committing homicide compared to other serious and violent offender groups and spent comparably more time incarcerated in both adolescence and adulthood. The study also found that the prevalence of adulthood recidivism among youth homicide offenders was high (70.8%), especially after controlling for those that moved, died, or were never released (84.2%), while a study on youth gang-related homicide offenders found that gang murderers were more likely to be rearrested for any offence and for a felony offence (murder, rape, burglary, kidnapping and arson) post-release than those not considered gang murderers (Trulson, Caudill, Haerle, & DeLisi, 2012). Katchatryan, Heide, and Hummel (2018) classified juvenile homicide offenders into two distinct subgroups to test if juvenile offenders who (1) killed or attempted to kill during the commission of a crime differed from those who (2) killed due to some type of conflict on pre-incarceration, incarceration, and post-incarceration variables in a longitudinal study spanning a 30-year period. Findings showed that 88% of offenders from both groups were rearrested after release of which 71.4% were rearrested for violent crimes.

### Age of first offence

The early onset of violent behaviour during youth has been debated amongst researcher as being an indicator of a future criminal career. Siegel and Welsh (2012) proposed that the seeds of a criminal career are planted during an individual's formative years and the earlier the onset of crime, the longer its duration. Sampson and Laub (cited in Siegel & Welsh, 2012) used empirical evidence to prove that antisocial behaviour choices evolve over time. Previous studies on age of onset of criminal behaviours as a risk factor indicate a moderate inverse relationship between age of onset and subsequent offending behaviour - the earlier an offender begins their criminal career, the more likely they are to commit future crimes (Bacon, Paternoster, & Brame, 2009; Mazerolle, Piquero, & Brame, 2010; Sweeten et al., 2013). Early offending does not cause subsequent crime, but can be considered a simple manifestation of a time-stable tendency to act in an antisocial manner and can be related to later more frequent and serious crime due to a higher propensity for criminal behaviours (Bacon et al., 2009). Bacon et al. (2009) used data from the *Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development* in their studies relating age of onset to recidivism and their findings were consistent with previous studies that found age of onset of criminal behaviour was correlated to future offending involvement. Similarly, Mazerolle et al. (2010) conducted a study in Queensland, Australia and found that early onset violent offenders exhibited a higher level of participation in violent offences as a juvenile than as an adult (45.45% vs. 25.12%), and had a higher likelihood of committing more serious person-orientated offences such as homicide and aggravated assault.

### **3.2.2 Relationship factors**

The second level of the ecological model reflects on close interpersonal relationships between family members, friends, partners, school peers, peer groups and colleagues. Specific risk factors that occur at this level are poor monitoring and supervision of children by parents, harsh, lax or inconsistent parental disciplinary practices, relationship problems of the parents, large families, a low level of attachment between parents and children, inadequate family cohesion, low parental involvement in children's activities, low level of education of parents, parental substance abuse or criminality, low socioeconomic status, associating with delinquent peers and use of drugs by peers (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [German Agency for International Cooperation] [GIZ], 2010; WHO, 2015).

### Parental care / parental control / Parental supervision

Poor parental supervision is also one of the predictors of youth violent behaviour (Krug et al., 2002; WHO, 2015). Parenting factors such as parental care and parental control have been identified as a risk factor for youth violent behaviour in studies carried out in the USA at a juvenile correctional facility that investigated the effects of parental care and parental control on youth offending behaviours (Tisak et al., 2017). Less parental care predicted more social aggression for both male and female youth offenders, but parental care was not a predictor of aggravated assault for either males or females. However, more parental control increased the rates of social aggression and simple assaults for female youth offenders (Tisak et al., 2017). A qualitative study carried out by the CSVr and the Department of Safety and Security (CSVr, 2008b) in South Africa found that impact of child abuse, child neglect and dysfunctional families were common factors among their sample of adult offenders. Amaoteng, Barber, and Erickson (2006) found that family stress was also predictive of lower levels of parental support and parental knowledge. The failure of parents to establish well-defined rules relating to behaviour, monitor social interaction by developmentally appropriate standards and inconsistencies in disciplinary measures also increase the risk for violent behaviour (Griffin, Botvin, Scheier, Diaz, & Miller, 2000).

### Family involved in violence

Studies carried out by Hawkins et al. (2000) relating to adolescent predictors of violence found that parental criminality more than doubled the risk for violence at age 14 and at least doubled the risk at age 16. Familial characteristics that increase the propensity for engaging in violent behaviour include consistent modelling of antisocial and violent behaviour by parents, siblings or significant others (Herrenkohl et al., 2000).

### Exposure to violence in the family

In South Africa, children are exposed to high levels of violence in the home and this may be an important risk factor for youth violent crime. Herrenkohl et al. (2000) indicated that exposure to the antisocial norms and values held by parents and the normalization of the occurrences of violence presents such behaviour as normal and acceptable to children. A study conducted by Leoschut (2006a) to investigate the exposure of young people to family violence found that South African youth are often exposed to violence in their homes at a very early age. The finding of the study indicated that 24% of the sample had first witnessed family violence between the ages of 6 and 10, while 46% had first witnessed violence between the ages of 11 to 15 (Leoschut, 2006a).



### Family structures / support systems

Family factors contain socialization within the family structure that is strongly linked to positive and negative developmental outcomes (Herrenkohl et al., 2000). WHO (2015) lists coming from a single-parent household, experiencing parental separation or divorce and exposure to violence in the family as precursors of violence. Youth from single-parent homes have a higher rate of problem behaviours such as substance abuse, school dropout and aggressive behaviours while poor parenting practices and poor parental support are associated with negative behavioural outcomes such as substance abuse and delinquent behaviour among youth (Griffin et al., 2000). Griffin et al. (2000) investigated if family structures and parenting practices played a role in youth substance abuse, delinquency rates and aggressive behaviour, if youth from single parent homes were more at risk and if male youth were more at risk than female youth. Their findings indicated that male youth from single parent homes were more likely to smoke ( $M\mu=1.42$ ) and consume alcohol ( $M\mu=2.21$ ) and exhibit aggressive ( $M\mu=1.98$ ) and delinquent behaviour ( $M\mu=1.57$ ) than youth from two-parent homes. Demuth and Brown (2004) further found that adolescents residing in a single-father family were the most likely to engage in delinquency when measuring total delinquency ( $M\mu=4.11$ ) and violence ( $M\mu=1.38$ ).

### Peers

Herrenkohl et al. (2000) stated that associating with delinquent peers places a child at risk for violent behaviour. Hawkins et al. (2000) conducted a quantitative, longitudinal study to identify the predictors of youth violence in adolescence. Their study found that having delinquent peers at ages 10, 14 and 16 years of age predicted an increased risk in later involvement in violence. A study conducted by CSVR (2008b) showed that peer groups, namely approval and fitting in, contributed to an individual's involvement in criminal activity. Gang membership is closely associated with delinquent peer relationships.

### Gang membership

Researchers have noted a significant relationship between youth gang membership and youth violence. Youth who join gangs are more likely to be involved in delinquency and serious violent offences than non-gang youth and non-gang delinquent youth and gang membership was associated with a 10-21% higher likelihood of violent offending (WHO, 2015). Children in South Africa are more likely to become involved in criminal activity, especially gang activities at a young age particularly during the ages of 11 or 12 (Van Der Merwe et al., 2012.).

Pyrooz, Turanvic, Decker, and Wu (2015) conducted a meta-analysis study on the relationship between gang membership and offending and found that the criminogenic effects of gang membership differ according to types of crime. The criminogenic effects of gang membership were stronger when assessing weapon carrying or possession and weaker for sales and substance abuse. The effects of gang membership were also stronger in studies that combine violent and non-violent offenders into a general measure and also self-reported studies as compared to official measures. The study did not find significant differences when comparing the effects of gang membership to violent crime.

### **3.2.3 Community factors**

Factors at this level incorporate the close social environment including the school, neighbourhood workplace, or any place in which social relations are constructed (GIZ, 2010).

School factors - Risk factors within the school environment include high levels of violence with schools, weak educational skills of the teacher, low availability of educational material, frequent changing of schools, truancy and suspension from school (GIZ, 2010).

Community factors - Risk factors at the general community level include formation of youth gangs, drug dealing and drug consumption, easy access and availability of weapons, high crime rate, weak infrastructure and lack of amenities for young people, lack of leisure activities, high drop-out rate from schools, lack of 'social capital' and poor social cohesion and an absence of non-violent alternatives for resolving conflicts (GIZ, 2010). The possibility that "children who grow up in impoverished and disempowered communities may develop belief systems of helplessness and pessimism" also exists (Kaminer & Eagle, 2012, p. 233). Higher rates of violence predominately occur in poor or low income areas (Ratele, 2013; Silber & Geffen, 2009). Young people are also more at risk for engaging in gang involvement if there are a large number of delinquent youth residing in their neighbourhood (Ward & Cooper, 2012). Studies by Yonas, O'Campo, Burke, and Gielen (2007) that studied the effect of neighbourhood risk factors and youth violence in the USA found that a positive relationship between youth violence and low-income neighbourhoods existed.

Growing up in a neighbourhood characterised by high levels of crime is considered a risk factor for youth violence (WHO, 2015). Burton (2007) and Van der Merwe et al. (2012) stated that individuals that are exposed to violence and violent crime at a young age are more likely to become perpetrators of violence themselves thereby perpetuating the cycle of

violence. Yonos et al. (2007) carried out a qualitative study to gauge the perceptions of youth living in violent neighbourhoods and found that youth from violent and crime ridden neighbourhoods were of the opinion that economic deprivation such as limited or lack of job opportunities and limited or restricted municipal services to their neighbourhoods were significant contributing factors to youth violence. Estrada-Martinez, Caldwell, Schulz, Diez-Roux and Pedraza (2011) found that in black or Latino neighbourhoods with lower absolute levels of socio-economic status, neighbourhood socio-economic status was positively associated with risk of violence with the odds of black youth being 1.44 times more likely to engage in violent behaviour and Latino youth 1.35 times more likely to engage in violent behaviour. Violence in South Africa is more prominent in black residential areas including townships, shack settlements and rural areas (Khuzwayo, Taylor, & Connolly, 2016).

There are studies in South Africa that show that certain neighbourhoods that are marked by concentrated disadvantage, family disruption and residential mobility have higher levels of violent crime and adolescent homicide (Swart et al., 2016). A study conducted in Cape Town found that exposure to community level violence predicted involvement in antisocial behaviours such as delinquency and engagement in criminal activities (Gardner, Waller, Maughan, Cluver, & Boyes, 2015). Breetzke, Landman and Cohn (2014) investigated if gated communities in Tshwane, South Africa were safer from crime than other communities and found that homes in the sample area had higher rates of burglaries than other area in Tshwane.

#### **3.2.4 Societal factors**

This level focuses on overarching factors that affect the entire society and facilitate a climate for violence. Youth, economic, education, security and social policies impact on the inequalities present in societies (GIZ, 2010). Countries with greater levels of socio-economic inequalities have higher levels of violence. Although developing countries face more challenges on data collection and statistics relating to violence (UNODC, 2010) and may not be able to provide accurate statistical information pertaining to the rate of violence, the high levels of violence can be attributed to poverty and unemployment, high population densities, large number of single parent families and high rates of drug use (UNODC, 2014a). CSVN (2008c) reported a positive relationship between the level of inequality and the level of violence exhibited in a country, namely more inequality leads to more violence and vice versa. Inequality can be socially or economically based, and is often the product of broad societal problems such as racism, poverty, unemployment, and family disruption.

### Cultural norms that support violence

The high rate of youth victimisation has also been raised as a cause for concern (Leoschut, 2006b; Van der Merwe et al., 2012) due to the learning outcome in terms of violent behaviour, what violence may accomplish and acceptable terms of behaviour used to attain goals. CSVN (2007) surmised that violent behaviour is partly learnt behaviour and the heightened level of violence is influenced by social factors and cannot be explained on the level of individual pathologies. These factors include group dynamics; lack of interpersonal skills; alcohol and substance abuse; vindictiveness or anger; target hardening accompanied with gun ownership and notoriety. Youth growing up in South Africa also face marginalization, impoverishment and marked levels of relative deprivation (Gardner et al., 2015).

### *A culture of violence*

Violence in South Africa can be traced back to pre-colonial times, through to the colonial and apartheid era encompassing the liberation struggle (CSVN, 2009; Ward et al., 2012). Pelsner (2008) argued that youth crime is the perpetuation of the culture of violence and normalisation of violence among socially excluded, negatively socialised youth.

The legacy of apartheid and colonialism contributed to the following factors:

- Brutalisation and the culture of violence – the resistance movement and the campaign to overthrow the apartheid regime made violence a daily part of life and created a culture of violence (Jefthas & Artz, 2007). Subsequent arrests by the police exposed millions to the violent correctional system and degradation by the police during the apartheid regime (CSVN, 2009).
- Impact of apartheid on families and the education system – the apartheid system through the migrant labour system interrupted African family systems, thus subjecting children to single parent families.

The youth uprising in 1976 and subsequent insurgences during the 1980's lead youth to further engage in violent behaviour. The dehumanisation of the apartheid system also impacted on the gender identity of African males. Masculinity was linked to culture and further intertwined with violence and the militant fight against oppression (Jefthas & Artz, 2007). Political violence was viewed as an alternative to gang membership; youth violence was glorified and aggression earned respect (Bruce, 2007).

Political violence and unrest continued into the post-apartheid era. Kipperberg (2007) argued that failure of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to adequately address the violent legacy of apartheid; and their initial exclusion of children and youth under the age of 18 to participate in the reparation process deprived those persons, namely the parents of today, of a better future. The roles of children and youth in the townships changed during the post-apartheid period from being a proactive political activist to a defensive reactive stance (Kipperberg, 2007). The political post-apartheid turmoil and friction between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) resulted in 91 massacres and the death of 14 000 people. The impact of these acts of violence on children that witnessed these massacres, along with the necklacing and burning of human beings is immense and undoubtedly left a traumatic psychological and dehumanising effect (Kipperberg, 2007).

#### Norms supportive of male superiority

*Dominant construction of masculinity in a society* Siegel and Welsh (2012) further add that violence towards women is an effectual way to establish manhood. Small arms usage are correlated with an increase in gender inequality and ‘a generalized culture of violence, against women in particular’ (Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom, 2017). This kind of aggression is often rooted in what scholars refer to as ‘hyper-masculinities’ or firearm-related social norms that focus on physical strength, control, and aggression (Dziewanski, LeBrun, & Racovita, 2014).

*Patriarchy* GIZ (2010) attributed culturally defined roles, patriarchal power structures and notions of masculinity that promote violence as contributory factors to the higher instances of violence amongst young males. These factors are experienced within a stage of development linked to the process of identity building and personal development. Siegel and Welsh (2012) argue that gender conflicts shaped by capitalist control and patriarchy exhibited in capitalist societies can be linked to criminal behaviour.

#### Weak laws and health, educational, economic and social policies

This level also refers to the patterns of cultural legitimation and economic inequity, lack of participation, and the uneven distribution of opportunities and prospects which restrict the potential for personal development. These include high income inequality, inadequate social security, rapid social and demographic changes, political and economic crisis, marginalisation or exclusion of certain age groups or sections of the population, discrimination of certain population groups, urbanization, migration, quality of a country’s governance (its laws and

the extent to which they are enforced, as well as policies for education and social protection), situations of armed conflict and violence, violent norms and values and cultures of violence (GIZ, 2010; WHO, 2015). Other factors include:

- i) Factors in post-apartheid South Africa which reinforce the legacy of apartheid (CSV, 2009)
  - Inequality – “International research indicates that levels of violence have a high correlation with levels of inequality” (CSV, 2009, p. 8). South Africa presently exhibits the highest rate of inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient (CSV, 2009).
  - Structural economic factors – these include “high levels of poverty, structural unemployment, and social and political exclusion and marginalisation” (CSV, 2009, p. 8).
  - State institutions – disproportional performance of service deliveries
- ii) Other factors such as poverty, the legacy of war and instability of state

### **3.3 Developmental Pathways of Violence**

Youth offenders are not just one homogenous group – their different socioeconomic levels, rural-urban divisions, gender and ethnicities differentiate them and the types of crime they commit. There are different pathways to youth crime, and hence different risk profiles for different types of crime. Loeber et al. (1993) propositioned three developmental pathways in antisocial behaviour from childhood to adolescence:

- A pathway of early authority conflict, entailing stubborn behaviour, followed by defiance and authority avoidance
- A covert pathway, comprising of minor covert behaviours (for example lying, shoplifting), followed by property damage, followed by moderately serious antisocial behaviours, followed by serious antisocial behaviour
- An overt pathway, consisting of aggression, followed by physical fighting, and finally, more serious and varied forms of violence.

### **3.3.1 Risk profiles and the type of crimes committed**

Researchers have conducted different studies and used various research methodologies to construct risk profiles for offenders in accordance to their risk factors and the types of crimes committed. Earlier studies by Piquero et al. (2007) showed a developmental progression in the severity of crime with an early onset of antisocial behaviour in childhood. Further research in the Cambridge study into delinquent behaviour (Farrington, Ttofi, & Piquero, 2016) concluded that developmental and life course theories required an explanation on promotive and protective factors as these are essential when developing trajectories on offending behaviour. Malti and Averjijk (2017) argued that a developmental science approach was essential in order to understand the pathways of severe youth violence. In their theoretical and empirical research into the developmental pathways of severe youth violence, Malti and Averjijk (2017) formulated the category of severe youth violence that incorporated aggravated assault, rape, robbery and murder committed by adolescent into their working definition. Another study found that the risk factors that predicted the severity of reoffending were different for serious violent offenders, violent property offenders, property offenders, and sex offenders (Mulder et al., 2012). Studies in Asia by Lai et al. (2016) that compared violent and non-violent offenders also found that offenders fell into different offender subtypes. Studies in South Africa by Souverein et al. (2015) using a latent class analysis revealed 41.5% of offenders with earlier starts to offending behaviour also committed later more serious offences. Substantial evidence indicates that violence is different from general offending and violent juvenile offenders differ from nonviolent juvenile offenders (Lai et al., 2016). The differentiation between various subtypes has important implications for prevention and rehabilitation.

Vaughn et al. (2015) conducted a study in the USA using a large, representative sample of 18 614 adolescents that identified a severe 5% group who not only showed higher levels of violence but also higher levels of substance abuse, and other delinquency behaviours such as fighting (89.43%), group fighting (70.40%) and violent attacks (40.68%). Vaughn et al. (2015) used a four class solution and results indicated a normative class (72.6%) characterised by low levels of substance use, delinquency and violence; a substance user class (13.3%) characterised by high levels of substance use, with relatively low to moderate levels of delinquent and violent behaviour; a violent class (9.4%) characterised by slightly high substance use, low to moderate levels of delinquency and elevated levels of physical violence; and the severe class (4.7%) was characterised by significantly consistent and elevated levels of substance use, delinquency and violence. The severe 5% group can be linked to overlapping

theoretical constructs such as life-course persistent offenders, serious, violent and chronic delinquent behaviours, early onset severe conduct disorder and psychopathy; and can be distinguished by a disproportionate contribution to violence, substance abuse, property damage and mental health distress.

Lai et al. (2016) compared the risks and needs of non-violent offenders to that of offenders who had committed violent offences only (violent only) and those who had committed violent and nonviolent offences (violent plus) to determine whether violent youth were a different “type” from nonviolent youth. Measures included offender group category, risk and criminogenic needs, non-criminogenic needs, age at first charge and recidivistic outcomes. The results indicated different characteristics were present in the different subtypes of violent youth offenders. The characteristics of the violent-plus youth showed that they were younger, had higher total risk and criminogenic needs on five domains, were more likely to have several non-criminogenic needs, and were at higher risk of all types of reoffending (except sexual reoffending) than violent-only. Violent-only youth were more likely to be involved in gangs and have a history of delinquent behaviour; and had the same total risk and risk of general and violent recidivism as nonviolent offenders but presented different criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs and risk of nonviolent recidivism. The consistent differences on various profile characteristics between the nonviolent youth and the two categories of violent youth suggested that it was valid to distinguish youth offenders based on whether they offended violently (Lai et al., 2016).

Muntingh and Gould (2010) discussed the field of criminal trajectories which separates youth offenders into three different categories. The categories are the life-course persistent offender (LCP), the adolescence limited (AL) offender and the chronic offender. Early childhood factors such as neurological difficulties and failing parent-child relationships were identified as indicators of a life path in anti-social behaviour for LCP offenders. AL offenders were believed to mimic the behaviour of LCP offenders temporarily to establish an independent status and abandon antisocial acts when better prospects become available. The low-level chronic offender resembled the LCP at a lower rate, mirrored the same characteristics presented by LCP offenders and also presented anti-social tendencies.

Souverain et al. (2015) conducted a study in South Africa to identify if sub groups of life-course persistent offenders could be distinguished from adolescent-limited offenders using latent class modelling and to identify which risk factors could be associated with life-course



persistent offenders. Age of onset of offending behaviour and diversity of offending (weapon carrying, robbery, burglary, theft, property damage and fighting) were used to assign offenders into two-and-three-class models respectively. The results indicated that a large portion of youth offenders (41.5%) within the sample could be identified as serious, violent offenders distinguishable by male gender, violence at home, other victimization, familial crime, school performance, violence at school, and alcohol abuse and gang membership in both the two-and-three-class models. The typical offender in class 3 of the three-class model had a high probability (0.948) of committing his first crime between the ages of 10 and 15 years and could have been incarcerated at age 14, and had a mean severity score of 6.48.

The research presented mainly differentiated between violent and non-violent crimes but does not provide the categorisation of the different types of violent crimes as proposed by Malti and Averjijk (2017). Research that shows how different risk factors differentiate between different pathways and different types of violence is required, most especially from a South African perspective due to the high rates of youth violence as discussed in Chapter 2.

### **3.4 Theoretical Propagations of Violence within the Ecological Framework**

As indicated in the introductory paragraph, the ecological framework was used as a heuristic tool to explain the different factors contributing to violent behaviour in youth. However, different psychological and criminological theories can be incorporated within these levels to further explain the propagations of violent behaviour, and due to the interlinking factors of the ecological model theories may apply to more than one level. The main theories that relate to this study namely, social learning, personality theories, routine activities theory, social disorganisation theory, general strain theory and social constructs of masculinity are further discussed below.

#### **3.4.1 Social learning theory**

The applications of psychological theories such as behaviourism and social cognitive learning theory have also been used to contrive an understanding of criminal behaviour at a relational, community and societal level of the ecological framework. Behaviourist such as John Watson and BF Skinner suggested that environmental factors can justify a person's personal characteristics (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 2008), while Albert Bandura advocated that behaviour was resultant of continuous interactions between personal, environmental and behavioural determinants (Meyer et al., 2008). Palermo (2007) argued that the non-fulfilment

of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory may create frustration and lead to anti-social behaviour and can be used as an explanation for criminal behaviour. Symbolic interactionism presumes that people only learn their patterns of behaviour, their roles and their social values during their interactions with other individuals in the course of their socialisation (GIZ, 2010).

Ferri (2013, p. 47) attributed crime to three different causes: "the anthropological conditions of the criminal, the telluric environment in which he is living, and the social environment in which he is born, living and operating." Criminality can be attributed to poor parenting, learnt behaviour and can also be affected by greater opportunities for crime (Howitt, 2012). Ward (2007) purported that the attainment of any complex social behaviour occurs through social learning as information is acquired from models of behaviour from authority figures. Children are exposed to various social sources during development that leads to the development of their own moral standards that they use to guide and deter or encourage behaviours (Ward, 2007).

### **3.4.2 Personality theories**

Psychological theories are predominantly based on the offender's personality attributes and cannot be considered in isolation as elements of social influences are present in all behaviour. Gottfredson and Hirshi (Hollin, 2013) pointed out that while the inclinations of crime are sociological, the general theory of crime revolves on the psychological notion of self-control. Traits identified by Krug et al. (2002) at the first level of individual factors of the ecological model are similar to the personality traits itemized by Palermo (2007) such as egocentrism, impulsivity, narcissism, obsessive compulsion, paranoia, sadism, aggressiveness, ambivalence, and emotional lability as typically identifiable in violent individuals. . Palermo (2007) attributed anger as being the most common emotion behind any criminal act of violence, particularly in homicide as anger promotes feelings of aggression and the intensity and quality of the aggression leads to acts of violence. Externalising spectrum disorders consist of childhood disruptive behaviour disorder, anti-social personality disorder and substance abuse disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Externalising disorders often manifest in aggression. Vaughn et al. (2015) contended that the externalizing spectrum is an important construct for youth violence. Externalizing problems are characterized by general behavioural disinhibition and is usually considered as "acting out behaviours". Externalizing behaviours include substance use, aggression and violence, theft, and property destruction. An integral part of the externalizing spectrum is the use of substances is due to the co-occurrence and highly intertwined relationship to delinquency and violence (Vaughn

et al., 2015). Constructs such as low self-control, psychopathy, impulsivity, risk taking behaviours and conduct disorders fall within this spectrum.

### **3.4.3 Routine activity theory**

Routine activity theory is a criminological theory that theorizes the situational context of the crime and requires three elements to be present for a crime to occur: a motivated offender with criminal intentions and the ability to act on these inclinations, a suitable victim or target, and the absence of a capable guardian or authority who can prevent the occurrence of the crime (Mustaine, 2014). The convergence of these three elements must occur simultaneously for a crime to occur and also requires two central propositions, firstly for lifestyles or routine activities to create criminal opportunity structures by increasing the frequency and intensity of contacts between potential offenders and suitable targets and secondly, that these criminal opportunity structures, or criminogenic locations, are enhanced by the absence of capable and willing guardians (Mustaine, 2014). Theoretically, the absence of any one of these elements may cause the opportunity to commit a crime to not arise, for instance the offender may be willing, but the victim may not have any valuables or the victim with valuables may be accompanied by a suitable guardian.

Routine activity theory takes into account all the event characteristics of the violent crime and has the uniqueness of attempting to explain victimization risks and the role of crime locations in the context of the criminal event. Mustaine (2014) presented five important lifestyle components that contribute to the likelihood of criminal victimisation, which is demographics, social activities, alcohol and drug use, economic status and community structural variables. Routine activity theory shifts focus to the differing risks for victimization that individuals and locations possess, for instance crime rates can increase if society provides more attractive target with no guardianship that is no alarm system, or diminished guardians (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2010).

### **3.4.4 Social disorganisation theory**

Social disorganisation theory refers to the failure of a neighbourhood's social institutions to develop cohesion, exert social control, and diminish crime (Contreras, 2008). Social disorganisation theorists examine how the structural characteristics of neighbourhoods that is residential stability, housing quality, economic opportunity, income levels, and social institutions affect how residents realize common values and exercise social control (Contreras, 2008). Socially disorganised neighbourhoods are characterized by high residential

turnover, poverty, overcrowded living conditions, racial and ethnic heterogeneity, and social isolation that collectively hinder strong social ties and trust among neighbourhood residents, making it difficult to develop the informal social control that maintains conventional values and reduces crime (Contreras, 2008).

Social disorganisation theory may explain why children from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are more at risk for violent behaviour. Children from poor socio-economic backgrounds are often left unsupervised and alone for prolonged periods of time since the parents are often absent for long hours from the home due to less work opportunities in these areas. Parents from these areas tend to work in lower paid jobs, for longer hours that may require longer travelling times and children are subsequently often left to fend for themselves after school, until their parents or caregivers arrive in the early evening (Eichhorst & Van As, 2012). The lack of parental supervision, the lack of behavioural control mechanisms and unsupervised contact with delinquent peer groups prevalent in socially disorganised neighbourhoods may lead children to partake in delinquent behaviours.

### **3.4.5 General strain theory**

Durrant (2013) echoed that violence and aggression is a result of social learning and also provided further an explanation of strain theory, another key theoretical approach to crime. The concept of strain theory as defined by Agnew and Brezina (Durrant, 2013) explains that certain strains and stressors present in society can increase the likelihood of crime. Agnew and Brezina (2010) further differentiate these strains into several versions that describe: 1) strains most conducive to crime; 2) why such strains increase the likelihood of crime; and 3) why some people are more likely to respond to strain than others.

General strain theory basically states that a broad range of strains contribute to criminal behaviours. A strain is an event or condition that is disliked by individuals and lead to negative emotions which then creates pressures for corrective actions (Agnew & Brezina, 2010). General strain theory details three general types of strains: 1) the inability to achieve goals through legal channels, for example monetary, autonomy, and status goals; 2) the loss of positively-valued stimuli, such as friends, romantic partners, and money; and 3) the presentation of negatively-valued stimuli, such as verbal and physical abuse (Agnew & Brezina, 2010). Engaging in criminal activities can act as a means of reducing or escaping from strains, seeking revenge against those believed responsible for the strains or related

targets, and alleviating the negative emotions associated with strains (e.g., through illicit drug use) (Agnew & Brezina, 2010).

### **3.4.6 Social constructions of masculinity**

The concept of hegemonic masculinities that is often used in gender studies is used to explain men's power over women, men's health behaviours and men's use of violence (Jewkes et al., 2015). It is considered a "cultural ideal of manhood" by both men and women (Jewkes et al., 2015) and men appear to hold a clustering of antisocial and violent ideas and behaviours and gender inequitable attitudes (Jewkes & Morrell, 2018). Masculinity, in Western culture refers to authoritative, controlling, in-charge and combative male behaviours (Siegel & Welsh, 2012). Men are left feeling effeminate or unmanly if they fail to adopt these roles (Siegel & Welsh, 2012). Codes of masculinity in youth are strongly influenced by less parental supervision and increased influence by peer groups and requires a combination of obligations for boys to act like "real men" and prove their masculinities publicly (Plummer & Geofroy, 2010). Gender socialisation processes may also contribute to the higher levels of aggression displayed by males (Van der Merwe et al., 2012) and males tend to externalise their anxiety in the form of aggression. Ratele (2010) indicated that internalised feelings of fearlessness persuades young men to adopt the idea that successful masculine males are always ready for a fight. Manhood is imagined to come with a set of rules and practices that "includes a fearsome look and drinking hard, a gangster pose and weapons under the clothes" (Ratele, 2010, p. 20). This idea of masculinity coupled with young men's actions within the constraints of their physical, social and economic environments places young black men at a greater risk of violence and homicide. The concept of masculinity can be further divided into hegemonic masculinity; subordinate masculinity; and the construction of masculinity (Ratele, 2013).

### **3.5 Summary**

This chapter reviews an ecological framing of youth violence. The ecological model is introduced and literature that has used the ecological theory as a framework to explain violent behaviour is explored. Ecological risk factors are presented under the various levels of individual, relational, community and societal levels. Individual risk factors appear to consist of the most risk factors that lead to violent offending. Developmental pathways of violence present that earlier onset may be a factor in later violent activities while different trajectories influence the criminal career. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of various theories that propagate violence.

## CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and the methodology used for this study. The permissions and procedures followed, study site, case identification process, materials utilized, data collection and the statistical treatment of the data is also discussed. The chapter concludes with a brief explanation of the ethical considerations of this study.

### 4.2 Study Design

The study employed a non-experimental, quantitative, cross sectional descriptive design to determine the characteristics of violent young offenders and the nature and circumstances of their violent crimes. The study was exploratory, therefore a non-experimental design was used to measure variables as they occurred in youth violent offenders only. Non-experimental research involves research that does not manipulate variables, or control groups, or both as in this design (Price, Jhangiana, & Chiang, 2015). Quantitative research designs are often used to look for causal relationships and associations among variables (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018), such as this study sought to examine the relationship between characteristics of violent youth offenders and the types of crimes they committed. The population of interest and data pertaining to the interest of the study was readily available, therefore a cross sectional design method was preferred. Cross sectional designs refer to studies in which data is collected at one time period only to access a representation of the population of interest at that point (Shanahan, 2012), and only record information without manipulating variables (Cummings, 2018). Specifically, this study utilised secondary data obtained from the existing records of the DCS to collect information on young offender's characteristics and crimes relating to objectives one, two and three of this study as stipulated in Chapter One.

### 4.3 Permissions and Procedures for Research within a Correctional Facility

Permission for conducting research at the DCS had to first be obtained from the National office via a formal application process. The relevant application forms, approved research proposal and ethical clearance received from the educational institute had to be submitted to the DCS Research Directorate for consideration and approval. The Directorate issued an approval letter outlining the procedures and rules that needed to be adhered to and the details of an internal guide to be contacted for further instructions. The internal guide advised the researcher to gain permission from the Regional Commissioners office prior to visiting the Correctional Facility. After permission was received from the Regional Commissioner,

further permission was obtained from the Director of the Westville Correctional Facility to gain entrance to the facility to conduct the study. The researcher then met with the Unit Manager, who then referred the researcher to the case management unit under the supervision of an internal guide for the Westville Correctional Facility who then introduced the researcher to each section's supervisor in the C block.

#### **4.4 Research Site**

The highest number of homicides occurred in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) with 21.5% of the countries homicides occurring in the province (SAPS, 2018). KZN also presented the most number of multiple homicides in the country with 223 dockets filed in the province during the 2017/2018 fiscal that contributed to a total of 556 victims (SAPS, 2018). The research site was therefore a correctional facility from the KZN region, that is, the Westville Correctional Facility in Durban, KwaZulu Natal. The facility is a regional facility that serves as a male, female and juvenile facility. The Westville Correctional Facility is one of the larger correctional facilities in South Africa and is a maximum security facility. The centre is also one of the nine female correctional facilities and one of fourteen juvenile / youth facilities in South Africa (DCS, 2018). The Westville Correctional Facility was chosen after consultation with the Provincial Offices who indicated that the facility housed a large number of the youth offender population.

The Director granted permission for access to files for offenders housed in the Medium B Facility C Block which is designated for male offenders convicted on aggressive and sexual crimes. The C cell block contained four levels, C1 contained two cell blocks, C2 and C3 contained two sections of six cell blocks and C4 contained four cell blocks. Each cell contained space for fifty offenders, however due to overcrowding, this number was exceeded. Access to the correctional facility is strictly controlled and all security and safety control measure must be strictly maintained at all times.

#### **4.5 Case Identification and Selection**

The research sample focused specifically on young male offenders who were between the ages of 18-25 years when convicted and who were incarcerated from January 2014 to June 2017 at the Westville Correctional facility in KwaZulu Natal. The selection criteria was further refined to only analyse youth male offenders who had been convicted for violent offences as defined in terms of the *South African Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977* under Schedule 5 to Schedule 8 offences (Republic of South Africa, 1977, p. 192-194) and have

been incarcerated as aggressive or sexual offenders in accordance with the criteria set out by the Department of Correctional Services. (DCS, 2009)

*Schedule 5* offences include murder, attempted murder, rape, drug related crimes (drugs worth R50 000 or more), corruption, extortion, fraud, forgery or theft to the value of R500 000, illegal dealings or smuggling of firearms and assault on a child under the age of 15. Conviction in this category carries a minimum of 15 years imprisonment for a first time offender. *Schedule 6* offences include murder, premeditated murder, the killing of law enforcement officers, killing as a result of rape or robbery with aggravating circumstances including robbery with the use of a firearm where grievous bodily harm is inflicted, gang rape, rape where the perpetrator is aware that he/she is HIV positive, rape of a person under 16 and rape of a mentally or physically challenged person. Convictions under schedule 6 carries life imprisonment. *Schedule 7* offences cover public violence, culpable homicide, bestiality, assault with the infliction of grievous bodily harm, house breaking, malicious injury to property, robbery and drug possession. All offences in this category do not exceed the value of R20 000. *Schedule 8* offences encompass treason, sedition, public violence, murder, kidnapping, child stealing, rape and compelled rape, sexual assault, aggravated assault, robbery, arson, theft and escape from lawful custody.

The target population was defined in terms of the research objectives and consisted of offenders that had already been incarcerated for a crime that they had committed. A total of 300 cases was decided on for the study to meet the criteria of a 95% confidence level required for a quantitative study. Confidence interval / margin of error mean that different random samples may result in different estimates. The larger the sample, the more precise the sample estimate (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2011).

The sampling technique used for this study was a simple random selection technique using a computer programme. The researcher first requested a list of all offenders sentenced between 2014 and 2017 that were under the age of 25 when convicted. The programme used by the DCS only allowed for a list of offenders that were under the age of 25 at the time of generation of such list as at January 2017, which totalled 653 offenders. The researcher then manually added the details of those offenders not included but who met the research criteria parameters, which was an additional 40 offenders. Such details were obtained from the registers maintained in each cell block. The list was then numbered, and the numbers input into a computer programme which then generated a sample of 300 offenders. However due to the



time lapse between the date that this list was drawn and the date the researcher was allowed into the facility, the researcher had to draw up a second list by following the same steps, however the dates were extended to include those incarcerated up to June 2017. The final data sample consisted of 281 cases due to the unavailability of certain offenders files at the time of study. Files were inaccessible as these may have been under review for applications from offenders to DCS relating to items required to be brought inside or permission to attend a funeral; or if the offender was receiving medical treatment; or undergoing a legal process. Also, 1% of the offenders in the sample were in solitary confinement and inaccessible to the researcher.

#### **4.6 Data Collection and Instruments**

As mentioned, the study utilised secondary data obtained from the existing records of the DCS to collect information on young offender's characteristics and crimes.

Secondary data refers to data already collected by another source such as existing government surveys, administrative records, or transcripts. Limitations exist when using secondary data obtainable from the public sector. Public administrative records may be stored in a digital document management system, but most records are still maintained manually in paper filing systems as with the DCS.

- Paper records are the primary means of data storage for most government departments in South Africa. Such records need to be retrieved, the information manually captured into a data collection form, then coded and entered into a statistical database. This is a lengthy and laborious task. In the case of this study, each file had to be studied in detail to extract the relevant data pertaining to the study. The data was then captured manually from each case file and written onto the data capture template (see attached annexure A). This process took approximately 20-30 minutes per file dependent on various factors, such as order of documents, information required appearing on different forms, and a substantial number of other documents within the same folder that had to be sifted through.
- The fields of administrative data which are essentially the variables, may need to be cleaned coded and reformatted. Mistakes made during the capturing process also hinder the capturing process. Each variable in this study was assigned with a number to allow for easy coding and capturing. The numbered coding system allowed for data to be organised to enable a more structured analysis.

- Administrative data tend to be organised as relational databases which are data structures that are composed of various tables of information, while statistical software requires a flat-file layout (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2011). A flat-file database stores data in plain text format and each line contains one record.

Remler and Van Ryzin (2011) indicated the limitations of utilising secondary data as follows:

- Available data determines what type of study gets done
- Questions that are asked are only those that have data available for answers, which can limit the type and number of questions asked.
- Public sources often don't contain sufficient data for the area of study
- Existing data may not measure the relevant variables of importance – the measure that best meet a specific network objective
- Existing data may not contain the right combination of variables
- Existing data may be out of date
- Existing data may not be fully accessible due to privacy and confidentiality matters

The limitations in the context of the study was that the existing data was collected by DCS staff which sometimes included trainees and interns and were obtained during interviews with offenders during intake. Conversations with DCS officials indicated that offenders may not always provide accurate information relating to their background or details of the crime. Such information such as use of illegal substances by offenders was later revealed during group sessions. These offenders then attended a substance abuse programme, which was captured accordingly onto the data capture template. Certain measures were adjusted in accordance with the data available and certain variables were added to the study due to the availability of such data.

Some of the advantages of collecting secondary data are that data is readily available and it is therefore time-saving and cost effective to obtain. Also, a large quantity of records and data is available that allows an effective quantitative survey. In the instance of this study, the data was readily available in the form of offenders' case files of which a vast number were available.

The data collection template (see Annexure A) was adapted from the DCS *G303 (A) Comprehensive Risk and Needs Assessment* form and the *G303 (Offender Profile)* form utilised by the case management section of the DCS. These forms are completed by officials during the admission interview with the offender and all offender case files are required to have such completed forms in their case files. The *SAPS62* form is an official incident report form that provides the situational context of the crime and the victim/s details and is provided to Correctional Services by the SAPS for inclusion into the case file. It should be noted that the *SAPS62* form was not available for all case files, however details relating to the situational context of the crime was also captured on the *G303* forms.

Questions were extracted for inclusion into the template based on the first two objectives of the research. Firstly, to identify the profile of the youth offender questions relating to the demographic characteristics (age at the time of conviction, gender, and race), socio-economic background (educational history, occupational history) family and environmental factors (offenders living situation, support systems, and type of neighbourhood the offender was raised in) and behavioural risk factors (substance abuse, previous criminal history) were isolated from the *G303* forms. Secondly, to describe the nature and circumstances of the crime for which they were incarcerated questions relating to the details of current crime, circumstances of the crime, extent of harm inflicted on victim and victim demographic details was extracted. These details were extracted from both the *SAPS62* forms if available and the *G303* forms if captured.

#### **4.6.1 Measures**

The measures were formulated consistent with the research objectives. The variables for objective one were derived after studying the various ecological level factors, reviewing previous studies and also took into account the availability of data. The variables for objective two were formulated by taking key factors of the situational context of the crime into consideration and the variables for objective three were derived based on theoretical relevance of objectives one and two and those variables that were statistically more significant.

##### ***Objective One***

Demographic characteristics: Age at the time of conviction was determined by date of birth and date of conviction. Race was captured from existing records and categorised into black African, white, coloured and Asian/Indian and religion was categorised into Christianity, Islam, Hindu or atheist / no religious affiliation.

Socio-economic background: Educational history looked at level of education completed. This was differentiated into categories of illiterate, some primary school, some high school, completed high school and tertiary education. The category of employment investigated employment history prior to arrest. Type of employment was categorised into full time / permanent, part-time, seasonal, temporary, self-employed, contractual / consultative or unemployed. The job title was further categorised using the *International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO-08)* (International Labour Office, 2012) for coding purposes. This system is divided into 10 major groups, namely managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals, clerical support workers, service and sales workers, skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, craft and related trades workers, plant and machine operators and assemblers, elementary occupations and armed force occupations.

Family and Environmental Factors: The offenders living arrangements prior to arrest considered who the offender was residing with such as mother only, father only, both parents or with other family members. Marital status was categorised into single, in a relationship and married. Support systems contemplated significant persons in the offenders' life including immediate and extended family and friends. Housing details such as own home, renting or sharing a flat or home, living in an informal dwelling or residing in RDP housing was studied. The type of neighbourhood was separated into rural, township, informal settlements / shacks, Government housing, suburb and small farm / holdings.

Behavioural risk factors: Gang membership contemplated if the offender was part of a gang and the type of gang such as friends, criminal peers, family members, community gang, organised crime syndicate, anti-social peers or a politically motivated group. The use of illegal substance asked if the offender had been addicted to any illegal substances, the types of illegal substances and the duration of the addiction. The category of history of criminal behaviour looked at the age of onset (derived by using date of birth and date of conviction), criminal behaviour during childhood and the type of treatment received and criminal behaviour during youth.

## ***Objective Two***

Type of crime: This section took into account the most serious crime committed as well as all crimes committed and the motive for committing the crime. Since a number of the offenders were involved in more than one of the type of crime categories provided by DCS, mutually exclusive major crime categories were constructed for the purpose of further analyses, in particular the multivariate analysis.

Situational context of the crime: These constructs measured circumstances and situational context of the crime

*Use of Weapon:* The use of a weapon contemplated if the offender used a weapon or no weapon, the type of weapon was classified into firearms, sharp objects, blunt objects, physical force, or other.

*Use of illegal substances:* The use of illegal substance asked whether the offender was under the influence of any illegal substances during the commission of the crime.

*Presence of accomplice/s:* Details relating to the accomplice/s first asked if an accomplice was present then looked at the number of accomplices.

*Crime event location:* The location of the crime was grouped as victim's home, offender's home, friend's home, street, retail establishment, public open space (such as parks and bushes), public establishment (such as school or government building) liquor establishments (such as sheebens, taverns, bars) and public transport stops.

*Degree of physical harm inflicted on the victim:* The degree of physical harm contemplated the type of harm inflicted on the victim classified as caused death to victim, serious injury (wounding, maiming, disfiguration), minor injuries (hitting, slapping, striking) or no physical harm.

#### Victim Characteristics:

*Number of victims:* This variable measured the number of victims involved in the criminal event into three subcategories, which were one victim, two victims or multiple victims.

*Age groups of victims:* Age groups were divided into the categories of children, youth, adult and elderly.

*Gender:* Only binary male or female categories were used due to the limitations of the information available

*Victim-Offender relationship:* The classifications for the nature of relationship was: in an intimate relationship, family member, acquaintance, friend, known but not specified and stranger / unknown.

### ***Objective Three***

Theoretically relevant variables from objective one were selected as independent variables and a categorical dependent variable was constructed by using type of crime as a basis. This is further explained under section 5.3.1.4.

#### **4.7 Entry and Coding of Data**

The DCS does not have public use microdata or data archives that are readily available as all information is private and confidential. No electronic devices are allowed inside the Correctional Facility therefore all data had to be manually recorded from each case file onto the data collection template. Case files for each offender are stored within the same cell block that the offender is housed in. Each cell block has a small administrative office with filing cabinets containing the case files, and an accompanying register of all offenders in that particular section. Files were stored numerically as per the offenders DCS registration number. Each file or folder had to be combed through thoroughly as the forms and information contained within the files didn't follow any particular order.

This study only analysed secondary data collected from existing records maintained by the DCS. Relevant data were extracted from offender's official files onto the data capture template. The data extraction process involved a thorough check through each file to extract relevant information into a more structured format on the data capture template. The data was then cleaned and coded for further statistical analysis. An excel spreadsheet template was devised to capture the coded data that was formulated into a numerical system. Numbers provide a convenient method for coding and storage of data, as numbers are easier to sort, summarise, count and analyse by computer programmes (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2011). The captured data was checked for correctness..

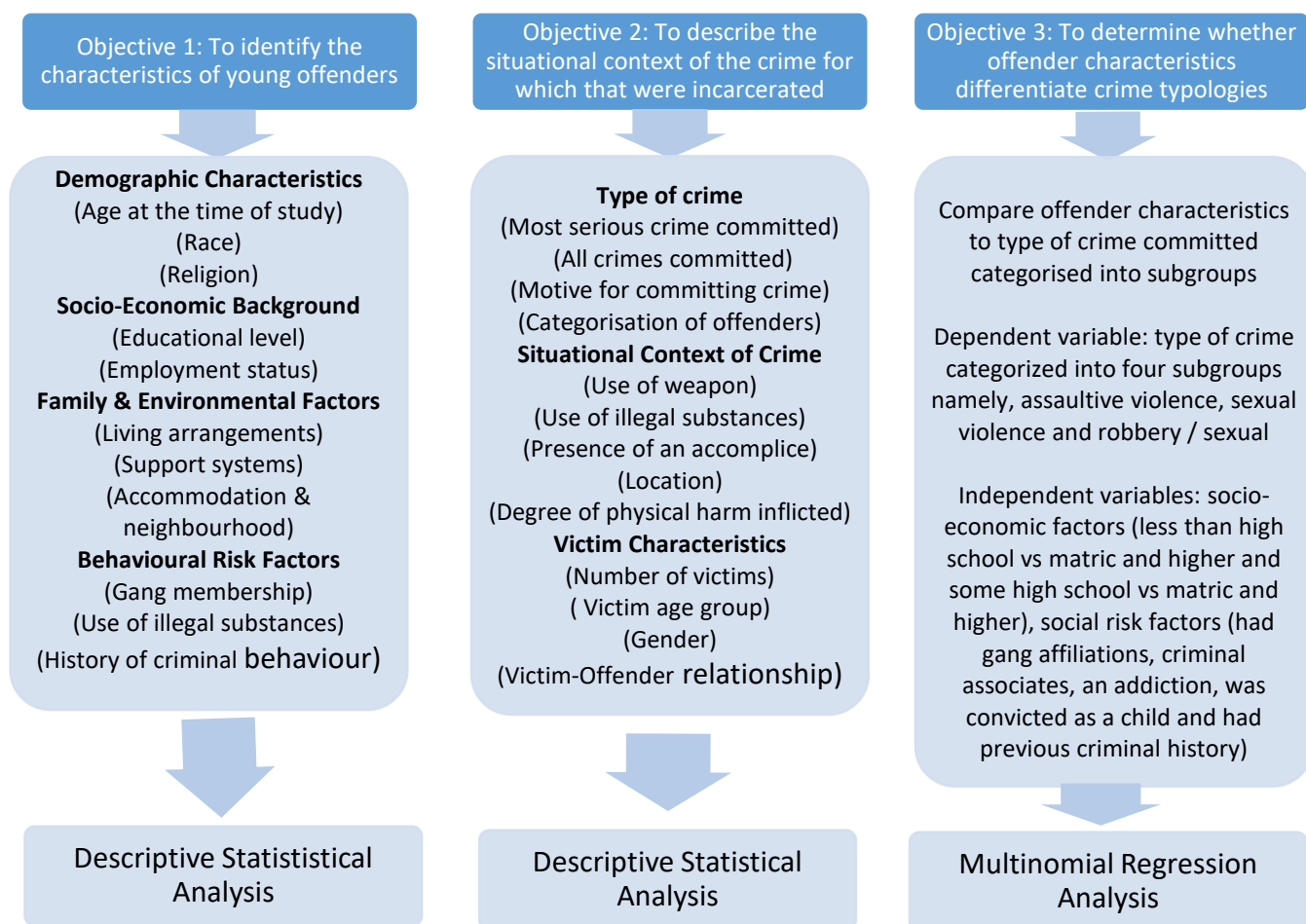
#### **4.8 Analysis of Data**

Figure 4.1 presents each of the three objectives, the variables related to these objectives and the method of analysis used to achieve the study objectives. Basic descriptive statistics and a multivariate technique of multinomial logistic regression for certain indicators were used to analyse the data collected. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to describe the basic features of objectives one and two of this study due to the number of variables that required measuring. This method of analysis was used to provide simple summaries of the sample and the measures; and to break down the quantitative data into a more simple form. Multinomial regression analysis was used to analyse object three because the dependent categorical variable had more than two categories. SPSS version 25 was used for analysing the data.

Descriptive statistics aims to provide a picture of reality and can be used to describe just one variable or the relationship between two variables (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2011). These relationships are represented as associations or correlations. Descriptive statistical analysis

and frequency analysis techniques were used to determine the results of the offenders' characteristics and the situational contexts of their crimes as presented in Figure 4.1 below. A subgroup analysis using variables presented under *objective one - offender characteristics* and *objective two - the situational context of their crime* in Figure 4.1, subdivided offenders into further groups based on the primary offences for which each offender was incarcerated, their motives for committing the crime, and the qualitative explanations of the crime were used to construct four major crime categories: *assaultive violence, robbery, sexual assault and robbery with sexual assault* (this is explained in more detail under 5.3.1.4 in the chapter on results).

Multinomial regression analysis is utilized when the dependent variable is categorical (Tredoux, Pretorius, & Steel, 2006). In the case of this study the multinomial regression analysis was used to determine whether offender characteristics as the independent variable presented under objective one in Figure 4.1, differentiated the types of crimes committed as presented under the dependent categorical variable. The independent variables consisted of offenders' demographic characteristics, socio-demographic background (categorised into less than high school vs matric and higher and some high school vs matric and higher for the analysis), family and environmental factors and behavioural risk factors (categorised further as - had gang affiliations, criminal associates, an addiction, was convicted as a child and had previous criminal history for the analysis) and the dependent variable was type of crime separated into the four major crime categories of assaultive violence, robbery, sexual violence and robbery/sexual. "The logistic regression model relates one or more predictor variables to a dependent variable and yields regression coefficients, predicated values and residuals" (Wright, 2006, p. 218).



**Figure 4.1: Statistical data analysis process**

#### 4.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from University of South Africa's Psychology Department Ethics Committee (see attached Annexure B). The correct procedures were then followed by submitting a formal application to conduct research at the DCS to the National Office (see attached Annexure C) and after approval was obtained the correct protocol as stipulated in the approval letter was followed. The Office of the Regional Commissioner: KwaZulu Natal was contacted and informed in writing of the research, and formal permission to enter the facility for the purpose of carrying out research was obtained from the Director of the Westville Correctional Facility (see attached Annexure D).

Confidentiality was guaranteed and no identifying information was captured or presented in the study, all data collected would only be used for the purpose of the study, and no harm would be caused to any persons by the study. The principle of anonymity which ensures that the participants will remain anonymous throughout the study, even to the researcher, was maintained. A key ethical obligation in research that uses administrative data is that it must



be non-identifiable and the data must be stripped of all personal identifiers to protect individuals' privacy (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2011) was adhered to throughout the study. All information provided to the researcher by the DCS as well as the completed data collection templates were returned to the Unit Manager on completion of the study. Only the case identification numbers were captured onto the data capture template and electronic data sets. All electronic data sets were encrypted and password protected for storage with restricted access to the researcher only.

#### **4.10 Summary**

This chapter first described the study design and research site used. The case identification and selection process that used a simple random technique was then outlined and full details of the data collection instruments and measures used for the collection of data was outlined. Permission for collection and the actual process of collection was discussed. Statistical techniques relating to the coding and entering of data and the statistical methods of descriptive analysis and multinomial logistic regression analysis used for the data analysis were explained, and finally issues pertaining to ethical considerations were addressed.

## CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS

### 5.1. Introduction

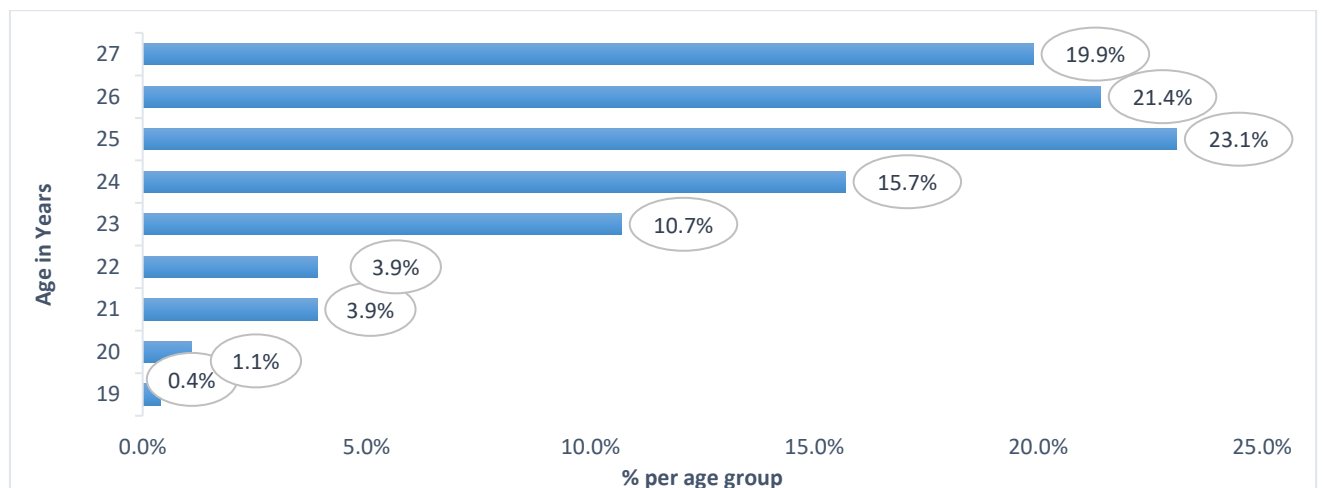
This chapter presents the results of the study in line with the objectives outlined in chapter one. The first section presents the profile of youth violent offenders showing demographic characteristics, socio-economic background, family and environmental factors and behavioural risk factors. The second section presents the situational context of the current crime for which the youth violent offender has been incarcerated and organises the types of crime into four major crime categories, describes the circumstances surrounding the present crime and provides the characteristics of the victims. The chapter concludes with the comparative results of offender characteristics within the four crime categories and the multinomial logistic regression of the subgroups of crime.

### 5.2. Profile of Young Violent Offenders

This section deals with the first objective of the study and describes the demographic characteristics, socio-economic background, family and environmental background and behavioural risk factors for the 281 violent young offenders in the study.

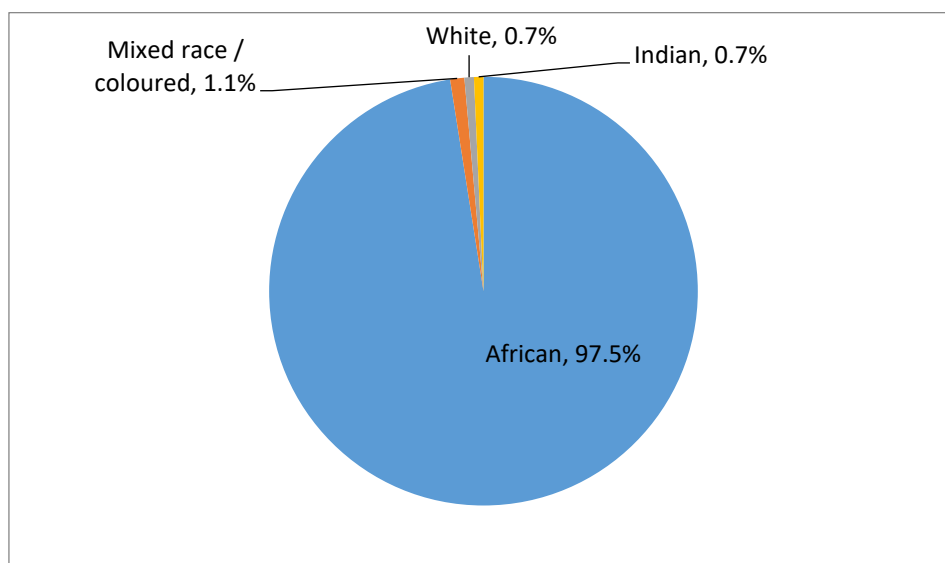
#### 5.2.1 Demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics such as age of offender at the time of study, race, nationality and religious orientation are presented in figures 5.1 to 5.3. Figure 5.1 shows the age of offenders at the time of the study, which ranged from 19 to 27 years, with 58.4% (n=164) falling within the 20-25 year parameters and the 41.2% (n=116) were over 25 years (that is, 26 and 27), and 0.4% (n=1) were 19 years old.



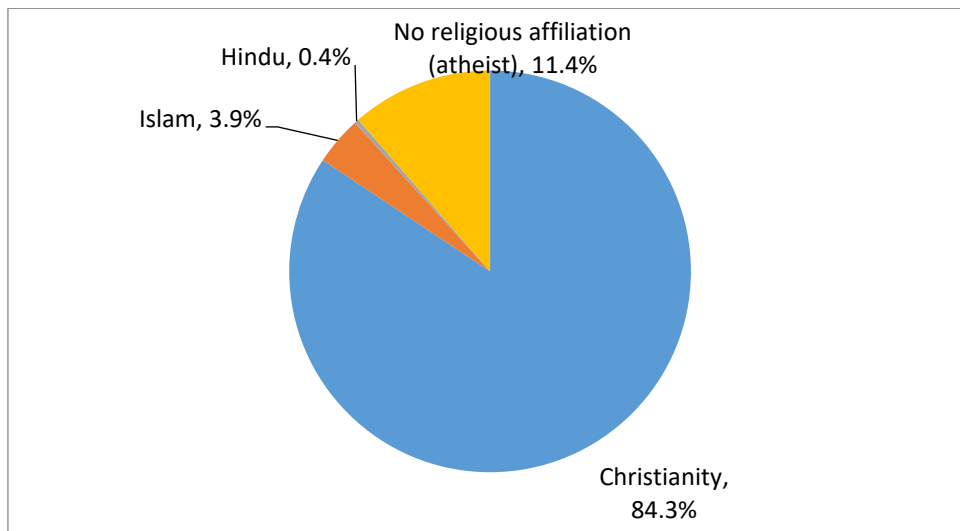
**Figure 5.1: Age of offenders at the time of study (n=281)**

Figure 5.2 shows the race of offenders. The categories ‘black’, ‘coloured’, ‘Indian’, and ‘white’ are reflective of apartheid classifications and the use of these terms does not imply acceptance of the apartheid assumptions on which these labels were based. The terms are used because of their significance as a result of the disparity in which apartheid laws impacted and continue to impact on the lives of South Africans; and in line with the distinctions used in international literature for majority and minority groups. The overwhelming majority of youth offenders were of black African descent (97.5%; n=274) with the remaining 2.5 % falling within the coloured or mixed race (1.1%, n=3), white (0.7%, n=2) and Asian/Indian descent categories (0.7 % , n=2). All the offenders in the sample (n=281) were of South African nationality.



**Figure 5.2: Race of offenders (n=281)**

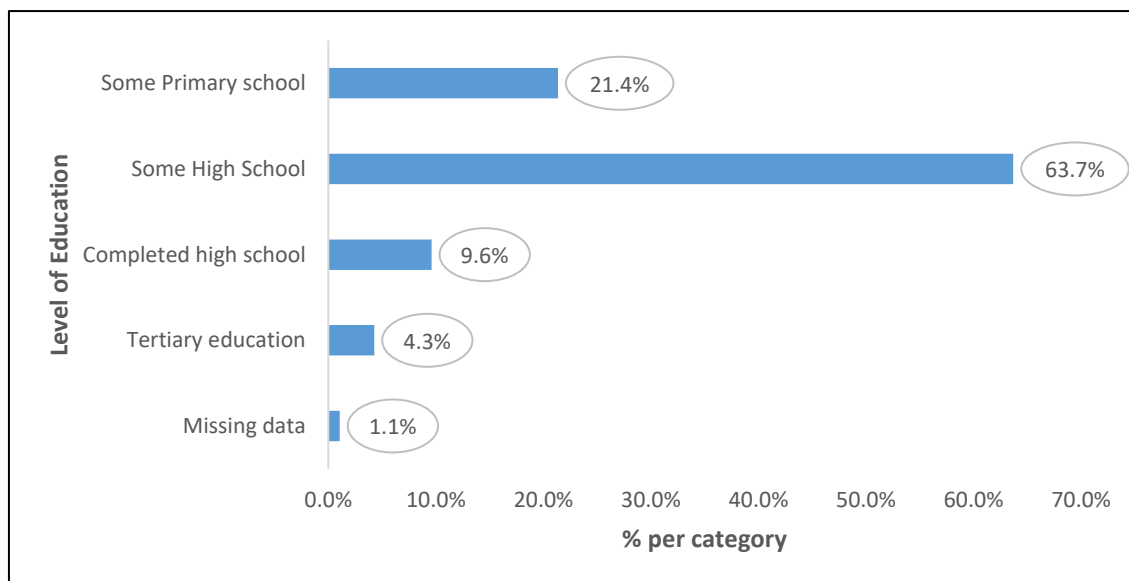
Figure 5.3 illustrates that offenders were of various religious orientations apportioned into various religious denominations. The large majority practiced Christianity (84.3%, n=237), followed by Islam (3.9%, n=11) and Hinduism (0.4%, n=1) while 11.4% (n=32) indicated that they did not have any religious preferences.



**Figure 5.3: Religion of offenders (n=281)**

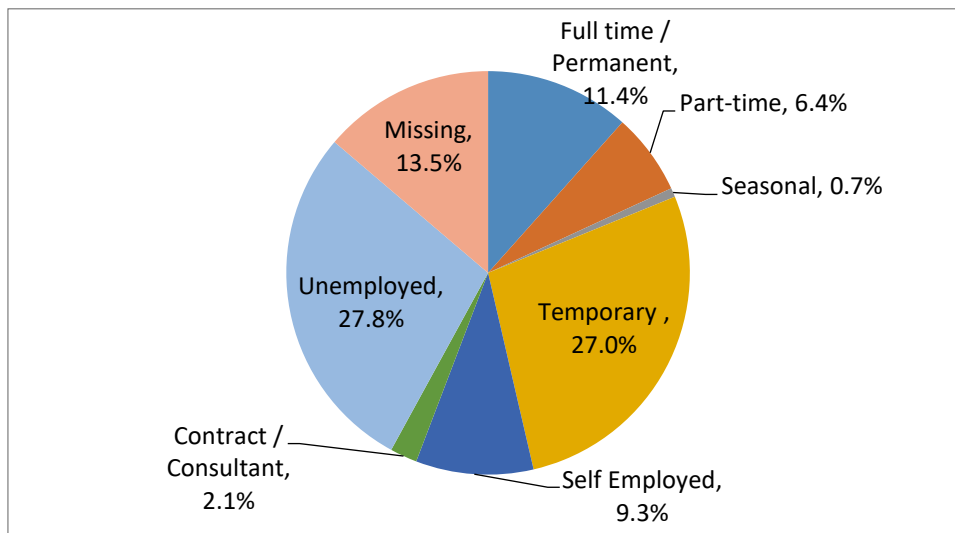
### 5.2.2 Socio-economic background

Socio-economic background incorporates level of education, income and occupation. A total of 91.5% (n=257) of the offenders were literate, while the remaining 8.5% (n=24) were not literate. Figure 5.4 shows that level of education varied among offenders with 21.4% (n=60) having some primary school education or ABET learning level, 63.7% (n=179) having attended high school, and 1.1% (n=3) had missing data. Of the 281 offenders in the sample only 9.6% (n=27) had completed high school and 4.3% (n=12) had some form of further education.



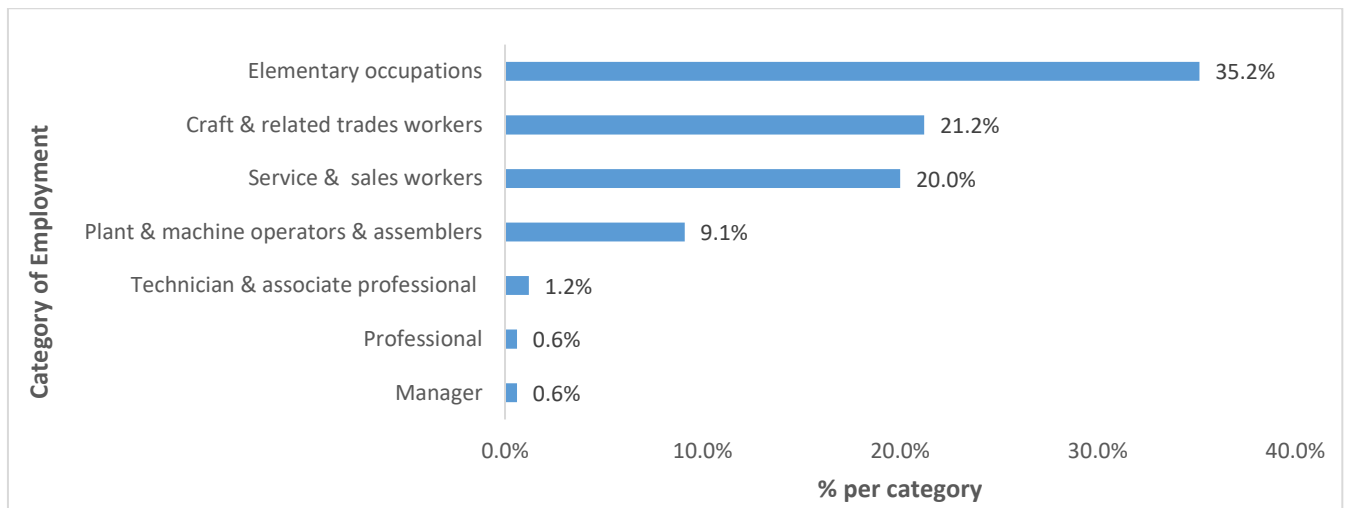
**Figure 5.4: Educational level of offenders (n=281)**

The employment status of offenders prior to arrest is indicated in Figure 5.5 below. The results indicated that prior to conviction most offenders had either temporary employment (27.0%, n=76), full-time employment (11.4%, n=32), were self-employed (9.3%, n=26), worked part-time (6.4%, n=18), had contractual (2.1%, n=6) or seasonal work (0.7%, n=2). The remaining 41.3% (n=116) of offenders were either unemployed (27.8%, n=78) or had missing data (13.5%, n=38).



**Figure 5.5: Employment status of offenders prior to arrest (n=281)**

The International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO-08) (International Labour Office, 2012) was used to code the various occupations reported. This system has 10 major groups, namely managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals, clerical support workers, service and sales workers, skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, craft and related trades workers, plant and machine operators and assemblers, elementary occupations and armed force occupations. Figure 5.6 is representative of only those offenders who were employed prior to arrest. The results indicated that 35.2% (n=58) of the offenders performed elementary occupations, a further 21.2% (n=35) were craft and related trades workers, while 20.0% (n=33) were service and sales workers, 9.1% (n=15) plant and machine operators and assemblers with the remaining 2.4% (n=4) falling into technical (0.7%, n=2), professional (0.4%, n=1) and management (0.4%, n=1) categories.



**Figure 5.6: Category of employment (n=165)**

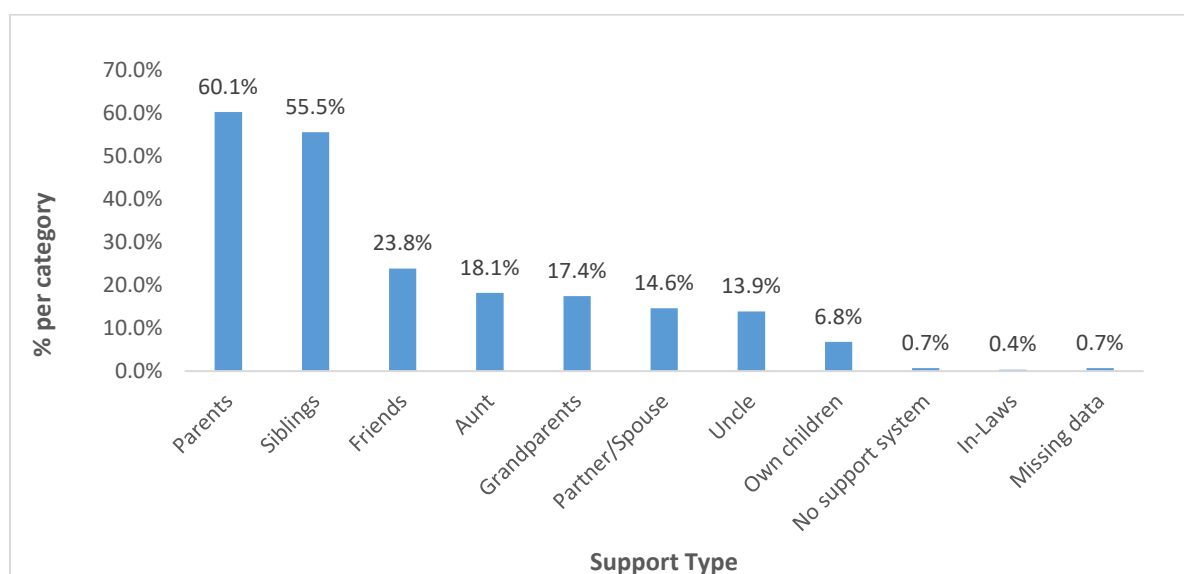
### 5.2.3 Family and Environmental Factors

The offenders living arrangements prior to arrest was investigated. The information collected indicted who the offender was residing with during the time of their arrest and what types of support systems were present for the offender. The type of living arrangement prior to arrest is shown in Table 5.1 and was distinguished into 5 categories, namely those offenders who were living with either one or both parent/s (53.0%, n=149), living with a relative (37.7%, n=106), living alone (5.7%, n=16), living with a partner (3.2%, n=9) and other (0.4%, n=1). Of the 53.0% (n=149) of offenders that lived with a either one or both parent/s, 32% (n=90) lived with only their mothers (32.0%, n=90), 14.6% (n=41) were residing with both parents, and 6.4% (n=18) lived with only their father. Table 5.1 further shows that a total of 92.5% (n=260) of offenders were single, 6.4% (n=18) were in a relationship and 0.7% (n=2) were married.

**Table 5.1**  
**Youths' living arrangements and marital status prior to arrest (n=281)**

	n	%
<b>Living arrangement</b>		
Mother Only	90	32.0
Both Parents	41	14.6
Grandmother	27	9.6
Brother	19	6.8
Father Only	18	6.4
Aunt	17	6.0
Sister	17	6.0
Alone	16	5.7
Uncle	13	4.6
Grandparents	10	3.6
Girlfriend	7	2.4
Other	4	1.6
Siblings	2	0.7
No support system	2	0.7
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	260	92.5
In a relationship	18	6.4
Married	2	0.7
Missing data	1	0.4

Figure 5.7 shows a histogram of the distribution of types of support systems with the most significant support systems being parent/s (60.1%, n=169) followed by siblings (55.5%, n=156), friends (23.8%, n=67), relatives (35.9%, n=101) and partner and own children (21.4%, n=60), while 0.7% (n=2) did not have any significant person/s or support systems in their life.



**Figure 5.7 Distribution of support systems for offenders (n=281)**

Table 5.2 shows that most offenders (79.7%, n=224) resided in their own home or the home they grew up in prior to arrest. The majority of offenders grew up in a rural area (47.5%, n=133) and townships (39.1%, n=110). The data also showed that 15.3% (n=43) of the youth offender acknowledged residing with a family member involved in criminal activities or who had already been arrested or convicted for a criminal activity.

**Table 5.2:**  
**Accommodation and Neighbourhood prior to arrest (n=281)**

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Type of accommodation</b>		
Own home	224	79.7
Renting a flat/room	19	6.8
Informal dwelling	13	4.6
RDP Housing	10	3.6
Sharing a flat/room	5	1.8
Rondavel	5	1.8
Renting a house	4	1.4
<b>Type of neighbourhood</b>		
Rural area	133	47.5
Townships	110	39.1
Informal settlement / shacks	11	3.9
Government housing (RDP)	11	3.9
Suburb	10	3.6
Small farm / holdings	4	1.4
Missing data	2	0.8

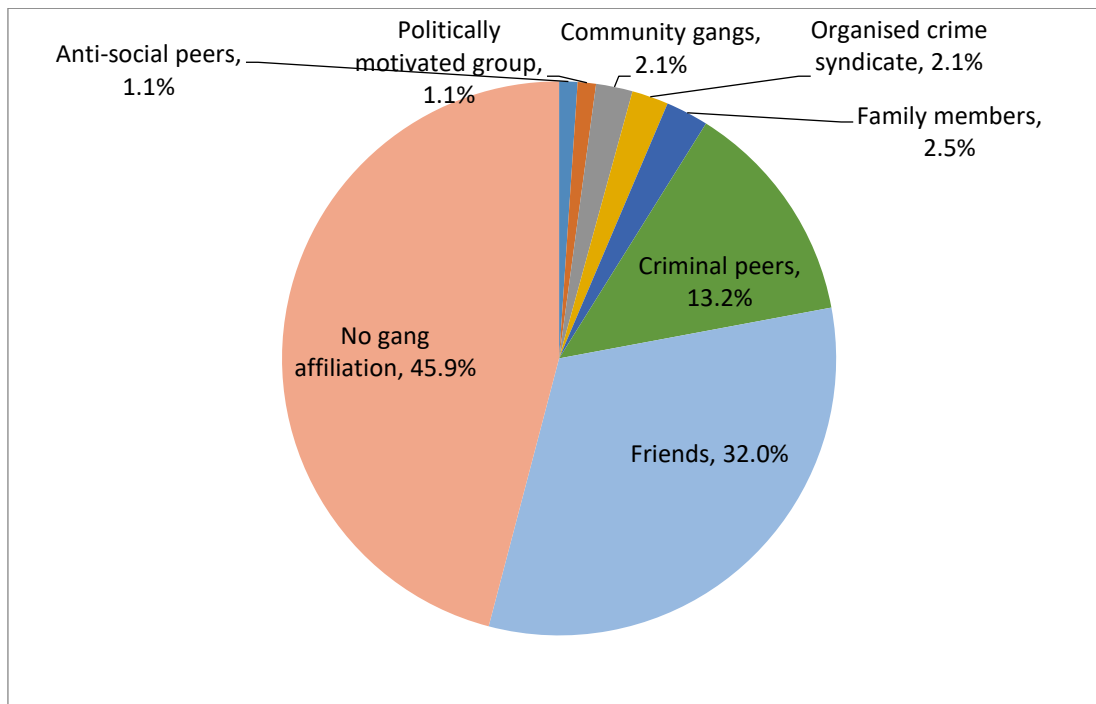
#### **5.2.4 Behavioural Risk Factors**

Behavioural risk factors include gang membership, use of illegal substances and history of criminal behaviour, including age of commencement of criminal behaviour.

##### **5.2.4.1. Gang membership**

More than half (54.1%, n=152) of the offenders admitted to being a part of a gang prior to arrest and conviction as shown in Figure 5.8 below. Of these 152 offenders, most were in a gang with their friends (59.2%, n=90), followed by a gang consisting of criminal peers (24.3%, n=37), family members (4.6%, n=7), community gangs (3.9%, n=6), organised crime syndicates (3.9%, n=6), antisocial peers (2.0%, n=3) and politically motivated groups (2.0%, n=3).





**Figure 5.8: Gang affiliations prior to arrest (n=281)**

#### 5.2.4.2 Use of illegal substances / drug abuse

Information relating to addiction to narcotics prior to conviction was also collected. Around 13.2% (n=37) of the offenders were recorded as having an addiction to one or more illegal substances. The most prevalent addiction was to marijuana or dagga (6.4%, n=11), followed by alcohol (3.9%, n=11) as indicated in table 5.6 below. The numbers reported below are likely to be an underestimate as during conversations with correctional officers at the Westville Correctional Facility, it was mentioned that offenders often withhold information pertaining to their addictions or substance abuse problems. Furthermore, data on the types of treatment programmes attended by the offenders indicate that 78.6% have attended or were recommended to attend a substance abuse programme by their case manager as part of their rehabilitation process.

**Table 5.3**  
**Type of illegal substances used (n=281)**

Type of illegal substance	n	%
Dagga ( <i>Cannabis</i> )	18	6.4
Alcohol	11	3.9
Mandrax ( <i>Methaqualone</i> )	4	1.4
Heroin ( <i>Diamorphine</i> )	3	1.1
Tik ( <i>Crystal methamphetamine</i> )	2	0.7
Cocaine	2	0.7
Whoonga ( <i>Mixture of heroin smoked with cannabis</i> )	2	0.7
Ecstasy ( <i>Methylenedioxymethamphetamine</i> )	1	0.4

The onset of abuse ranged from 13 years to 22 years with 17 and 18 years being the most common ages.

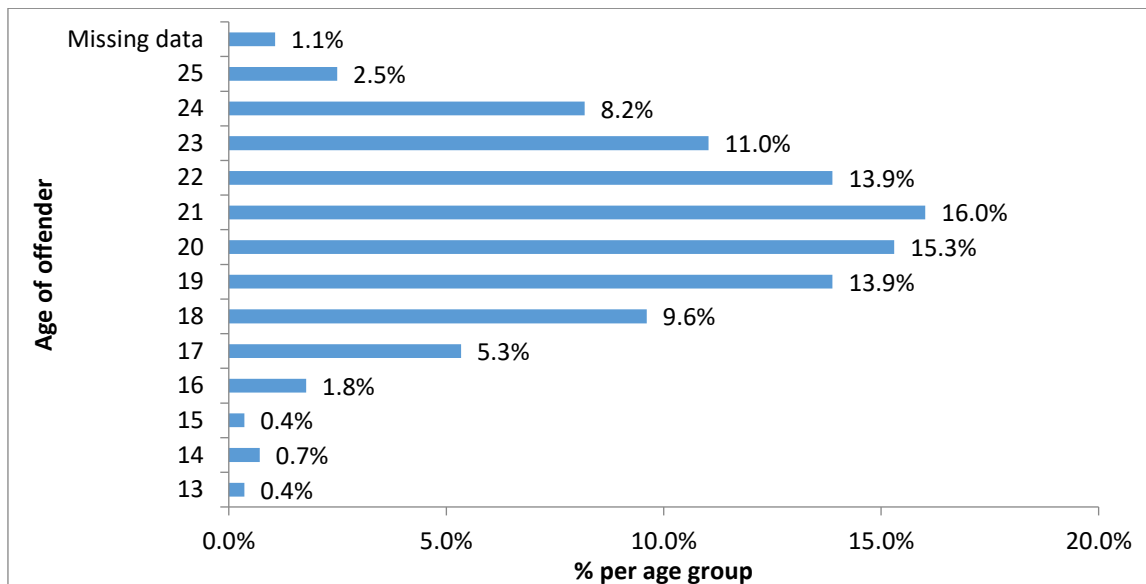
#### 5.2.4.3 History of criminal behaviour

Almost one out of five (19.2%, n=54) of the offenders had a previous conviction, that is 1.4% (n=4) had previously committed a crime that was considered high risk as categorised by the DCS while the remaining 17.8% (n=50) had committed a crime that was not considered high risk, that is 16.7% (n=47) were considered medium risk and 1.1% (n=3) were considered minimum risk, while the majority (80.8%, n=227) were first time offenders or incarcerated for the first time. The department carries out a risk assessment on each offender which encompasses the severity of the crimes, length of sentence, number of previous convictions, number of counts on the warrant, time lapse between offences, history of violence, age of admission, motive for committing the crime, if the crime was committed in a gang context and the number of victims. A scoring guide is used to determine the risk category of the offender.

Criminal history was assessed under two categories, criminal behaviour during childhood (under 18 years) and criminal behaviour during youth (18-25) as defined in the *White Paper on Corrections* (2005).

##### a) Age of onset

The age profile of respondents that participated in the study is presented in Figure 5.9. Offenders were aged between 13 and 25 years at the time of their first offence with 1.1% (n=3) being under the age of 15, 31.0% (n=87) were between 15-20 and 66.9% (n=188) were between the ages of 20-25.



**Figure 5.9: Percentage distribution of age of commencement of crime (n=281)**  
*(Average age of offenders – 20.6)*

b) Criminal behaviour during childhood and treatment programmes

A total of 8.5% (n=24) of the offenders were convicted for crimes committed during their childhood (under the age of 18). The type of crimes committed were mainly theft (including petty theft and housebreaking) (50.0%, n=12), robbery (16.7%, n=4), drug related crimes (16.7, n=4), kidnapping and rape (4.2%, n=1), murder (4.2%, n=1), attempted murder (4.2%, n=1), and robbery and assault (4.2%, n=1). A total of 1.1% (n=3) of offenders in the sample had been suspended from school during their childhood for criminal and delinquent behaviour, and 0.7% (n=2) of the offenders had been expelled from school for reasons pertaining to criminal behaviour. Data also revealed that 5 of the offenders were placed in placement programmes by a court of law for criminal behaviour during childhood. The type of placement programmes for those offenders were reformatory (50.0%, n=2), secure care facility (25.0%, n=1) and court imposed programme (25.0%, n=1). The reasons for placement included court placement (25.0%, n=1), delinquent behaviour (25.0%, n=1), protective care (25.0%, n=1), and rehabilitation (25.0%, n=1).

c) Criminal behaviour during youth

A total of 39 (13.9%) of the offenders in the sample had been previously convicted during their youth (18-25 years). The types of crime committed were primarily breaking and entering and housebreaking (33.3%, n=13), theft (26.6%, n=10), assault (15.4%, n=6), robbery (12.8%, n=5), sexual offences (7.7%, n=3), drug related (0.4%, n=1) and firearms related (0.4%, n=1). In terms of the risk categorisation by the DCS, 74.4% (n=29) fall within the maximum risk category, 17.9% (n=7) were considered a medium risk and 7.7% (n=3) were not specified.

### 5.3 The Situational Context of the Current Crime

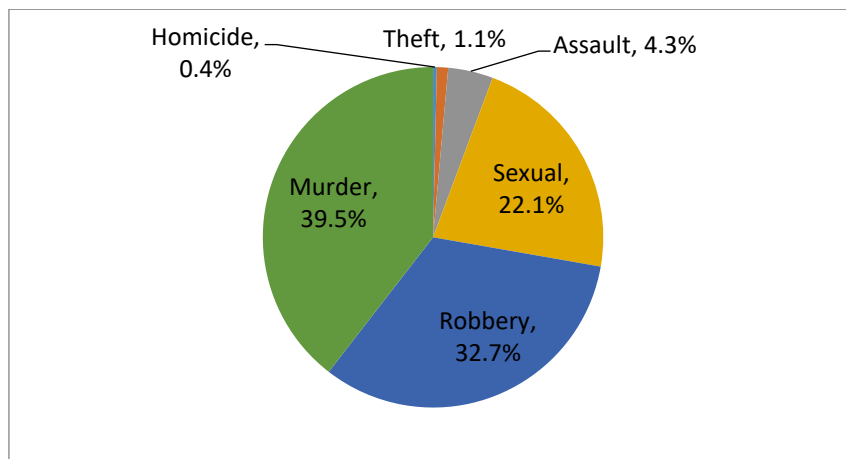
This section describes the situational context of the criminal event and characteristics of the victim(s) of the current crime (objective 2).

#### 5.3.1 Type of crime

As some of the offenders were incarcerated for more than one crime the most serious crime committed is presented first, followed by the number of instances per crime type and the motive and finally four major crime categories are generated from this information to enable further analysis.

##### 5.3.1.1 Most serious crime committed

The types of crime committed by the offenders are differentiated in accordance with the DCS categories. Figure 5.10 below displays the frequency of the most serious crime types committed by the offender as determined by DCS. The most frequent type of crime was murder (39.5%, n=111), followed by robbery with aggravating circumstances (32.7, n=92), sexual crimes (22.1%, n=62), common assault (4.3%, n=12), theft (1.1%, n=3) and culpable homicide (0.4%, n=1). The differences between the charges of murder and culpable homicide is that the former requires intent while the latter is due to negligence as defined by the *Criminal Law Amendment Act 105 of 1997* (Republic of South Africa, 1997).

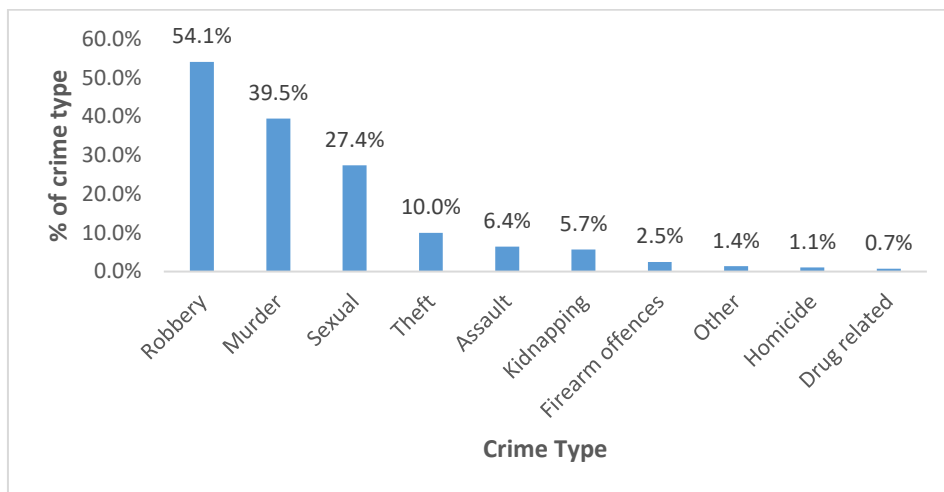


**Figure 5.10: Pie chart showing proportions of most serious crime types**

##### 5.3.1.2 All crimes committed

Some of the offenders were convicted for more than one criminal offence, for example if an offender committed murder during a robbery. Figure 5.11 presents all the crimes for which the offenders were incarcerated in histogram showing the distribution of crime types. Offenders were mostly convicted on charges of robbery (54.1%, n=152), murder (39.5%,

n=111) and sexual offences (27.4%, n=77), followed by theft (10.0, n=28), common assault (6.4%, n=18), kidnapping (5.7%, n=16), firearm offences (2.5, n=7) other( 1.4, n=4), culpable homicide (1.1%, n=3) and drug related offences (0.7%, n=2).



**Figure 5.11: Distribution of crime types (n=281)**

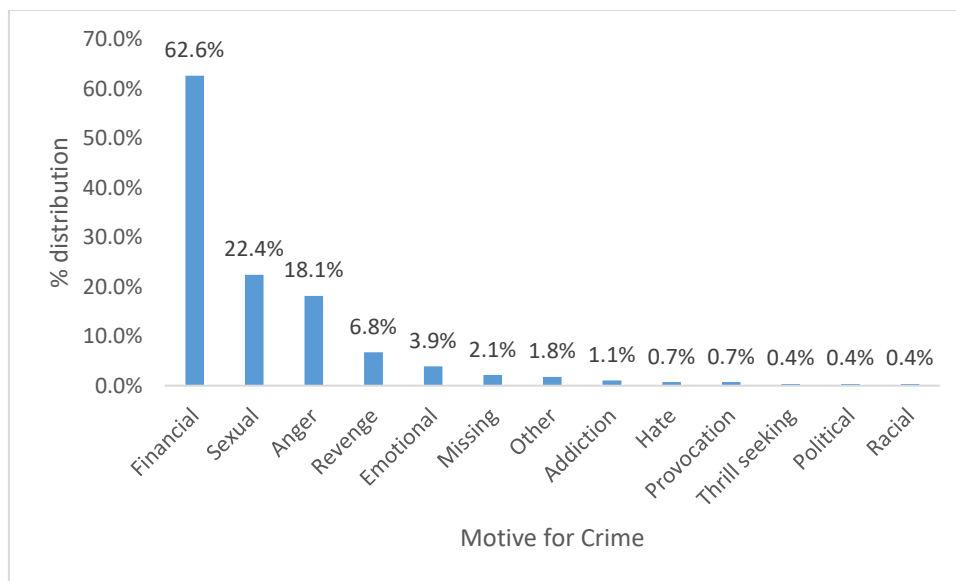
Table 5.4 details the number and percentage of convictions and combinations of convictions from single convictions to up to five convictions and details the combinations of type of crimes committed. The majority of offenders were convicted for a single crime type (61.2%, n=172), followed two separate convictions (30.6%, n=86), three convictions (6.0%, n=17), four convictions (1.4%, n=4) and five convictions (0.7%, n=2).

**Table 5.4**  
**Convictions and combination of convictions (n=281)**

	n	%
<b>Single Convictions</b>		
Robbery	74	26,3%
Murder	56	19,9%
Sexual Offence	38	13,5%
Theft	3	1.1%
Assault	1	0.4%
<b>Two Convictions</b>		
Murder + Robbery	36	12.8%
Robbery + Sexual	9	3.2%
Robbery + Theft	8	2.8%
Sexual + Assault	6	2.1%
Sexual + Theft	5	1.8%
Robbery + Firearm	4	1.4%
Sexual + Housebreaking	4	1.4%
Robbery + Kidnapping	3	1.1%
Murder + Assault	2	0.7%
Murder + Theft	2	0.7%
Robbery + Drug Related	2	0.7%
Murder + Sexual Offence	1	0.4%
Murder + Firearm Related	1	0.4%
Murder + Kidnapping	1	0.4%
Sexual + Kidnapping	1	0.4%
Assault + Kidnapping	1	0.4%
Assault + Culpable Homicide	1	0.4%
<b>Three Convictions</b>		
Sexual + Theft + Housebreaking	3	1.1%
Murder + Robbery + Theft	2	0.7%
Robbery + Sexual + Assault	2	0.7%
Robbery + Sexual + Kidnapping	2	0.7%
Murder + Robbery + Firearm	1	0.4%
Murder + Robbery + Kidnapping	1	0.4%
Murder + Sexual + Assault	1	0.4%
Murder + Sexual + Theft	1	0.4%
Murder + Assault + Theft	1	0.4%
Robbery + Sexual + Theft	1	0.4%
Robbery + Kidnapping + Theft	1	0.4%
<b>Four Convictions</b>		
Murder + Robbery + Sexual + Assault	2	0.7%
Murder + Robbery + Theft + Culpable Homicide	1	0.4%
Robbery + Sexual + Assault + Theft	1	0.4%
<b>Five Convictions</b>		
Murder + Robbery + Sexual + Theft + Kidnapping	1	0.4%
Murder + Robbery + Theft + Firearm + Culpable Homicide	1	0.4%

### 5.3.1.3 Motive for committing the crime

Correctional officials also capture the alleged motive for the crime. This information is extracted from the SAPS62 form. The motive is established by the SAPS officer when questioning the suspect and included in the offenders file. Of the 281 files, 17.1% (n=48) presented more than one motive. Figure 5.12 below provides a distribution of the different motives for committing the crime and shows financial motive (62.6%, n=176) as the most prevalent motive, followed by sexual (22.4%, n=63), anger (18.1%, n=51) and other (consisting of revenge, emotional, addiction, provocation, hate, political, racial and thrill-seeking) (16.0%, n=45) while the remaining 2.1% (n=6) were missing.



**Figure 5.12: Primary motive for committing a crime (n=281)**

### 5.3.1.4 Assignment of offenders into four major crime categories

Since a number of the offenders were involved in more than one of the type of crime categories provide by DCS (Table 5.4) mutually exclusive major crime categories were constructed for the purpose of further analyses, in particular the multivariate analysis. The primary offences for which each offender was incarcerated, their motives for committing the crime and the qualitative explanations of the crime were used to construct four major crime categories using subgroup analysis: *assaultive violence*, *robbery*, *sexual assault and robbery with sexual assault* as shown in Table 5.5. The criterion for assaultive violence was violent physical assault with a motive of anger, hate and emotional reasons resulting in death and serious injuries. The category of *robbery* includes both violent and property crimes with a financial motive. The category of sexual offences included mainly rape (including minors) and sexual assault with the primary motive being indicated as sexual. The category of robbery and sexual offences was created due to the number of offences that included both offences,

but the primary motive was unclear based on the data collected. Seven (2.5%) of the cases did not provide sufficient data to allow for categorisation and are excluded from the multivariate analysis.

**Table 5.5:**  
**Assignment of offenders into major crime categories (n=281)**

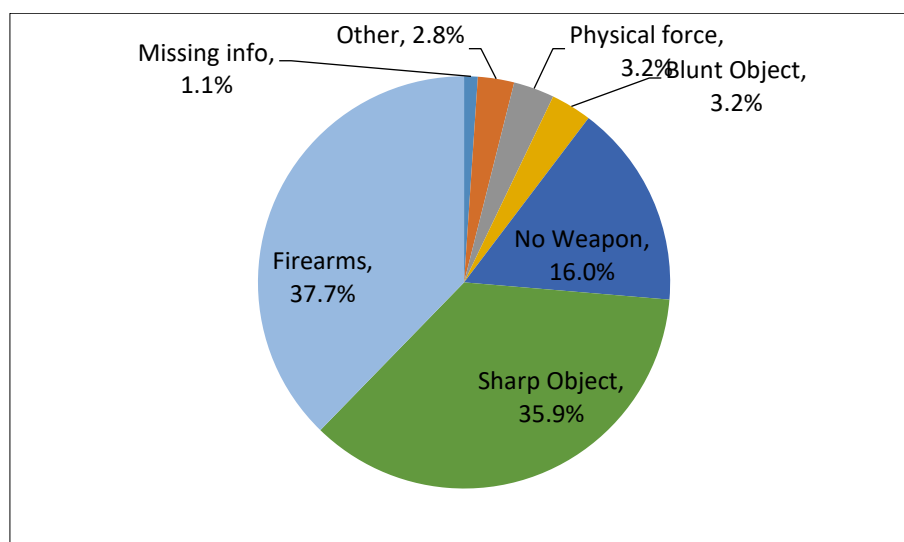
Offence category	n	%
Assaultive violence	51	18.1%
Robbery	154	54.8%
Sexual	49	17.4%
Robbery & Sexual	20	7.1%
Not categorised	7	2.5%

### 5.3.2 Situational context the current crime

The situational context of the current crime, namely the use of weapons and force, use of illegal substances, presence of an accomplice, location, and degree of physical harm caused is presented for the whole sample and separately for the four major crime categories.

#### 5.3.2.1 Use of weapons and force

Most offenders (82.9%, n=233) used a weapon/s or physical force during the commission of their current crime. The most frequently used weapons as shown in Figure 5.13 were firearms (37.7%, n=106) and sharp objects (35.9%, n=101) followed by blunt objects (3.2%, n=9), physical force (3.2, n=9), other (2.8%, n=8), while 16.0% (n=45) did not use any weapon and 1.1% (n=2) had missing information.



**Figure 5.13: Use of weapons (n=281)**



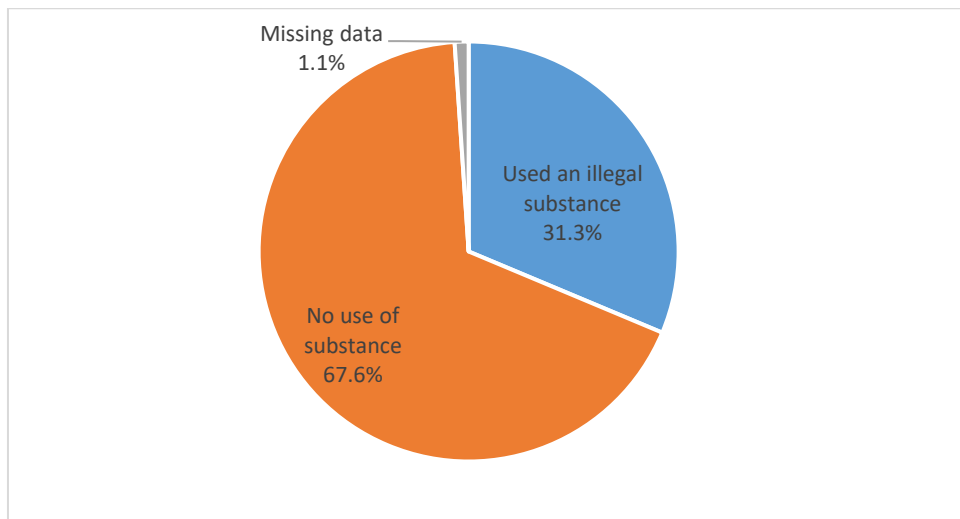
Table 5.6 depicts weapons used and weapon type for each the four major crime categories. The majority (88.2%) of assaultive violence crimes were committed with the use of a weapon, typically a sharp object (68.6%). Similarly, the large majority (91.6%) of robberies committed involved the use of a weapon, though these were mainly (59.7%) firearms. In contrast, the majority (75.5%) of sexual crimes did not involve the use of any weapons, whereas most (60%) of the robbery and sexual assault category crimes involved the use of a weapon including, sharp objects (45%) and firearms (15%). Perpetrators of assaultive violence (88.2%), robbery (91.6%) and robbery/sexual assault (60.0%) were more likely to use a weapon than perpetrators of sexual assault (22.5%). With regard to weapons used, offenders who committed robbery were more likely (59.7%) to have used firearms than those offenders who committed assaultive violence, sexual assault, and robbery with sexual assault, while offenders who committed assaultive violence were more likely to have used sharp objects (68.6%) than the offenders from the other three crime categories.

**Table 5.6**  
**Use of weapons and type of weapons for the four major crime categories**

		<b>Assaultive Violence (n=51)</b>	<b>Robbery (n=154)</b>	<b>Sexual (n=49)</b>	<b>Robbery / Sexual (n=20)</b>
		<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>
<b>Use of weapon</b>					
	Yes	<b>45 (88.2)</b>	<b>141 (91.6)</b>	11 (22.5)	<b>12 (60.0)</b>
	No	6 (11.8)	13 (8.4)	<b>37 (75.5)</b>	7 (35.0)
	Missing data	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.0)	1 (5.0)
<b>Type of weapon</b>					
	Firearm	5 (9.8)	<b>92 (59.7)</b>	4 (8.2)	3 (15.0)
	Sharp object	<b>35 (68.6)</b>	49 (31.8)	6 (12.2)	9 (45.0)
	Blunt object	3 (5.9)	2 (1.3)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)
	Physical force	6 (11.8)	1 (0.6)	2 (4.1)	0 (0.0)
	Other	2 (3.9)	5 (3.2)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)
	None	0 (0.0)	5 (3.2)	<b>34 (69.4)</b>	6 (30.0)
	Missing data	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	2 (10.0)

### 5.3.2.2 Use of illegal substances

Figure 5.14 displays that nearly a third (31.3%, n=88) of the offenders had used an illegal substance at the time of the crime, while 67.6% (n=190) were not under the influence of illegal substances during the commission of their crime and 1.1% (n=3) had missing information.



**Figure 5.14: Use of illegal substances (n=281)**

The use of illegal substances within each of the four crime categories is displayed in Table 5.7. Offenders that perpetrated robbery were less likely to use an illegal substance (82.1%) than offenders in the other three categories for which the results were of minimal difference. Almost half (49%) of the youth who committed assaultive violence crimes were using an illegal substance at the time of their crime. Youth who committed robberies were the least likely of the four groups to have used illegal substances (17.5%). Around 44.9% of youth who committed sexual crimes used illegal substances. Youth who committed robbery and sexual assault were the most likely of the three groups to have used illegal substance with the majority (60%) having done so at the time of the crime.

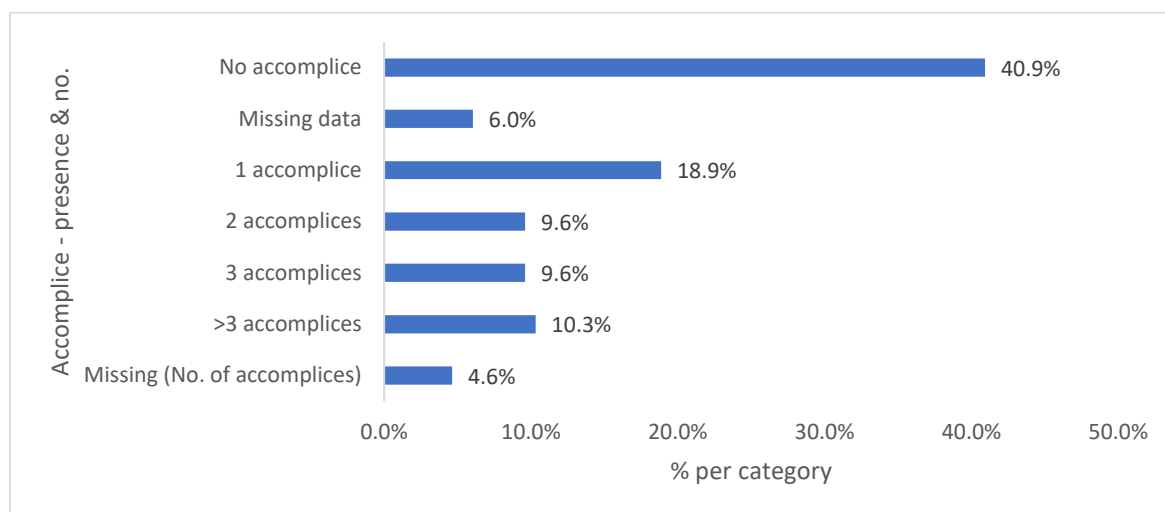
**Table 5.7:**  
**Use of illegal substances for the four crime categories**

	<b>Assaultive violence (n=51)</b>	<b>Robbery (n=154)</b>	<b>Sexual (n=49)</b>	<b>Robbery / Sexual (n=20)</b>
	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>
<b>Was an illegal substance used?</b>				
Yes	25 (49.0)	27 (17.5)	22 (44.9)	12 (60.0)
No	26 (51.0)	125 (82.1)	27 (55.1)	8 (40.0)
Missing data	0 (0.0)	2 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

### 5.3.2.3 Presence of an accomplice/s

Figure 5.15 illustrates that 53.0% (n=149) of offenders committed their crimes with an accomplice/s and 40.9% (n=115) were committed alone, while 6.1% (n=17) had missing data. For those that had an accomplice, the number of accomplices per criminal event varied with 18.9% (n=53) having had one accomplice, 9.6% (n=27) had two accomplices, 9.6% (n=27)

had three accomplices, 10.3% (n=29) had more than three accomplices and 4.6% (n=13) did not stipulate the number of accomplices present.



**Figure 5.15: Presence of an accomplice/s during criminal offence (n=281)**

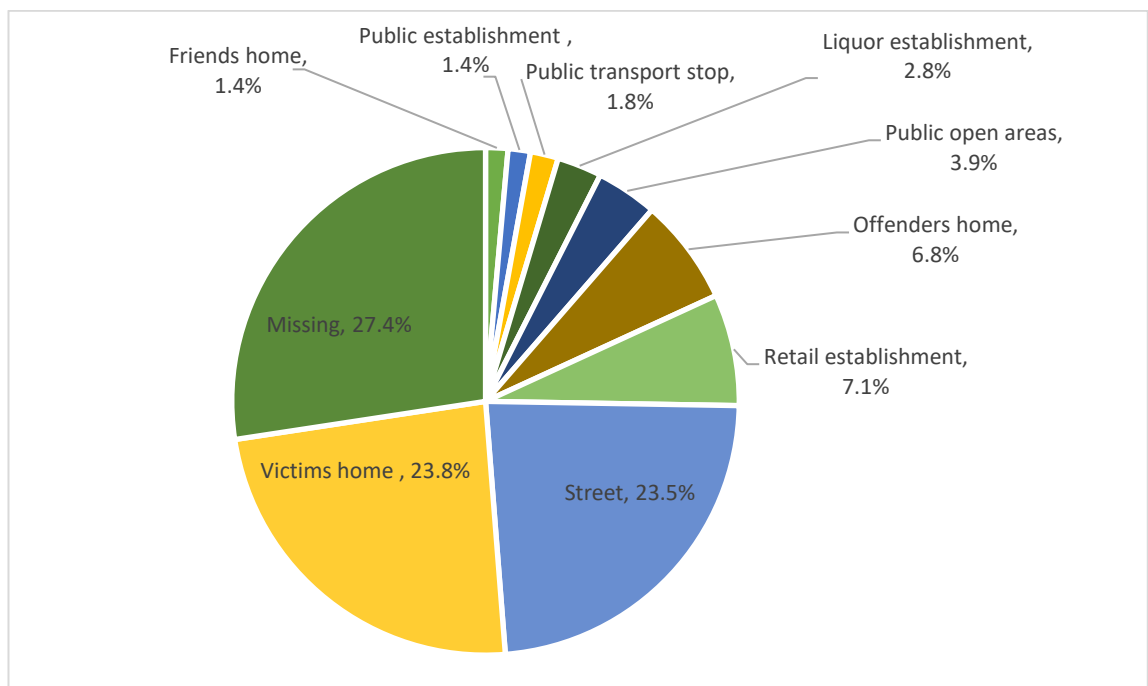
Table 5.8 demonstrates that the majority (56.9%) of assaultive violence crimes were committed alone. Contrarily, the large majority (70.1%) of robberies committed were committed with an accomplice, mainly one accomplice present. In the category of sexual offences, majority (79.6%) of sexual crimes did not involve the presence of an accomplice/s, similarly most (55.0%) of the robbery and sexual assault category crimes were committed without an accomplice present

**Table 5.8  
Presence of an accomplice/s within the four crime categories**

	Assaultive violence (n=51)	Robbery (n=154)	Sexual (n=49)	Robbery / Sexual (n=20)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
<b>Did the offender have an accomplice?</b>				
Yes	20 (39.2)	<b>108 (70.1)</b>	9 (18.4)	8 (40.0)
No	<b>29 (56.9)</b>	33 (21.4)	<b>39 (79.6)</b>	<b>11 (55.0)</b>
Missing data	2 (3.9)	13 (9.7)	1 (2.0)	1 (5.0)
<b>No. of accomplices</b>	<b>(n=20)</b>	<b>(n=108)</b>	<b>(n=9)</b>	<b>(n=8)</b>
1 accomplice	4	41	5	3
2 accomplices	3	21	1	1
3 accomplices	4	18	0	3
>3 accomplices	6	22	0	0
Missing data	3	6	3	1

### 5.3.2.4 Location

Figure 5.16 presents the results on the location of the crime. The most common place where the crimes had occurred was either within or in close proximity to the victims' home (23.8%, n=67) and the street (23.5% n=66), followed by retail establishments (7.1%, n=20), offenders' home (6.8%, n=19), public open areas (parks, beaches, bushes) (3.9, n=11), liquor establishments (taverns, shebeens, bars) (2.8%, n=8), public transport stop (1.8%, n=5), friend's home (1.4%, n=4) or public establishment (place of learning, parking lot) (1.4%, n=4) and 27.4% (n=77) had missing data.



**Figure 5.16: Location of the current crime (n=281)**

Table 5.9 shows the locations of current crime differed within each of the four crime categories. Assaultive violence crimes were more likely to occur in the victim's home (23.5%), liquor establishment (15.7%) and the street (11.8%). The majority of robberies occurred on the street (35.1%), followed by victim's home (22.7%) and retail establishments (13.0%). Sexual crimes were most likely to have occurred at the offenders home (34.7%) followed by the victims home (18.4%). Crimes in the robbery / sexual category were more likely to have occurred at the victim's home (40.0%).

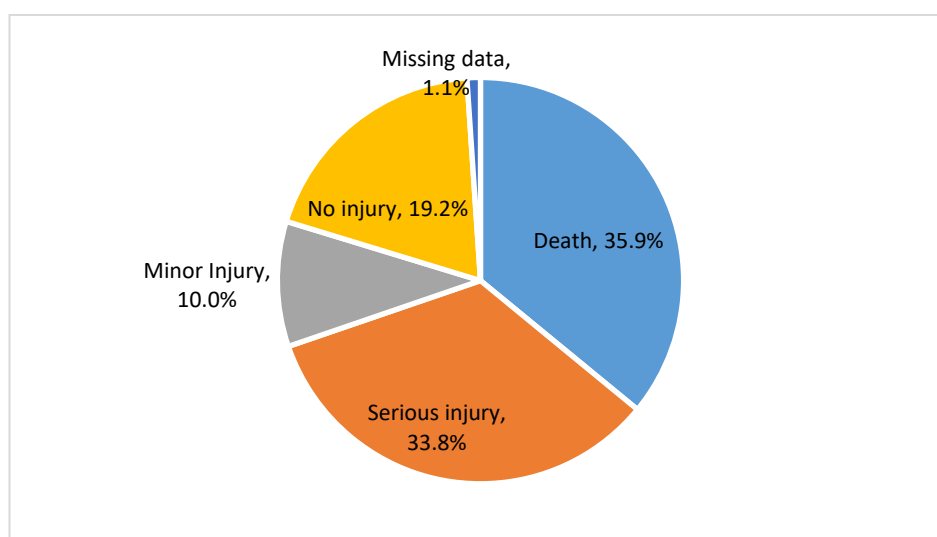
**Table 5.9**

**Location of crime as assigned within the four crime categories**

Location of the crime	Assaultive violence	Robbery	Sexual	Robbery / Sexual
	(n=51)	(n=154)	(n=49)	(n=20)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Victims home	12 (23.5)	35 (22.7)	9 (18.4)	8 (40.0)
Street	6 (11.8)	54 (35.1)	3 (6.1)	3 (15.0)
Retail establishment	0 (0.0)	20 (13.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Offenders home	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	17 (34.7)	0 (0.0)
Public open areas	3 (5.9)	2 (1.3)	5 (10.2)	1 (5.0)
Liquor establishment	8 (15.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Public transport stop	0 (0.0)	4 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Friends home	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (6.1)	0 (0.0)
Public establishment	0 (0.0)	4 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Missing data	20 (39.5)	35 (22.7)	12 (24.5)	8 (40.0)

5.3.2.5 Degree of physical harm

Figure 5.17 reflects the nature of physical harm inflicted on the victim by the offender during the violent crime incident for which they were currently incarcerated. Offenders for the most part caused death (35.9%, n=101), or serious injuries (33.8%, n=95) to their victims, while 10.0% (n=28) caused minor injuries, 19.2% (n=54) did not cause any physical harm, and 1.1% (n=3) had missing data.



**Figure 5.17: Degree of physical harm inflicted on victim (n=281)**

Assignment of degree of physical into the four crime categories is shown in Table 5.10. In contrast to the other three groups, the overwhelming majority of assaultive violence crimes resulted in the death (96.1%) of the victims. With regard to the category of robbery, offenders more generally did not cause physical harm to their victims (35.1%) and if harm was inflicted

this mostly lead to death (26.6%) followed by serious injuries (18.2%) and minor injuries (18.2%). In the sexual crimes (93.9%) and robbery/sexual category (95.0%), victims were most likely to suffer serious injuries.

**Table 5.10**  
**Type of physical harm inflicted on victim within the four crime categories**

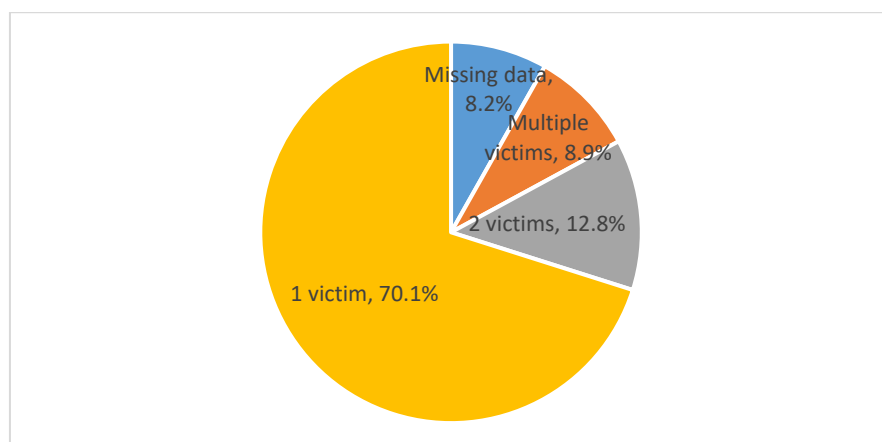
Type of physical harm inflicted	Assaultive violence (n=51)	Robbery (n=154)	Sexual (n=49)	Robbery / Sexual (n=20)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Death	49 (96.1)	41 (26.6)	3 (6.1)	1 (5.0%)
Serious injury	2 (3.9)	28 (18.2)	<b>46 (93.9)</b>	<b>19 (95.0%)</b>
Minor Injuries	0 (0.0)	28 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0%)
No physical harm	0 (0.0)	<b>54 (35.1)</b>	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0%)
Missing data	0 (0.0)	3 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	(0.0%)

### 5.3.3 Victim Characteristics

Characteristics of the victim including the number of victims, demographic details such as age group, gender and details relating to the type of relationship between the offender and the victim are first presented for the whole sample and then separately within the four major crime categories.

#### 5.3.3.1 Number of victims

Figure 5.18 shows that the majority of the current crimes committed by the offenders involved a single victim (70.1%, n=197), followed by crimes with 2 victims (12.8%, n=36), more than 2 or multiple victims (ranging from 2 to 9 number of victims) (8.9%, n=25) and 8.2% (n=23) had no information available on the number of victims involved.



**Figure 5.18: No of victims involved in criminal event (n=281)**

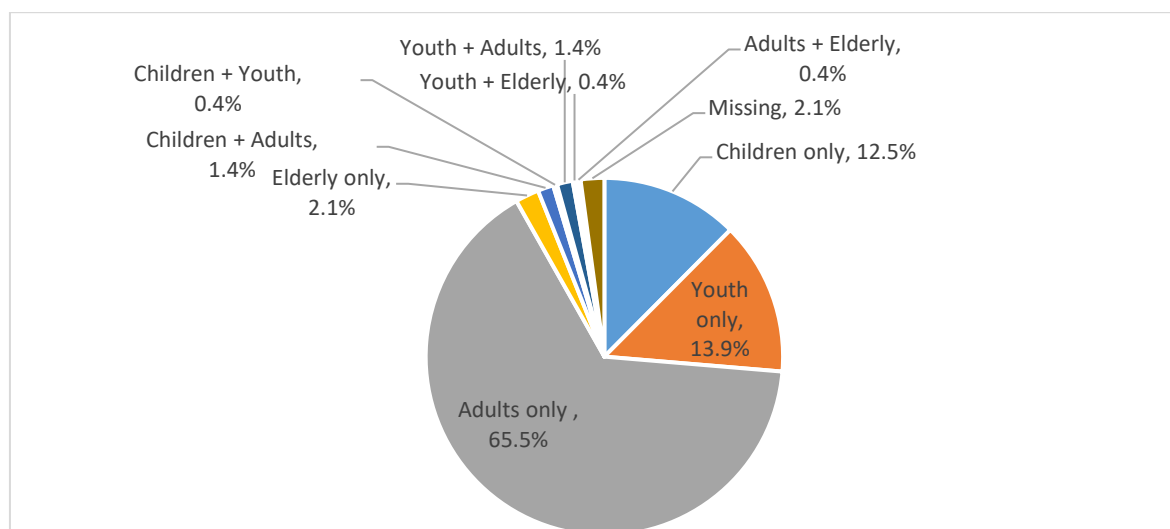
Table 5.11 shows the number of victims in each of the four crime categories. The majority of offenders in the assaultive violence category (96.1%), robbery (59.1%), sexual crimes (91.8%) and robbery / sexual (70.0%) categories favoured a single victim.

**Table 5.11**  
**No. of victims involved in criminal event within the four crime categories**

No. of victims involved in crime	Assaultive violence (n=51)	Robbery (n=154)	Sexual (n=49)	Robbery / Sexual (n=20)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
1 victim	42 (96.1)	91 (59.1)	45 (91.8)	14 (70.0)
2 victims	5 (9.8)	26 (16.9)	3 (6.1)	1 (5.0)
> 2 victims	4 (7.8)	17 (11.0)	1 (2.0)	2 (10.0)
Missing data	0 (0.0)	20 (13.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (15.0)

### 5.3.3.2 Victim age group involved in current crime

Figure 5.19 shows the distribution (percentages) of victims according to their age group for the 281 crimes committed. Categories consisted of children (under 18 years), youth (18-25 years), adults (>25 years) and elderly (>65 years) involved in the current crime in comparison to the total number of cases. The category of adults only (65.5%, n=184) had the most number of overall victims, followed by youth only (13.9%, n=39), children only (12.5%, n=35) and elderly only (2.1%, n=6). The cases that had more than one type of victim were categorised as children and youth (0.4%, n=1), children and adults (1.4%, n=4), youth and adults (1.4%, n=4), youth and elderly (0.4%, n=1), adults and elderly (0.4%, n=1) and 2.1% (n=6) had missing information.



**Figure 5.19 Distribution of victim age groups (n=281 cases)**

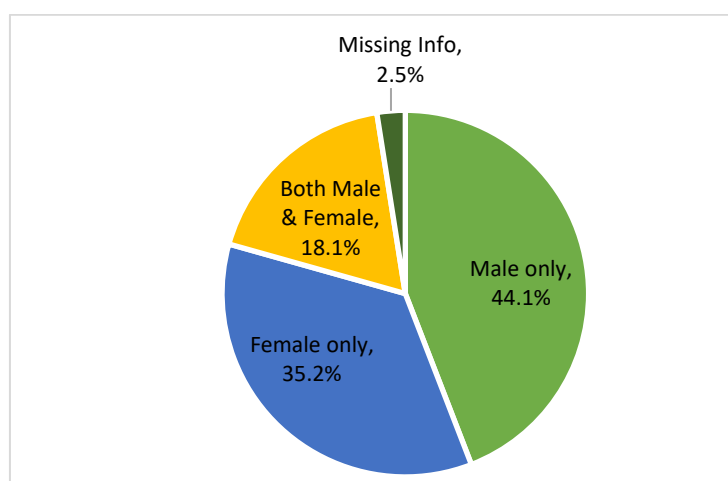
Table 5.12 shows that in the category of assaultive violence crimes most of the victims were adults only (54.9%), followed by youth only (45.1%). The majority of the victims of offenders that perpetrated robbery were adults (81.8%). A large number of victims within the sexual category were children (57.1%) and victims in the robbery / sexual category consisted mostly of adults (55.0%).

**Table 5.12**  
**Victim age groups involved in current crime within the four crime categories**

	<b>Assaultive violence (n=51)</b>	<b>Robbery (n=154)</b>	<b>Sexual (n=49)</b>	<b>Robbery / Sexual (n=20)</b>
<b>Age group categories</b>	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>
Children only (<18years)	2 (3.9)	0 (0.0)	<b>28 (57.1)</b>	5 (25.0)
Youth only (18-25 years)	18 (45.1)	9 (5.8)	9 (18.4)	3 (25.0)
Adult only (26-65 years)	<b>28 (54.9)</b>	<b>126 (81.8)</b>	12 (24.5)	<b>11 (55.0)</b>
Elderly only (>65 years)	2 (3.9)	4 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Children + adults	0 (0.0)	4 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Children + youth	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.0)
Youth + adults	1 (2.0)	3 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Youth + elderly	0 (0.0)	1 (0.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Adults + elderly	0 (0.0)	1 (0.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Missing data	0 (0.0)	51 (33.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

### 5.3.3.3 Gender of victims

Figure 5.20 reveals that of the 281 cases, 44.1% (n=124) involved only a male victim, 35.2% (n=99) involved only a female victim, 18.1% (n=51) involved both male and female victims and 2.5% (n=7) had missing information.



**Figure 5.20: Gender of victims (n=281)**



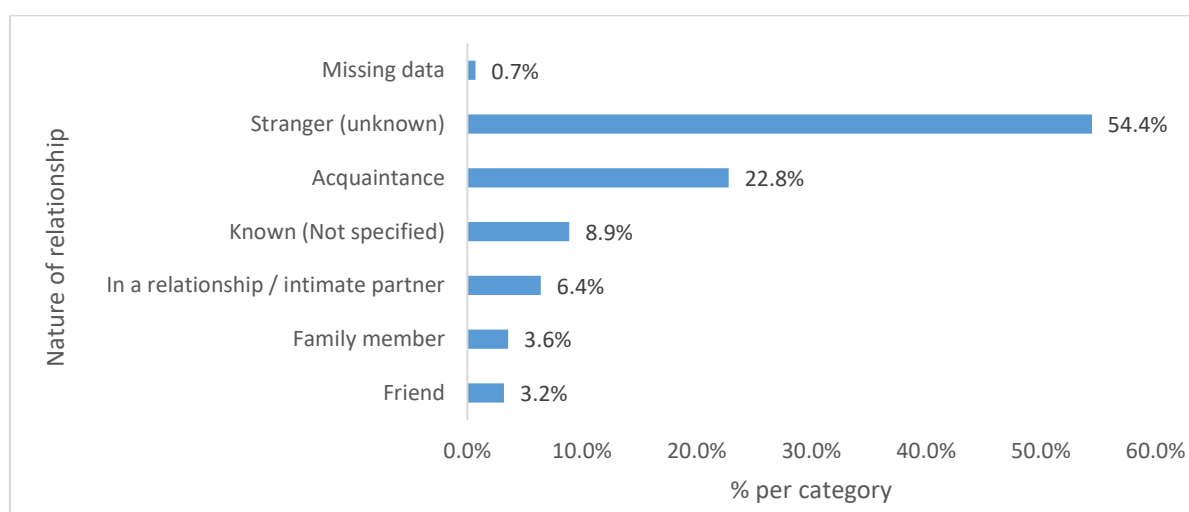
Table 5.13 shows that the categories of assaultive violence (76.5%) and robbery (50.6%) involved largely male only victims, while the categories of sexual (91.8%) and robbery / sexual (90%) involved largely female only victims.

**Table 5.13**  
**Gender of victims within the four crime categories**

Gender of victims	Assaultive violence	Robbery	Sexual	Robbery / Sexual
	(n=51)	(n=154)	(n=49)	(n=20)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Male only	<b>39 (76.5)</b>	<b>78 (50.6)</b>	3 (6.1)	0 (0.0)
Female only	7 (13.7)	27 (17.5)	<b>45 (91.8)</b>	<b>18 (90.0)</b>
Both Male & Female	4 (7.8)	44 (28.6)	0 (0.0)	2 (10.0)
Missing Info	1 (2.0)	5 (2.0)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)

#### 5.3.3.4 Nature of relationship between offender and victim

The nature of the relationship between the offender and the victim is shown in Figure 5.21. 54.4% (n=153) of offenders did not know their victims, 22.8% (n=64) were acquaintances, 8.9% (n=25) did not specify the nature of their relationship to the victim, 6.4% (n=18) were in an intimate relationship with their victims, 3.6% (n=10) were family, 3.2% (n=9) were friends and 0.7% (n=2) of the data had missing information.



**Figure 5.21: Nature of relationship between offender and victim**

Table 5.14 shows that the offender was more likely to know the victim as an acquaintance in the category of assaultive violence (41.2%). The majority of victims (81.2%) in the robbery category were strangers to the offenders. Victims in the sexual crime category were

acquaintances (38.8%) or known to the offender (22.4%), while in the robbery / sexual category the victims were mostly strangers (60.0%).

**Table 5.14 Association between relationship type and four crime categories**

Nature of Relationship	Assaultive Violence	Robbery	Sexual	Robbery / Sexual
	n=51	n=154	n=49	n=20
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
In a relationship	8 (15.7)	0 (0.0)	8 (16.3)	2 (10.0)
Family member	2 (3.9)	0 (0.0)	7 (14.3)	0 (0.0)
Acquaintance	<b>21 (41.2)</b>	20 (13.0)	<b>19 (38.8)</b>	4 (20.0)
Friend	5 (9.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Known (not specified)	4 (7.8)	7 (4.5)	11 (22.4)	2 (10.0)
Stranger (unknown)	11 (21.6)	<b>125 (81.2)</b>	4 (8.2)	<b>12 (60.0)</b>
Missing data	0 (0.0)	2 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

#### 5.4 Offender Profiles for the Four Major Crime Categories

In line with objective three of the study, this section provides the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis to determine whether the profile of young violent offenders differ depending on the type of crime committed. The dependent variable which is a categorical variable namely type of crime committed, consisted of the four major crime categories: *assaultive violence, robbery, sexual and robbery / sexual*. The independent variables consisted of the offender characteristics including socio-economic status, family and environmental factors and social risk factors. The offender profile or characteristics for each of the four major crime categories is presented first (Table 5.15) then the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis are presented (Table 5.16 and Table 5.17).

Table 5.15 below show that the majority of offenders across the four crime categories had not completed their schooling, with 62.7% of those who had committed assaultive violence, 67.5% of those who had committed robberies, 55.1% of those who had committed sexual crimes and 55.0% of those who had committed robbery / sexual crimes having had some high school education. Unemployment was highest in the categories of robbery (42.2%), sexual crimes (38.8%) and robbery / sexual (60.0%). For the category of assaultive violence temporary / part-time employment (41.2%) faired the highest, followed by unemployment (35.3%).

The category of living arrangements showed that offenders involved in assaultive violence were more likely to have been residing with their mother only or with other family member (31.4% and 31.4% respectively). The category of other family members was highest in robbery (39.6%) sexual crimes (38.8%) and robbery / sexual categories (45.0). The majority of offenders were single: assaultive violence (98.0), robbery (90.3%), sexual (93.9%) and robbery / sexual (90.0%). In the category of type of neighbourhood there were minimal differences between the four crime categories with the majority of offenders residing in rural areas and townships: assaultive violence (47.1% and 41.2% respectively); robbery (44.8% and 42.2% respectively); sexual (51% and 36.7% respectively) and robbery / sexual (55.0% and 20.0% respectively).

In the category of gang membership / affiliations, the majority of youth offenders in the assaultive violence (68.6%), sexual (83.7%) and robbery / sexual (60.0%) categories did not indicate having gang affiliations. In the category of robbery however, 74.7% of offenders belonged to a criminal gang. The majority of youth offenders in all four crime categories were not addicted to illegal substances: assaultive violence (86.3%), robbery (90.9%), sexual (87.8%) and robbery / sexual (60.0%). The majority of youth offenders across the four crime categories did not have a previous criminal record: assaultive violence (90.2%), robbery (74.7%), sexual (79.6%) and robbery / sexual (55.0%)

Youth involved in gang activity (74.7%) and had previous involvement in criminal activity (25.4%) were more prone to commit robbery, than other offence types. Overall, tables 5.15 indicated that level of education; type of employment; parental supervision; type of neighbourhood that the offender grew up in and gang membership were factors related to committing a violent criminal offence.

Table 5.15

Descriptive statistics showing offender characteristics within the four crime categories

Offender Characteristics	Type of crime			
	Assaultive Violence (n=51) n (%)	Robbery (n=154) n (%)	Sexual (n=49) n (%)	Robbery & Sexual (n=20) n (%)
<b>Educational Information</b>				
Some Primary school	11 (21.6)	30 (19.5)	13 (26.5)	7 (35.0)
Some High School	<b>32 (62.7)</b>	<b>104 (67.5)</b>	<b>27 (55.1)</b>	<b>11 (55.0)</b>
Completed high school	6 (11.8)	13 (8.4)	7 (14.3)	0 (0.0)
Tertiary education	2 (3.9)	5 (3.2)	2 (4.1)	2 (10.0)
Missing	0 (0.0)	2 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<b>Employment Status</b>				
Unemployed	18 (35.3)	<b>65 (42.2)</b>	<b>19 (38.8)</b>	<b>12 (60.0)</b>
Full time / Permanent	7 (13.7)	16 (10.4)	8 (16.3)	0 (0.0)
Self-employed	4 (7.8)	16 (10.4)	3 (6.1)	2 (10.0)
Temporary / Part-time	<b>21 (41.2)</b>	36 (23.4)	18 (36.7)	6 (30.0)
Not stated	1 (2.0)	21 (13.6)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)
<b>Living arrangements</b>				
Mother only	<b>16 (31.4)</b>	54 (35.1)	13 (26.5)	4 (20.0)
Father only	3 (5.9)	11 (7.1)	2 (4.1)	1 (5.0)
Both Parents	10 (19.6)	18 (11.7)	10 (20.4)	3 (15.0)
Other family member	<b>16 (31.4)</b>	<b>61 (39.6)</b>	<b>19 (38.8)</b>	<b>9 (45.0)</b>
Alone	4 (7.8)	5 (3.2)	4 (8.2)	2 (10.0)
Other	2 (3.9)	5 (3.2)	1 (2.0)	1 (5.0)
<b>Relationship status</b>				
Single	<b>50 (98.0)</b>	<b>139 (90.3)</b>	<b>46 (93.9)</b>	<b>18 (90.0)</b>
In a relationship	1 (2.0)	13 (8.4)	2 (4.1)	2 (10.0)
Married	0 (0.0)	2 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Missing data	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)
<b>Type of neighbourhood</b>				
Rural area	<b>24 (47.1)</b>	<b>69 (44.8)</b>	<b>25 (51.0)</b>	<b>11 (55.0)</b>
Townships	21 (41.2)	65 (42.2)	18 (36.7)	4 (20.0)
Informal settlement / shacks	2 (3.9)	7 (4.5)	1 (2.0)	2 (10.0)
Government housing (RDP)	1 (2.0)	4 (2.6)	4 (8.2)	2 (10.0)
Suburb	3 (5.9)	6 (3.9)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)
Small farm / holdings	0 (0.0)	3 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.0)
<b>Gang Membership</b>				
Yes	16 (31.4)	<b>115 (74.7)</b>	8 (16.3)	8 (40.0)
No	<b>35 (68.6)</b>	39 (25.3)	<b>41 (83.7)</b>	<b>12 (60.0)</b>
<b>Addiction to illegal substances</b>				
Yes	7 (13.7)	14 (9.1)	6 (12.2)	8 (40.0)
No	<b>44 (86.3)</b>	<b>140 (90.9)</b>	<b>43 (87.8)</b>	<b>12 (60.0)</b>
<b>Previous criminal record</b>				
No previous criminal record	<b>46 (90.2)</b>	<b>115 (74.7)</b>	<b>39 (79.6)</b>	<b>11 (55.0)</b>
Previous childhood crime	1 (2.0)	15 (9.7)	4 (8.2)	4 (20.0)
Previous youth crime	4 (7.8)	24 (15.6)	6 (12.2)	5 (25.0)

Table 5.16 and Table 5.17 below show the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis. The figures presented are the odds ratios and their corresponding confidence intervals. The categories of living arrangements, relationship status and type of neighbourhood were not included as part of the analysis as these categories did not vary sufficiently. The category of employment is highly associated with the category of education with a co-linear relationship and was not analysed further. Model fit indices represent discrepancies between observed and model-implied data and the parameters of the model for which the model fit is calculated. “Intercept Only” describes a model that does not control for any predictor variables and simply fits an intercept to predict the outcome variable. “Final” describes a model that includes the specified predictor variables and has been arrived at through an iterative process that maximizes the log likelihood of the outcomes seen in the outcome variable.

The reference categories for the multinomial regression analysis were assaultive violence and robbery. The literature suggests that assaultive violence motives tend to be more spontaneous or emotive whereas the other categories motives are more instrumental. Therefore, for the first regression assaultive violence was chosen as the reference to determine whether and how risks for the other crime categories differ from assaultive violence.

The second regression was undertaken with robbery as the reference category because robberies constituted the majority of crime categories, so it was considered useful to determine whether and how the other crime categories differed from robberies.

Regression analyses with the sexual crime category and the sexual crime and robbery category as reference categories was not conducted because they are already considered with reference to assaultive violence and robbery in the regressions above and because the numbers of these crime categories were small.

Table 5.16 shows that if one committed robbery vs assaultive violence, one is 1.3 times more likely to have less than high school vs matric and higher education and 1.2 times more likely to have some high school vs matric and higher. Under social risk factors, robbery and gang membership were positively associated whereby the results indicated that if one committed robbery vs assaultive violence one is 8.5 times to have gang membership vs not having gang membership, 2.0 times less likely to have criminal associates vs not having criminal associates and 1.7 times less likely to have an addiction vs not having an addiction. The table also shows

that if one committed robbery vs assaultive violence, one is 6.5 times more likely to have been convicted for a crime in their childhood vs not being convicted for a crime during their childhood and 2.1 times more likely to have been convicted for a previous youth crime vs not being convicted for a previous youth crime. Except for gang membership, all associations are not statistically significant because of low numbers.

Table 5.16 also shows that if one committed a sexual crime vs assaultive violence one is 1.4 times more likely to have less than high school vs matric and higher and 1.0 times more likely to have some high school vs matric and higher. If one committed sexual crime vs assaultive violence one is 2.0 times less likely to have gang membership vs not having gang membership, 1.7 times less likely to have criminal associates vs not having criminal associates and 1.25 times less likely to have an addiction vs not having an addiction. The results also showed that if one committed a sexual crime vs assaultive violence, one is 4.6 times more likely to have been convicted for a crime in their childhood vs not being convicted for a crime during their childhood and 1.3 times more likely to have been convicted for a previous youth crime vs not being convicted for a previous youth crime. Although the result of 4.6 is high for one to have been convicted for a crime in their childhood vs not being convicted for a crime during their childhood, it is not statistically significant due to the small number of youth offenders within this category.

In Table 5.16 we also see that if one committed a robbery / sexual crime vs assaultive violence one is 2.6 times more likely to have less than high school vs matric and higher and 1.3 times more likely to have some high school vs matric and higher. The results further showed that if one committed robbery / sexual crime vs assaultive violence, one is 1.9 times more likely to have gang membership vs not having gang membership, 1.25 times less likely to have criminal associates vs not having criminal associates and 3.3 times more likely to have an addiction vs not having an addiction. The results also showed that if one committed a sexual crime vs assaultive violence, one is 6.6 times more likely to have been convicted for a crime in their childhood vs not being convicted for a crime during their childhood and 2.1 times more likely to have been convicted for a previous youth crime vs not being convicted for a previous youth crime. These results are statistically non-significant due to the small number of youth offenders having prior childhood and youth convictions.

Table 5.17 indicates that if one committed assaultive violence vs robbery one is 1.3 times less likely to have less than high school vs matric and higher and 1.2 times less likely to have some

high school vs matric and higher. Results indicated that if one committed assaultive violence vs robbery one is 10.0 times less likely to have gang membership vs not having gang membership, 1.8 times more likely to have criminal associates vs not having criminal associates and 1.7 times more likely to have an addiction vs not having an addiction. The table also shows that if one committed robbery vs assaultive violence, one is 6.6 times less likely to have been convicted for a crime in their childhood vs not being convicted for a crime during their childhood and 2.1 times less likely to have been convicted for a previous youth crime vs not being convicted for a previous youth crime. The associations are not statistically significant because of low numbers.

The associations between sexual crimes vs robbery was also investigated in Table 5.17. The outcomes were indicative of a weak association between less than high school vs matric and higher and some high school vs matric and higher if one committed sexual crime vs robbery. There was also a weak association between gang membership vs not having gang membership and having criminal associates' vs not having criminal associates if one committed sexual crime vs robbery. The results also showed that if one committed sexual crime vs robbery one is 1.3 times more likely to have an addiction vs not having an addiction. Results showed that if one committed sexual crime vs robbery one is 1.4 times less likely to have been convicted for a crime in their childhood vs not being convicted for a crime during their childhood and 1.7 times less likely to have been convicted for a previous youth crime vs not being convicted for a previous youth crime.

Table 5.17 lastly revealed that if one committed robbery / sexual vs robbery, one is 2.0 times more likely to have less than high school vs matric and higher and 1.1 times more likely to have some high school vs matric and higher. The table also showed that if one committed robbery / sexual vs robbery one is 5.0 times less likely to have gang membership vs not having gang membership, 1.5 times more likely to have criminal associates vs not having criminal associates and 5.6 times more likely to have an addiction vs not having an addiction. The findings showed a weak association between those convicted for a crime in their childhood vs not being convicted for a crime during their childhood and convicted for a previous youth crime vs not being convicted for a previous youth crime.

**Table 5.16:**

**Multinomial logistic regression of type of crime with reference category assaultive violence**

Variable	Robbery vs Assaultive violence				Sexual Vs Assaultive Violence				Robbery and Sexual vs Assaultive Violence			
	OR	95% Confidence Int		<i>p</i>	OR	95% Confidence Int		<i>p</i>	OR	95% Confidence Int		<i>p</i>
		Lower	Upper			Lower	Upper			Lower	Upper	
Intercept				.714				.829				.019
<b><i>Socio-economic factors</i></b>												
Less than high school vs matric and higher	1.315	.380	4.550	.666	1.378	.367	5.177	.635	2.682	.391	18.390	.315
Some high school vs matric and higher	1.222	.435	3.432	.704	.966	.312	2.993	.952	1.328	.228	7.751	.753
<b><i>Social Risk Factors</i></b>												
Gang membership=yes	8.546***	3.836	19.042	.000	.475	.161	1.401	.177	1.937	.566	6.624	.292
Criminal associates=Yes	.549	.193	1.558	.260	.615	.144	2.620	.511	.814	.168	3.938	.798
Addiction=yes	.595	.193	1.833	.366	.801	.223	2.871	.733	3.305	.878	12.446	.077
Convicted for crime in childhood	6.451	.741	56.170	.091	4.615	.461	46.242	.193	6.647	.612	72.251	.120
Previous youth crime	2.145	.632	7.276	.221	1.310	.325	5.279	.704	2.075	.436	9.880	.359

Table entries include the multinomial regression log odds and 95% confidence levels. \* $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ .



**Table 5.17:**  
**Multinomial logistic regression of type of crime with reference category robbery**

Variable	Assaultive violence vs Robbery				Sexual Vs Robbery				Robbery and Sexual vs Robbery			
	OR	95% Confidence Int		<i>p</i>	OR	95% Confidence Int		<i>p</i>	OR	95% Confidence Int		<i>p</i>
		Lower	Upper			Lower	Upper			Lower	Upper	
Intercept				.714				.563				.027
<b><i>Socio-economic factors</i></b>												
Less than high school vs matric and higher	.761	.220	2.633	.666	1.049	.305	3.603	.940	2.040	.336	12.408	.439
Some high school vs matric and higher	.819	.291	2.299	.704	.791	.268	2.332	.671	1.087	.202	5.848	.923
<b><i>Social Risk Factors</i></b>												
Gang membership=yes	.117	.053	.261	.000	.056	.022	.140	.000	.227	.077	.668	.007
Criminal associates=Yes	1.822	.642	5.168	.260	1.120	.309	4.062	.863	1.482	.380	5.780	.571
Addiction=yes	1.680	.546	5.175	.366	1.346	.413	4.389	.622	5.554	1.729	17.837	.004
Convicted for crime in childhood	.155	.018	1.350	.091	.715	.182	2.819	.563	1.030	.244	4.355	.967
Previous youth crime	.466	.137	1.581	.221	.611	.198	1.879	.632	.967	.269	3.482	.959

Table entries include multinomial regression the log odds and 95% confidence levels. \* $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ .

## 5.5 Summary

Information was collected on a total of 281 violent young offenders incarcerated at the Westville Correctional Facility who were aged between 18-25 years when incarcerated during the period January 2014 to July 2017. The outcome of study objective one showed that the majority of youth violent offenders were black African (97.5%), with an average arrest age of 20.6, had some high school education (63.7%), were either unemployed (27.8%) or temporarily employed (27.0%), engaged in mostly elementary occupations (35.2%) if employed, grew up mostly in rural areas (47.5%) and townships (39.1%) and belonged to a criminal gang (54.1%).

Study objective two showed that the most serious crime type for which violent youth offenders were incarcerated was murder (39.5%) while robbery was the most frequent type of crime committed (54.1%), with a financial motive (62.8%) being the most frequent motive behind committing a crime. The majority of youth violent offenders used a weapon (82.9%), mostly firearms (37.7%) and sharp objects (35.9%), while almost a third (31.3%) were under the influence of alcohol during the commission of their crime, more than half (53.0 %) had an accomplice and either death (35.9%) or serious injury (33.8%) were inflicted upon their victims. Victims were mostly attacked when alone (70.1%), were mostly adults (between >25 - <65years) (65.5%), male only (44.1%), and strangers (54.4%) to the offender.

Study objective three compared the demographic details from study objective one to the four major crime categories established in objective two to establish a profile for the youth violent offender. The outcomes indicated that profile for youth offenders that committed assaultive violence mostly had some high school education (62.7%) and were temporarily employed (41.2%), while offenders that committed robbery mostly had some high school education, were unemployed (42.2%) and gang affiliation (74.7%) was significantly high. The profile for youth violent offenders that committed sexual crimes indicated some high school education (55.1%) and unemployment (38.8%), and showed similar characteristics for those that committed robbery / sexual with some high school education (55.0%) and unemployment (60.0%).

## CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the present study and draws comparisons from the existing literature studied to the main study results in line with the three study objectives presented in Chapter One. The implications for further research and the limitations of the study are also discussed and the final conclusion to this study is presented.

### 6.2 Profile of Youth Violent Offenders

The first objective of the study examined the demographic characteristics, socio-economic background, family and environmental factors and behavioural risk characteristics of youth violent offenders to distinguish common characteristics. The research findings suggest that the possibility of constructing a risk profile within a South African context does exist. Specifically, of the 281 male offenders in the study, almost all were black African (97.5%), had not completed their schooling (85.1%), were either unemployed (27.8%) or temporarily employed (27.0%) at the time they were convicted, and grew up mostly in rural areas (47.5%). Furthermore, the majority were single (92.5%) and lived with a parent or parents (mother 32.0%, father 6.4%, or both 14.6%), most offenders belonged to a criminal gang (54.1%), 78.6% had attended or were recommended to attend a substance abuse programme, around 1 of 5 youth offenders had a previous conviction, and almost a third had committed their first offence before the age of 20 years.

The age and gender profiles of youth offenders in the study were consistent with those of individual level factors presented within the ecological framework. The gender patterns for violent criminal offending is distinct in relation to widely established research and is indicative that violent offending is a gendered youth phenomenon. South Africa is dominated by hegemonic notions that ratify men's use of violence, violent ideas and behaviours (Jewkes et al., 2015) and coupled with male preponderance in social risks such as alcohol and binge drinking, especially among adolescent and young men (Vellios, 2018) provides a catalyst for violence perpetration. The age-crime curve theory proposed by Godfredson and Hirshi (1990) that contends involvement in crime rises steadily during middle adolescence, and then peaks during early adulthood is mirrored in the results of the study that indicated violent offending behaviour peaked between the ages of 20-25 (66.9%) years for offenders in the sample, while 19.2% of offenders had been previously convicted.

The results of the study relating to socio-economic background which indicated that an astounding 90.4% of youth violent offenders did not complete high school and 88.6% of offenders did not have full-time / permanent employment and most offenders had elementary occupations (35.2%) support the research that poor educational attainment, poor employment status and poor socio-economic conditions were conducive to the nurturing of criminal behaviour (Fajnzyl et al., 2002; Hjalmarsson & Lochner, 2012; Lochner, 2008). These factors serve as major barriers to the economic aspirations of youth. The combination of greater personal and social pressures around social aspirations of a 'better life' and misconceived perceptions of ideal standards of living as portrayed by the media, may create frustration in youth causing them to resort to acts of crime to attain this 'ideal' lifestyle, similar to the non-fulfilment of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory argued by Palermo (2007). The culmination of these various strains may contribute to a criminal career path in accordance to general strain theory (Agnew & Brezina, 2010).

From a family and environmental perspective, the results showed that 85.4% of youth violent offenders did not reside within a nuclear family thereby supporting international research that asserts that youth violent offenders usually live in single parent homes (Griffin et al., 2000). The theoretical concepts of general strain theory and social disorganisations theory are supported by the research findings that most youth violent offenders grew up in either rural areas (47.5%) or townships (39.1%) which are often characterised by high levels of violence (Khuzwayo et al., 2016; Seedat et al., 2009) and growing up in violent, crime ridden neighbourhoods is considered to be a strong risk factor for youth violent behaviour (WHO, 2015). Fragile family structures and support systems, together with the structural disorganisation factors discussed in social disorganisation theory provide a fertile breeding ground for the nurturing of violent behaviours. The lack of behavioural control mechanisms and the absence of parental figures facilitates the transmission of delinquent values from delinquent peer groups to impressionable adolescents through continuous interactions as explained in the social learning theory.

Finally from a behavioural risk perspective the results of this study indicated that 54.1% of violent youth offenders had gang affiliations, and 1 in 5 violent youth offenders had a criminal history, both factors serve as precursors for violent criminal behaviours. International research showed that youth who join gangs are more likely to be involved in delinquency and serious violent offences (WHO, 2015) while children in South Africa are more likely to become

involved in criminal activity, especially gang activities at a young age, particularly during the ages of 11 or 12 (Van Der Merwe et al., 2012). Also, the literature review presented findings by Gilman et al. (2015) that indicated that persons incarcerated as children were four times more likely to reoffend.

### **6.3 The Nature and Circumstances of the Different Types of Crimes**

The second objective sought to describe the nature and circumstances of youth violent crimes. Murder was the leading crime with 39.5% of offenders having a murder conviction as part of their sentence, while the most frequent motive cited for committing a crime was financial (62.6%). Overall, the data on the situational contexts of youth crimes studied showed that youth mostly used a firearm (37.7%) or sharp objects (35.9%) during the commission of a violent crime and almost a third (31.3%) of offenders were under the influence of illegal substances during the criminal event. Most youth offenders had at least one accomplice when committing the crime (53.0%). The data revealed that the most common locations that youth violent crimes were committed were the victim's home (23.8%) followed by on the street (23.5%) and the degree of physical harm inflicted was most frequently death (35.9%) or serious injuries (33.8%) to their victims.

The event characteristics discussed above were similar to those discussed in the international literature. The results indicated that most commonly used weapons were firearms (37.7%) or sharp objects, mostly knives (35.9%). The literature showed that internationally the most commonly used weapons for homicide were firearms (Mc Evoy & Hideg, 2014; UNODC, 2014a), consistent with the literature on crime in South Africa that indicated firearms followed by knives / sharp objects as being the weapons mostly used when committing violent crimes, (SAPS, 2018; WHO, 2014). Lantz (2018) found that the severity of an offence proportionally increased with an increase in co-offenders. This study found that 53.0% of offenders had a co-offender and, as mentioned previously, 35.9% of violent offences lead to death and 33.8% lead to serious injuries, which may suggest that the presence of co-offenders influenced the severity of the crime. Consistent with international research (UNODC, 2014a) and other studies in South Africa (Souverein et al., 2015) the current study indicates that almost a third of the offenders were under the influence of an illegal substance at the time of the crime and hence illegal substances may have played a role in committing the crime.

The study identified four main categories of crime, namely *assaultive violence*, *robbery*, *sexual violence* and *robbery / sexual*. The data revealed that the circumstances or situational context differed across the four main categories of crime identified in this study. In the assaultive violence category, weapons used were mostly sharp objects (68.6%) and 56.9% of assaultive violence cases were committed alone. 51.0% of offenders were not under the influence of illegal substances while 49.0% had taken some sort of illegal substance prior to committing their crime. The most common locations for assaultive violence crimes were the victim's home (23.5%) or a liquor establishment (15.7%). Death (96.1%) was the result for the majority of the victims of assaultive violence.

Robberies were mostly carried out with a firearm (59.7%), an accomplice present (70.1%) and most offenders were not under the influence of any illegal substances (82.1%). The most common location was the street (35.1%) followed by the victims home (22.7%). The degree of physical harm inflicted on the victims varied from no physical harm (35.1%), to death (26.6%) and serious (18.2%) or minor injuries (18.2%).

Youth offenders who perpetrated sexual violence mostly did not use a weapon (69.4%) or have any accomplices (79.6%). 55.1% of offenders were not under the influence of any illegal substances during the criminal event while 44.9% had ingested either drugs or alcohol prior to committing an act of sexual violence. The common locations were either the offender's home (34.7%) or the victim's home (18.4%) and often resulted in serious injuries to the victim (93.9%).

The situational context of the robbery/sexual category differed from the both the robbery and sexual; violence categories. Offenders used a sharp object (45.0%), had no accomplice (55.0%) and were mostly under the influence of an illegal substance (60.0%). The most common locations were either the victim's home (40.0%) or the street (15.0%) and the degree of physical harm inflicted was mostly serious injury (95%).

Similar to studies undertaken by CSVr (2008b), Stats SA (2016b) and Swart et al. (2018) the data of the subgroup analysis discussed above is indicative that the situational contexts of the crimes differ in accordance to the type of crime committed.

Research pertaining to the characteristics of the victims of youth violent offenders has also been a neglected field of study. This study found that overall, the victims were mostly adults only (65.5%) and 44.1% of youth violent crimes involved a male only and a disturbing 44.9% of offenders knew their victims as either family, friend or an acquaintance. Victims of assaultive violence were mainly alone (70.1%) during the criminal event and victim demographics data showed that most victims were adults only (65.5%), 44.1% were male only and 35.2% were female only, and 78.4% were known to the offender. Victims of robbery were usually alone when robbed (59.7%), adult, (81.8%) and strangers to the offenders (81.2%). The majority of victims of sexual violence were female (91.8%) who were alone when attacked (91.8%), mostly children (57.1%) and 91.8% of offenders knew their victims, while a large majority of victims in the robbery/sexual category were female (90.0%), alone (70.0%), mostly adults (55.0%) and strangers to the offenders (60%). The absence of a capable guardian contributed to the vulnerability of victims, especially victims of assaultive violence (70.1%) and sexual violence (91.8%) making them an easy target for the offender, similar to the elements of routine activity theory that theorizes the situational context of a crime requires a motivated offender with criminal intentions and the ability to act on these inclinations, a suitable victim or target, and the absence of a capable guardian or authority who can prevent the occurrence of the crime.

#### **6.4 Comparison of Offender Characteristics and Types of Crimes Committed**

The comparison of offender characteristics to the type of violent crime committed encompassed objective three. Certain offender characteristics differentiated the type of crime committed, for example, 74.7% of offenders that had committed robbery belonged to a gang while the majority of offenders in the other categories did not have gang affiliations. Similar to the findings by Pyrooz et al. (2015) gang membership differed in accordance to the type of crime committed.

Other independent variables such as education, employment, the type of neighbourhood in which the offender grew up and who the offender was residing with prior to arrest were similar across the different crime types. Similar to the study results, research done by Hjalmarsson and Lochner (2012); Jonck et al. (2015) and Kaminer and Eagle (2012) has shown that low educational attainment was positively linked to criminal behaviour. Also consistent with the research were the variables employment status and employment category. Lee and Cho (2015) found that a status change from unemployed to holding an informal job increased the chances for an individual participating in crime due to the unstructured and unsupervised nature of informal jobs which provided more opportunities to associate with peers in an unstructured

environment. CSV (2008b) found that just over a third of offenders were unemployed. Similarly, the results showed that most offenders were unemployed and those employed were not permanently or formally employed. Offenders across all categories did not reside within a nuclear family, but mostly with their mother only or other family members as shown by the categorical data in Table 5.15 and a lack of parental care and support are precursors of violent behaviours (Tisak et al., 2017). The fundamentals of the social learning theory attributes crime to the environment in which the offender was brought up, parental care and modelling behaviours. This study found that offenders lived mostly in rural areas and township, areas in South Africa that are characterized by violence (Khuzwayo et al., 2016). Rural areas and townships in South Africa present the structural characteristics of socially disorganized neighbourhoods. Socially disorganized neighbourhoods are characterized by high residential turnover, poverty, overcrowded living conditions and poor work opportunities (Contreras, 2008). Parents from these areas are forced to work further away from home, often leaving children unattended and unsupervised with no behavioural control measures, which leaves them susceptible to joining gangs when seeking out peers and modelling the characteristics of these criminal peers, as discussed under the social learning theory. The findings in this section relating to socio-economic background; family and environmental factors and behavioural risk characteristics are supportive of the research discussed in the literature review and the precepts of social learning theory and social disorganization theory.

## **6.5 Implications for Prevention**

Due to the complexity of the risk factors associated with violent offending among youth in South Africa, a comprehensive programme is required that addresses all levels of the ecological model, includes primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, and involves multiple sectors of government including the criminal justice, SAPS, educational system and local authorities.

The profile of violent youth offenders suggest that localised, context-specific knowledge is necessary in order to inform youth violence policy and programmes. The results of this study indicate that special attention should be paid to male youth residing in rural areas and townships, more specifically poor socio-economic areas. The establishment of youth centres that provide job training skills should be considered as different youth possess different skills which should be enhanced to provide employment possibilities.



The role of the family is an integral component of any prevention programme and violence prevention programmes should contain more intensive and earlier intervention strategies for violence prone families, and train youth with more non-violent methods for dispute resolution. The data showed that the majority of youth violent offenders (85.4%) did not reside within a nuclear family and came from single-parent homes. Parental care, parental control and parental support were identified as risk factors for violent behaviour, therefore programmes aimed at enhancing parenting skills, especially for single parents, are imperative. Parenting programmes are key to successful violence prevention endeavours. Although parenting programmes are available in South Africa, few are evidence based (Wessels & Ward, 2015). The World Health Organization had at least 21 violence prevention strategies that focus on four key areas: parenting and early childhood development; school-based academic and social skills development, young people at higher risk of or already involved in violence, and community and societal level strategies (WHO, 2015). One such programme, Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH), was implemented in several severely impoverished communities in South Africa. The project aims to develop, test and widely distribute a suite of parenting programmes for low-resource settings that is affordable, non-profit, and based on rigorous evidence. The programmes within the PLH project aim to prevent child maltreatment and subsequent involvement in other forms of violence such as youth and intimate partner violence. The components of the programme include group-based problem solving exercises; coaching in non-violent discipline, the use of “time out” as a disciplinary measure, and the practicing of parenting skills. From a parental perspective, the programme aims to increase positive and reduce harsh parenting practices; improve parental supervision of children; increase the use of effective, non-punitive discipline; decrease stress and improve mental health, and from the child’s perspective, the programme aims to reduce child behaviour problems and reduce the risk of child maltreatment. An investigation to assess the impact of the programme was concluded in December 2017. The study location was within 40 villages situated in the Eastern Cape Province and the sample contained a total of 552 families that had reported conflict with their adolescents aged 10-18 years. The results concluded that the programme showed promise for reducing violence improving parenting and family functioning within low resource settings (Cluver et al., 2018). This study also highlighted the potential impact of collaborations between policy and science by increasing the relevance of research to policy makers and programmers.

The type and situational contexts of the crime are indicative that opportunities for crime need to be reduced. Violence prevention strategies that incorporate more severe firearm control measures and weapons controls need to be devised. The presence of authority figures in crime prone areas may also act as a deterrent as it will eliminate an integral element in accordance with routine activity theory. Support structures such as a friend's network system, after school programmes and supervised peer group meetings can be considered in socially disorganized neighbourhoods where children are left unsupervised after school. The possibility of engaging in activities with friends may provide youth a sense of belonging and discourage youth from seeking out criminal gangs.

The different types of violent youth crimes identified, namely assaultive violence, robberies, sexual violence and robbery/sexual, each have different situational contexts within which they occurred. Further research is necessary in order to devise more specific prevention measures. The nature of youth violent crimes reported in this study point to a need for intervention strategies towards the reduction of youth violence and youth being incarcerated, especially for violent offences.

The youth profile also differs to some extent for each type of crime indicating that intervention measures should contain more diverse programmes aimed at specific areas of concern. For instance, programmes to keep youth in school should help reduce all the types of crime while programmes to prevent gang membership would primarily reduce robbery crimes.

Intervention measures should incorporate the multiple levels of the ecological model, and the roles of different sectors of society. The Umhlali Project (2018) based in Walmer Township, Port Elizabeth emulates the ecological model by focusing on individual, school, family and community level interventions for the prevention of youth violence and criminal activities. The Umhlali Project is a joint undertaking between the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP), The University of Cape Town's Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit (GHJRU), and Masifunde Learner Development (MLD) and started in 2015 and will continue to 2020. The effectiveness of the programme has not yet been assessed. Another strategy would be to examine the links between violence prevention, and safety and peace promotion, to develop a wellbeing-oriented approach (Lazerus, Tonsing, Ratele, & Van Niekerk, 2008).

Although there are several violence prevention programmes in South Africa, there is no National Youth Violence Prevention Policy in place. A policy may ensure collaborative efforts between researchers and the various government departments in South Africa.

## **6.6 Limitations of the Study**

The study utilised secondary data obtained from the existing records of the DCS. Such data was collected by DCS staff which sometimes included trainees and interns and obtained during interviews with offenders during intake. Conversations with DCS officials indicated that offenders may not always provide accurate information relating to their background and details of the crime were not always captured which is indicative of missing data. Missing data may have introduced bias into the results of the study. For example, information such as use of illegal substances or addictions to narcotics by offenders may not be declared during intake, however such information was later revealed during group sessions and offenders were then placed in a substance abuse programme. Therefore the rates of addictions and abuse of illegal substances by offenders may be underrepresented.

Another limitation that may introduce bias into the results was that the researcher was not allowed in certain sections of the facility due to being a civilian female within a male only jail, therefore the full sample was not collected. The B block housed extremely aggressive offenders and the safety of the researcher could not be guaranteed within this section. Therefore certain categories of crime and certain risk factors may be underrepresented.

The correlational nature of this study was also a limitation to the study. Although the relationship between two variable can be identified, a correlational study cannot prove that changes to one variable would lead to changes in the other variable nor can the correlation point to a causation.

The study was only conducted at one correctional facility in KwaZulu Natal. Therefore the findings cannot be generalised to all youth violent offenders in the country. The characteristics of youth violent offenders are likely to vary across different areas of South Africa. Further studies need to be carried out in other provinces to determine if characteristics of violent youth are similar or differ in accordance to the crime types. Future research that measures the impact of prevention programmes on at risk youth should also be undertaken.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This study was undertaken in order to fill some of the substantial gaps in the knowledge of youth violent offenders in South Africa and the nature and circumstances of their crimes. The focus of this research was to understand the demographic, socio-economic, family and environmental and behavioural characteristics of youth violent offenders. Overall the findings indicated that the characteristics of youth violent offenders in South Africa are similar to the risk factors reviewed in other research. However, those youth violent offenders that were affiliated to a criminal gang were more likely to commit robbery than other types of crimes. Therefore an urgent need exists for preventative intervention strategies that incorporate all relevant stakeholders from researchers, to the various intersecting government departments, to community members themselves. Related risks, together with the rising health burden highlight that the greatest challenge to reducing the current high levels of youth violence lie in preventative measures. Research is an important innovation in understanding the causes of youth violence and knowing the key risk factors can assist in effectively devising prevention strategies.

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## Annexure A

Case no:	
Current Offence (s)	<sup>1</sup>
Sentence Length	<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 Demographic Details

1.1.1	Date of Birth				
1.1.2	Race	African <sup>1</sup>	White <sup>2</sup>	Coloured <sup>3</sup>	Asian <sup>4</sup>
1.1.3	Ethnic Group (Please specify)	<sup>1</sup>			
1.1.4	Faith, religion/ creed (Please specify)	Christianity <sup>1</sup>	Islam <sup>2</sup>	Hindu <sup>3</sup>	None <sup>4</sup>
1.1.5	Nationality	South Africa <sup>1</sup>		Other <sup>2</sup>	
1.1.6	Marital status	Single <sup>1</sup>	In a relationship <sup>2</sup>	Married <sup>3</sup>	Other (Please Specify)
1.1.7	Age crime committed (Please specify)				
1.1.8	Date Of Conviction (Please specify)				
1.1.9	Age Incarcerated (Please specify)				
1.1.10	Current Age (Please specify)				

### SOCIO ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

### 1.2 Educational / Skills Details

1.2.1 Can the offender read and write?			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>
1.2.2 What is the highest grade the offender passed? (Please specify)	ABET Level (e.g. 1 to 4):		Grade (e.g. 1 to 12):	
1.2.3 In which year did the offender obtain the qualification? (Please specify)				
1.2.4 Is the offender trained in any specific profession, skill or trade?			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>
1.2.5 If yes, please specify				
1.2.6 Indicate the offender's practical experience in his profession, skill and / or trade in years: (Please specify)				
1.2.7 Is the offender qualified or registered for a specific profession, skill, trade?			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>
1.2.8 If yes, please specify				
1.2.9 Does the offender have any tertiary education?			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>
If yes, please specify the qualification	1.2.10 Degree / Diploma / Certificate (E.g. BA, Hons, Dipl.)		1.2.11 Year obtained?	
1.2.12 Was the offender in school / studying prior to arrest?			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>
1.2.13 Please specify what the offender was studying?				

### 1.3 Employment History

1.3.1 Was the offender employed prior to his / her arrest and incarceration?							Yes 1	No 2	
1.3.2 If yes, state the type of employment:									
Full time / Permanent	1	Part-time	2	Seasonal employment	3	Temporary employment	4		
Self-employed	5	Consultation / Contract basis	6	Unemployed	7				
Other (please specify)									
1.3.3 Job title (Please specify)									
1.3.4 Categorization as per ISCO-08 Major Groups	Managers <sup>1</sup>		Technicians & Associated Professionals <sup>3</sup>		Services & Sales Workers <sup>5</sup>		Craft & Related Trades Workers <sup>7</sup>		Elementary Occupations <sup>9</sup>
	Professionals <sup>2</sup>		Clerical Support Workers <sup>4</sup>		Skilled agricultural, Forestry & Fishery Workers <sup>6</sup>		Plant & Machine Operators & Assemblers <sup>8</sup>		Armed Forces Occupations <sup>10</sup>
1.3.5 Duration (Please specify)									
1.3.6 If unemployed was the offender employed ever previously employed?							Yes 1	No 2	Unknown 3
1.3.7 Reason:									

### 1.4 Family and Environmental Characteristics

1.4.1 With who was the offender staying at the time of arrest? Please specify relationship (mother / father / spouse etc)													
1.4.2 Who are the current significant family members, relative (s) or friends of the offender?													
Spouse	1	Parents	2	Grand parents	3	Siblings	4	Uncle	5	Aunt	6	Own Children	7
In laws	8	Friends	9	Intimate Partner	10	Others: Please specify							
1.4.3 What type of accommodation did the offender stay in:													
Own Home	1	Renting a house	2	Renting a flat/room	3	Sharing a flat / room with a relative or friend		4					
Lived on the streets	5	Lived in a shelter	6	Informal dwelling	7	Rondavel		8					
RDP housing	9												
1.4.4 Who was the offender residing with?			Parents <sup>1</sup>	With relative <sup>2</sup>	Alone <sup>3</sup>	With intimate partner/spouse <sup>4</sup>							
1.4.5 Name of area the offender grew up?													
1.4.6 Indicate the type of neighborhood in which the offender grew up?													
Informal settlement / Shacks	1	Government housing(RDP)	2	Inner city high – flats	3	Township	4						
Suburb	5	Rural area	6	Farm / small holdings	7	Hostel	8						
Others please specify													



## BEHAVIOURAL RISK FACTORS

### 1.5 GANG / CRIMINAL ASSOCIATIONS (PRIOR TO ARREST)

1.5.1 Is the offender part of a gang, an antisocial group or associated with an organized crime syndicate?								Yes 1	No 2		
1.5.2 Indicate the type of association and the characteristics of the association:											
Family member(s)	1	Friend(s)	2	Correctional Centre gangs	3	Community gangs	4	Anti-social peers	5		
Cult (e.g., Satanist, spiritual etc)	6	Politically motivated group	7	Mafia association	8	Organized Crime Syndicate	9	Criminal peers	10		
1.5.3 Was the current crime(s) committed in a group / gang / syndicate context?							Yes 1	No 2	Not stated 3		
1.5.4 What is the mission / objective of the gang / syndicate / group?											
Violence and violent activities	1	Theft	2	Sex offences	3	Armed robbery	4	Robbery & hijacking of cars / money	5	Drug dealings	6
Money laundering	7	Organized crime syndicate	8	Escape	9	Prostitution	10	Power & intimidation	11	Political	12
Other (Please specify)											
1.5.5 Are the offender's parents, siblings, partner or any other relatives that they reside with or interact with involved in any criminal activity (e.g., drug, etc)?								Yes 1	No 2		

### 1.6 SUBSTANCE ABUSE

1.6.1 Is the offender addicted to any substances?							Yes 1	No 2
1.6.2 What substances is the offender addicted to?								
1.6.2.1 Alcohol	1.6.2.2 Dagga	1.6.2.3 Mandrax	1.6.2.4 Tik (methamphetamines)	1.6.2.5 Heroine	1.6.2.6 Cocaine acids	1.6.2.7 Ecstasy		
1.6.2.8 Whoonga								
1.6.2.9 Other (please specify) <sup>8</sup>								
1.6.3 At what age did the offender start using the substance(s)? (Please specify)								
1.6.4 How long has the offender been addicted? (Please specify)								
1.6.5. Has the offender ever received medical treatment / counselling for the substance use / abuse in the past?							Yes 1	No 2
1.6.6 Does the offender want to receive medical treatment / counselling for the substance use / abuse?							Yes 1	No 2
9.7 Is The offender attending any substance abuse programs							Yes 1	No 2

## 2. CRIMINAL HISTORY

### 2.1 Childhood History: (Below the age of 18)

#### Crime history

2.1.1 Has the offender been convicted for any crime (s) as a child?		Yes 1	No 2
2.1.2 If yes specify the crime and sanction (s) received			
Crime(s)		2.1.3 Sanction(s)	
2.1.4 Was the offender previously placed in a reformatory school, secure care centre or placed under a programme by a court?		Yes 1	No 2
If yes provide details			
2.1.5 Indicate Form of Placement		2.1.6 Reasons for placement (Please specify)	
Reformatory School / School of industry	1		
Secure Care Centre	2		
Court imposed Programme	3		
2.2.1 Has the offender ever attended a special school?		Yes 1	No 2
2.2.2 Has the offender ever been suspended from school?		Yes 1	No 2
2.2.4 Has the offender ever been expelled from school?		Yes 1	No 2
		2.2.3 If yes, please specify the reason (s)	
		2.2.5 If yes, please specify the reason (s)	

### 3: Previous Crime (Youth – 18-25)

3.1 Did the offender commit any other crime as a youth?		Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>
3.2 Specify the crime (s) the offenders is currently sentenced for:			
3.2.1 Murder and Related Offences		3.2.2 Culpable Homicide and Related Offences	
3.2.3 Assault and Related Offences		3.2.4 Sexual Offences	
3.2.5 Robbery and Related offences		3.2.6 Theft Related Offences	
3.2.7 Drug and Alcohol Related Offences		3.2.8 Firearms and Ammunition Offences	
3.2.9 Offences against Freedom of Movement		3.2.10 Other	
Please Specify			
3.3 Length of Sentence (Please specify)			
3.4 DCS Crime Category		Medium	Maximum
		1	2
3.5 Indicate the relationship of the offender to the victim(s):			
The offender knew the victim(s) before the incident		1	The victim(s) were strangers to the offender before the incident
			2
3.6 Type of victim			
3.6.1 Woman / Women	1	3.6.3 Girl(s)	3
3.6.2 Man / Men	2	3.6.4 Boy(s)	4
3.6.5 Aged/Elderly	5	3.6.6 Child/Children	6
3.6.7 Disabled	7	3.6.8 Business	8
3.6.9 Others	9	3.6.10 Please specify	
3.7 Indicate the degree of physical harm done to the victim(s):			
Caused death of victim(s)		1	Serious injury(wounding, maiming, disfiguring)
			2
Minor injury(hitting, slapping, striking)		3	

None	4				
3.8 Use of Weapons	Yes 1	No 2	Not indicated <sup>3</sup>	3.9 Please specify type of weapon:	
3.10 Use of illegal substances / intoxicants as per police report	Yes 1	No 2	Not indicated <sup>3</sup>	3.11 Please specify type of substance	
3.12 Year convicted					

#### 4: Current Crime (Youth – 18-25)

4.1 Number of different crimes (Please specify):					
4.2 Specify the crime (s) the offenders is currently sentenced for:					
4.2.1 Murder and Related Offences		4.2.2 Culpable Homicide and Related Offences		4.2.3 Assault and Related Offences	
4.2.4 Sexual Offences		4.2.5 Robbery and Related offences		4.2.6 Theft Related Offences	
4.2.7 Drug and Alcohol Related Offences		4.2.8 Firearms and Ammunition Offences		4.2.9 Offences against Freedom of Movement	
4.2.10 Other		4.2.11 Please Specify			
4.3 Length of the sentence(Please specify)					
4.4 Indicate the motives for the offender's offending / criminal behaviour (NB. See revised SAPS 62):					
4.4.1 Financial	4.4.2 Thrill- seeking	4.4.3 Addiction	4.4.4 Sexual	4.4.5 Revenge	4.4.6 Anger & Aggression
4.4.7 Hate	4.4.8 Provocation	4.4.9 Political	4.4.10 Racial	4.4.11 Emotional	4.4.12 Other, please specify
4.5 Category					

#### 5: Details of the Crime

Details of Offence									
5.1 Date of offence: Please specify							5.2 Time of offence: Please specify		
5.3 Use of Weapons			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>					
5.4 Indicate the type of weapon(s) used on the victim(s):									
5.4.1 Firearm			5.4.2 Knife			5.4.3 Explosive			
5.4.4 Blunt Object			5.4.5 Specify						
5.4.6 Sharp Object			5.4.7 Specify						
5.4.8 Physical force			5.4.9 Specify						
5.4.10 Other Please Specify									
5.5 Use of alcohol as per police report			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>					
5.6 Use of narcotics as per police report			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>	5.7 Please specify:				
5.8 Accomplices			Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>	Not stated <sup>3</sup>	5.9 Please specify no			
5.10.1 Address if available for 1 <sup>st</sup> offence: (Please specify)									
5.10.2 Address if available for 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence: (Please specify)									
5.11 Location of 1 <sup>st</sup> offence: (Please specify)									
5.11 Location of 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence: (Please specify)									
Victims home	1	Street	2	Retail establishment	3	Offenders home	4	Public open area	5
Liquor establishment	6	Transport stop	7	Friends home	8	Public establishment	9	Not stated	0

## 6: Victims Details

Type of victim											
6.1.1 Woman / Women	<sup>1</sup>	6.1.3 Girl(s)	<sup>3</sup>	6.1.5 Aged/Elderly	<sup>5</sup>	6.1.7 Disabled	<sup>7</sup>	6.1.9 Others	<sup>9</sup>	6.1.10 Please specify	
6.1.2 Man / Men	<sup>2</sup>	6.1.4 Boy(s)	<sup>4</sup>	6.1.6 Child/Children	<sup>6</sup>	6.1.8 Business / Homes	<sup>8</sup>				
6.2.1 No. of victims (Please specify)				6.2.2 Single victim <sup>1</sup>			Multiple victims <sup>2</sup>				
6.3 Age of victim (s) (Please specify)			6.3.1 Victim 1			6.2.2 Victim 2		6.2.3 Victim 3			
6.4 Gender			6.4.1 Male		6.4.2 Female		6.4.3 Other		6.4.4 Specify		
6.5 Indicate the relationship of the offender to the victim(s):											
The offender knew the victim(s) before the incident					<sup>1</sup>	The victim(s) were strangers to the offender before the incident				<sup>2</sup>	
6.6 Nature of relationship				6.7 Please Specify							
In a relationship / Intimate partner		<sup>1</sup>	Please specify								
Family Member		<sup>2</sup>	Please specify								
Acquaintance		<sup>3</sup>	Please specify								
Friend		<sup>4</sup>									
Unknown		<sup>5</sup>									
Other details of the relationship if available:											
6.8 Indicate the degree of physical harm done to the victim(s)											
6.8.1 Caused death of victim(s)				6.8.2 Serious injury (wounding, maiming, disfiguring)				6.8.3 Minor injury (hitting, slapping, striking)			
6.8.4 None											
6.9.1 Circumstances of 1 <sup>st</sup> offence (Please specify)											
6.9.2 Circumstances of 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence (Please specify)											

## 7. Security

7.1 Previous crimes categorized as high risks		Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> time offender / No previous crime <sup>3</sup>
7.2 If no, please specify				
7.3 Specify current crimes category		Please specify		

## Annexure B



### Ethical Clearance for M/D students: Research on human participants

*The Ethics Committee of the Department of Psychology at Unisa has evaluated this research proposal for a Higher Degree in Psychology in light of appropriate ethical requirements, with special reference to the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Psychologists of the HPCSA and the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics.*

**Student Name:** Ashika Singh      **Student no.** 41821165

**Supervisor:** Dr. Lu-Anne Swart      **Affiliation:** Institute for Social and Health Sciences, Unisa

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Ashley van Niekerk      **Affiliation:** MRC / Unisa (VIPRU)

**Title of project:**

High risk offenders: who are they?

The proposal was evaluated for adherence to appropriate ethical standards as required by the Psychology Department of Unisa. The application was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Psychology on the understanding that –

- Any and all formal procedures that need to be followed to gain access to the participants and to obtain information for the purposes of research, as required by Department of Correctional Services, have been adhered to, and that the relevant authorities are aware of the scope of the research;
- Secondary sources are to be used, the sources of original data will be protected and no identifying information through which the sources of original data can be determined and which may undermine the right to confidentiality of particular individuals will be disclosed.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Kruger', written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Prof P Kruger**

[For the Ethics Committee

Date: 21 October 2015

]

***The proposed research may now commence with the proviso 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, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the Psychology Department Ethics Review Committee.*
- 3) *An amended application should be submitted if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.*
- 4) *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.*

***Please note that research where participants are drawn from Unisa staff, students or data bases requires permission from the Senate Research and Innovation Committee (SENRIC) before the research commences.***

## Annexure C



### correctional services

Department:  
Correctional Services  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X136, PRETORIA, 0001 Poyntons Building, C/O WF Nkomo and Sophie De Bruyn Street, PRETORIA  
Tel (012) 307 2770, Fax 086 539 2693

**Ms A Singh**  
**27 Gemini Street**  
**Glenhill**  
**KwaDukuza**  
**4449**

Dear Ms A Singh

**RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ON: "HIGH RISK OFFENDERS IN KWAZULU NATAL- WHO ARE THEY?"**

It is with pleasure to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on the above topic has been approved.

Your attention is drawn to the following:

- The relevant Regional and Area Commissioners where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.
- Your internal guide will be **Regional Head of Corrections: KwaZulu-Natal, Ms N Mkhize**.
- You are requested to contact her at telephone number (033) 355 7340 before the commencement of your research.
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.
- Your identity document and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting.
- You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005) e.g. "Offenders" not "Prisoners" and "Correctional Centres" not "Prisons".
- You are not allowed to use photographic or video equipment during your visits, however the audio recorder is allowed.
- You are required to submit your final report to the Department for approval by the Commissioner of Correctional Services before publication (including presentation at workshops, conferences, seminars, etc) of the report.
- Should you have any enquiries regarding this process, please contact the Directorate Research for assistance at telephone number (012) 307 2770 / (012) 305 8554.

Thank you for your application and interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours faithfully

**ND SIHLEZANA**  
**DC: POLICY COORDINATION & RESEARCH**  
**DATE: 25/07/2016**

# Annexure D



## correctional services

Department:  
Correctional Services  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

I.D. No. 781029 0090 08 8

S.A. BURGER/S.A. CITIZEN

VOORNAAMFORNAAMES  
SINGH  
ASHIKA

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
SOUTH AFRICA  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

1978-10-29  
DATUM UITGEREK  
DATE ISSUED

2003-06-09  
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Area Commissioner  
Correctional Services Durban  
Private Bag X1,  
Westville, 3630

Ref No.: 13/1/3/1  
Enq: PN Malembe  
Tel: (031)204 8812

### ENTRANCE PERMIT TO MANAGEMENT AREA: DURBAN CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

1. Authorization is hereby granted to:

Full Name: SINGH ASHIKA  
Identity Number: 781029 0090 08 8  
Capacity: UNISA STUDENT  
Institution: UNISA  
Purpose: TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN HIGH RISK OFFENDERS IN MEDIUM B  
Period of validity: 2017/01/04 - 2017/03/30

*2017/07/30 amended by Dir Dlamini*

2. This permit is subjected to the following specific condition and provisions.

- 2.1 The permit holder is restricted to do Practical Work/Research at the Durban Medium B Correctional Centre.
- 2.2 Bearer has to produce this permit upon entry to the Correctional Centres if and when requested to do so.
- 2.3 Bearer must comply with the security arrangements of each of the Correctional Centres he/she will visit during the period authorized.
- 2.4 Bearer is authorized to enter the premises with VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBER NT 35120.
- 2.5 On expiry, the permit must be returned to this office please.

SIGNED AT Westville ON 11 OF November 2016

Dlamini  
AREA COMMISSIONER  
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: DURBAN

*Ac: MR ZIKHANI gave permit for this body to continue with the research*  
*2017/01/05 BL. Nkomo*