

**THE DRUG-CRIME RELATIONSHIP: AN EXPLORATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON CRIME COMMITTED BY FEMALE OFFENDERS  
INCARCERATED AT THE JOHANNESBURG AND KGOŠI MAMPURU  
CORRECTIONAL CENTRES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

31/05/2022  
DATE

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late father, **Ngwako John Monyepao**. His love for knowledge is but one facet that he has deposited in me, and for that I am truly thankful. He left large footprints that still guide my path in life to this day.

May his soul continue to rest in peace.

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## ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship between criminality and substance use. The aim was to discover the influence of two variables, gender and drug type, in the drug-crime nexus. Although research on the drug-crime relationship has been conducted, there is still no explicit clarity on the factors that are associated with the relationship. The current simplistic and salient understanding of the drug-crime relationship, as evident in the literature, is that drug use causes crime but that does not factor in the nuances present in the relationship. This study focused on gender as a possible idiosyncratic factor contributing to the relationship. The exploration sought to explain how gender influences the drug-crime relationship by explicitly contextualising it in the experiences of women. This study argues that the introduction of influencing factors to the drug-crime relationship illuminates the complexities embedded in the relationship. The study further suggests that when women are factored into the drug-crime relationship, the relationship in itself seems to lose its connection. The study argues that both drug use and criminality are potentially influenced by a third mediating factor, rather than criminality and drug use directly affecting each other. Ultimately, what was discovered was that female substance use is usually a form of coping with certain negative life events that the women experienced.

To arrive at these conclusions, the study followed a qualitative research approach with a leaning towards exploration. Explorative qualitative data were collected from 29 female offenders in two female correctional centres in Gauteng, South Africa, namely, Johannesburg and Kgoši Mampuru II Correctional Centres. The data were collected via one-on-one interviews guided by the philosophy of phenomenology. The female offenders had to fit the primary criteria of having a history of substance use in order to participate in the study. Additionally, five (5) Department of Correctional Services (DCS) officials that offer psychosocial services (i.e., psychologists and social workers) to the female offenders were also interviewed individually for their perspectives on the drug-crime relationship. The data collected from the DCS officials served as supplementary data to the collected data from the female offenders. All the data were then analysed utilising inductive thematic analysis. From the analysed data, discussions were formed grounded

in the literature and the theoretical framework of the study.

The major contribution of this study is that it fills a gap in the research area of substance use in relation to criminality by focusing on gender. Furthermore, it elucidates the complexities of the drug-crime relationship, thus opening a further debate on the soundness of the established drug-crime nexus. The major recommendation from this study is that drug treatment facilities and the DCS ought to consider gender when applying their drug rehabilitation programmes. Furthermore, drug policies ought to be reassessed from an evidence-based perspective, instead of the anecdotal. However, as evident in this study referenced against the literature, more research is required before establishing the drug-crime relationship conclusively.

**KEY TERMS:**

Drug-crime relationship; substance use; female offender; drug abuse; coping mechanism; general strain theory; drugs cause crime; tripartite framework; gender; criminality; South Africa

## KAKARETŠO

Dinyakišišo di hlahlobile kamano magareng ga bosenyi le tšhomišo ya ditagi. Maikemišetšo e be e le go hwetša khuetšo ya dikarolo tše pedi tše di fapanego, bong le mohuta wa seokobatši, go kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi. Le ge dinyakišišo tša kamano ya seokobatši le bosenyi di šetše di dirilwe, go sa na le go se kwešiše gabotse mabapi le dintlha tše di amanago le kamano ye. Kwešišo ye bonolo le ye bohlokwa ya gabjale ya kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi, ye e bonagalago ka gare go dipadi, ke gore tšhomišo ya seokobatši e hlola bosenyi, fela seo ga se seabe sa diphapano tše di lego gona go kamano ye. Dinyakišišo tše di šeditše bong bjalo ka ntlha ye e ikgethilego yeo e tlaleletšago go kamano ye. Tlhahlobo e be e nyaka go hlaloša gore bong bo huetša kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi bjang ka go bea diteng phatlalatša tša maitemogelo a basadi. Dinyakišišo tše di dira ngangišano ya gore tsebišo ya dintlha tše di huetšago kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi e bontšha mathata ao a lego ka gare go kamano. Dinyakišišo di tšwela pele go šišinya gore ge basadi ba akaretšwa ka go kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi, kamano e bonala e lahlegelwa ke kgokagano ya yona. Dinyakišišo di ngangišana gore bobedi bja tšhomišo ya seokobatši le bosenyi di ka ba di huetšwa ke ntlha ya boraro, ntle le gore bosenyi le tšhomišo ya seokobatši di huetšane thwii. Mafelelong, seo se utolotšwego, ke gore tšhomišo ya seokobatši ke basadi gantši ke tsela ya go kgotlelela maemo ao a itšego a mabe a bophelo ao mosadi a kilego a itemogela wona.

Go fihlelela dikakaretšo tše, thuto e šomišitše tebelelo ya nyakišišo ya boleng ye e ithekgilego ka go leka go utolla. Datha ya tlhahlobo ya boleng e kgobokeditšwe gotšwa go basadi bao ba obilego melato ba 29 go disenthara tša tshokollo tše pedi kua Gauteng, Afrika Borwa, tšeo ka maina e lego, Johannesburg le Disenthara tša Tshokollo tša Kgoši Mampuru II (Kgoši Mampuru II Correctional Centres). Datha e kgobokeditšwe ka dipotšišo tša go dirwa le batho ka o tee ka o tee tšeo di hlahlilwego ke filosofi ya maitemogelo a thwii a motho. Basadi bao ba obilego melato ba be ba swanetše go ba bao ba loketšego dipotšišo go ya ka selekanyo sa thwii sa gore ba be le histori ya tšhomišo ya seokobatši go kgatha tema go dinyakišišo tše. Go tlaleletša se, bahlankedi ba ba hlano (5) ba Kgoro



ya Ditirelo tša Tshokollo (DCS) bao ba abago ditirelo tša dikarolo tša monagano le tša setšhaba (k.g.r., bašomi ba monagano le badirelaleago) ba basadi bao ba obilego melato le bona ba botšišitšwe ka o tee ka o tee mabapi le bobono bja bona ka kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi. Datha yeo e kgobokeditšwego go tšwa go bahlankedi ba DCS e šomišitšwe bjalo ka tlaleletšo ya datha yeo e kgobokeditšwego go tšwa go basadi bao ba obilego melato. Datha ka moka e sekasekilwe ka go šomiša tshekatsheko ya dihlogotaba tša diteng. Go tšwa go datha ye e sekasekilwego, dipoledišano di hlamilwe tšeo di tšwago go dipadi le tlhako ya teori ya dinyakišišo tše.

Tlaleletšo ye kgolo ya dinyakišišo tše ke gore e tlatša sekgoba sa nyakišišo ya tšhomišo ya seokobatši malebana le bosenyi ka go iša šedi go bong. Go tlaleletša se, e hlaloša mathata a kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi, ka gona e bula poledišano ya go tšwela pele ya go kwagala ya kamano ye e hlamilwego ya seokobatši-bosenyi. Keletšo ye kgolo go tšwa go dinyakišišo tše ke gore mafelo a kalafo ya bothata bja diokobatši le DCS ba swanetše go šetša bong ge ba šomiša mananeo a tsošološo ya bophelo go tšwa go diokobatši. Go tlaleletša se, dipholisi tša diokobatši di swanetše go lekolwa gape go tšwa go tebelelo ye e ikemego ka bohlatse, go na le bjalo ka dilo tše di sego tša ikema ka nnete. Le ge go le bjalo, ka ge bohlatse ka go dinyakišišo tše bo šupeditše bo le kgahlanong le dipadi, dinyakišišo tša tlaleletšo di a nyakega pele ga ge go hlangwa kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi ka mo go feleletšego.

## **MAREO A BOHLOKWA:**

Kamano ya seokobatši-bosenyi; tšhomišo ya seokobatši; mosenyi wa mosadi; tšhomišompe ya seokobatši; mekgwa ya go šogana le maemo; teori ya kakaretšo ya kgatelelo; bosenyi bjo bo hlolago ke seokobatši; tlhako ya dikarolo tše tharo; bong; bosenyi; Afrika Borwa

## INGQIKITHI YOCWANINGO

Lolu cwaningo lubheke ubudlelwane phakathi kobugebengu nokusetshenziswa kwezidakamizwa. Inhloso yalolu cwaningo kwakuwuthola umthelela wezinhlubo ezimbili, okuwubulili nohlobo lwezidakamizwa, ekukwakheni ubugebengu bezidakamizwa. Nakuba selwenziwe ucwaningo olumayelana nobugebengu nezidakamizwa, namanje akukacaci ngezimo ezihlobene nalobu budlelwane. Njengamanje ukuqonda okwenza kungabi nzima kunokulindelikile futhi okusobala mayelana nobudlelwane bobugebengu bezidakamizwa, njengoba kuvelile embhalweni wocwaningo, ukuthi ukusebenzisa izidakamizwa kudala ubugebengu, kodwa lokho akusona isimo esingaba wumehlukwana okhona kulobu budlelwane. Lolu cwaningo lugxile ebulilini njengesimo esingahle senzeke esehlukile kwezinye izimo ezinesandla kulobu budlelwano. Lokhu kubheka kufuna ukuchaza ukuthi ubulili bunomthelela kanjani ebudlelwaneni bobugebengu bezidakamizwa ngokuthi kuvezwe ngokusobala umqondongqangi omayelana nalokho abesifazane ababhekana nakho. Lolu cwaningo lufakazela ukuthi isiqalo sezimo ezinomthelela ebudlelwaneni bobugebengu bezidakamizwa siqinisa ubunzima obuxhantele kulobu budlelwane. Lolu cwaningo luqhubeka luzwakalise ukuthi nxa abesifazane beba mdibi ebudlelwaneni bobugebengu bezidakamizwa, lobu budlelwane buthanda ukulahlekelwa wukuxhumana kwabo. Lolu cwaningo lufakazela ukuthi kokubili ukusetshenziswa kwezidakamizwa nobugebengu kungaba namandla okuba nomthelela wesimo sesithathu, ngale kobugebengu kanye nomthelela oqondene ngqo nokusetshenziswa kwezidakamizwa. Ekugcineni, kwabe sekutholakala ukuthi ukusetshenziswa kwezidakamizwa ngabesifazane ngokuvamile basuke bezama ukumelana nezimo ezithile ezingezinhle abasuke bebhekene nazo. Ukuze kufikwe kulezi ziphetho, ucwaningo lusebenzise indlela yokwenza ucwaningo kulandelwa indlela yokwenza ucwaningo ephathelene nesimo (ikhwalithethivu), lunamathele kakhulu ekubhekeni. Ulwazi olungahlungiwe oluphathelene nesimo lwaqoqwa kwabesifazane abangu-29 ababoshiwe ezikhungweni ezimbili zokuhlunyeleliswa kwezimilo zabesifazane e-Gauteng, eNingizimu Afrika, eGoli kanye nase-Kgoši Mampuru II Correctional Centres. Ulwazi olungahlungiwe lwaqoqwa ezinkulumweningxoxo umlomo nomlomo umcwaningi elawulwa yinzululwazi yesenzeko esithile. Abesifazane ababoshiwe kwakumele bahambisane nokwakudingeka okokuqala kwakungukuba

nomlando wokusebenzisa izidakamizwa ukuze babambe iqhaza ocwaningweni. Ukwengeza nje, abasebenzi abahlanu boMnyango Wezokuhlunyeleliswa Kwezimilo (i-DCS) abanikezela ngezinsizakalo zezengqondo kubantu (okuyilaba: isazi sokusebenza kwengqondo yomuntu nabangosohlalakahle) kuya kwabesifazane ababoshiwe kwenziwa inkulumongxoxo nomuntu ngamunye ukuba baveze izimvo zabo mayelana nobudlelwano bobungebengu bezidakamizwa. Ulwazi olungahlungiwe lwabasebenzi bakahulumeni kwa-DCS lwathathwa njengolwazi olungahlungiwe olwesekele lolo lwazi olungahlungiwe oluvela kwabesifazane ababoshiwe. Lonke ulwazi olungahlungiwe lwabe selucutshungulwa kusetshenziswa uhlaziyo olusebenza ngokwezindikimba. Okuphosa kakhulu itshe esivivaneni kulolu cwaningo wukuthi luvala igebe emkhakheni wocwaningo lokusetshenziswa kwezidakamizwa kuya ebugebengwini ngokuthi kugxilwe ebulilini. Ukwenaba nje, luhluba udlubu ekhasini ngobunzima bobudlelwano bobugebengu bezidakamizwa, kunjalo-ke luvula inkulumompikiswano eqhubekayo mayelana nokungezwakali kwalokhu kuxhumana kobubengu bezidakamizwa okwaziyo. Isincomo esikhulu esivela kulolu cwaningo wukuthi izindawo zokulashelwa inkinga yezidakamizwa kanye neDCS ivele ikhethe ukufaka phakathi ubulili nxa besebenzisa izinhlelo zokuhlunyeleliswa kwezimilo. Ukwenaba mbijana, izinqubomigomo zikhetha ukuba kuhlolwe kabusha kube kusetshenziswa uvo olugxile kubufakazi, kunalokho okwake kwehlela lowo muntu ozeka indaba. Noma kunjalo, njengoba kuvelile kulolu cwaningo lufakazisa ngokuthi luqhathanise nosekwabhalwa, kusadingeka ucwaningo olukhulu ngaphambi kokuba kuboshwe ngabhande linye ubudlelwano bobugebengu bezidakamizwa.

### **AMAGAMA ASEMQOKA:**

Ubudlelwano bobugebengu bezidakamizwa; ukusebenzisa izidakamizwa; abesifazane ababoshiwe; ukusebenzisa izidakamizwa ngokweqile; iqhingasulo lokumelana nesimo ; injulalwazi ejwayelekile yokumelana nobunzima; ubugebengu obudalwa yizidakamizwa; uhlaka oluwunxantathu; ubulili; ubugebengu; iNingizimu Afrika.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
<b>CAT</b>	Methcathinone
<b>CCS</b>	Critical Case Sampling
<b>CDA</b>	Central Drug Authority
<b>CJS</b>	Criminal Justice System
<b>CLAW</b>	College of Law
<b>CMC</b>	Case Management Committees
<b>CSDD</b>	Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development
<b>DCS</b>	Department of Correctional Services
<b>DSM</b>	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
<b>DUCO</b>	Drug Use Careers of Offenders
<b>DV</b>	Domestic Violence
<b>GMB</b>	Gamma Hydroxybutyrate
<b>GST</b>	General Strain Theory
<b>HRI</b>	Harm Reduction International
<b>IPV</b>	Intimate Partner Violence
<b>ITA</b>	Inductive Thematic Analysis
<b>LSD</b>	Lysergic Acid Diethylamide
<b>MA</b>	Methamphetamine
<b>MDMA</b>	3-4 Methylene-Methamphetamine
<b>NDMP</b>	National Drug Master Plan
<b>NICHHD</b>	National Institute of Child Health & Human Development

<b>NICRO</b>	National Institution of Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders
<b>NIH</b>	National Institutes of Health
<b>OTC</b>	Over the Counter
<b>PCP</b>	Phencyclidine
<b>SA</b>	South Africa
<b>SACENDU</b>	South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use
<b>SANCA</b>	South African National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence
<b>SANPUD</b>	South African Network of People Who Use Drugs
<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Service
<b>TA</b>	Thematic Analysis
<b>THC</b>	Tetrahydrocannabinol
<b>TPF</b>	Tripartite Framework
<b>Unisa</b>	University of South Africa
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USAF</b>	Higher Health and Universities South Africa
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH APPROACH

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Deputy Chairperson of the Central Drug Authority (CDA), Dr. David Bayever, mentions:

*“The drug problem in South Africa remains very serious with drug usage being twice the world norm in most cases ... and we are only dealing with what we know about ... this is only the tip of the iceberg”* (CDA, 2013).

The South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU) report showed a slight decrease in drug use and dependency in the Free State and the North West Provinces (31% and 25% reduction respectively) between the 2017 and 2018 period (Dana, 2019:49). However, there was a significant increase in the KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape regions, each showing over 200% increases (Bhana, 2019:40).

The impacts of drugs in South Africa (SA) include, among others, the following:

- Drug abuse is costing SA R20-billion a year and could pose a bigger threat to the country's future than the Aids pandemic.
- One Rand in four (1:4 ratio) in circulation in SA is linked to the substance abuse problem (CDA, 2013). Recent statistics were not available at the time of this research, but it can be inferred from the World Drug Report (2019) that the 1:4 ratio has also increased.
- Drug related arrests increased from a daily average of 471.5 in 2015/16 to 801.9 in 2016/17 (Africa Check, 2017a).
- Over 400 drug related crimes are reported daily (Souverein, Ward, Visser & Burton, 2016:1860).

Bhardwaj (2018) does however make the statement that calculating for drug abuse and related costs is an inexact science. Therefore, the above impacts ought to be used more

as estimations rather than definitive facts. Furthermore, female drug related offences are not well documented in SA. A 2019 study in North West however has shown that females were involved in 3.2% of drug related crimes (South African Police Service [SAPS], 2019:118). It has to be noted however, that drug-related crime figures indicate the number of cases and not the quantities or different types of drugs confiscated and that these figures are also not representative of the type of crime in relation to the drugs.

The emotional and psychological impacts on families and the high levels of crime and other social ills have left many communities under siege by the scourge of alcohol and drug abuse (Bekh, DeFife, Guarnaccia, Phifer, Fani, Ressler & Westen, 2011:685; Mathews & Benvenuti, 2014:27). It is thus the aim of the National Drug Master Plan (CDA, 2013) to alleviate the social ills caused by drugs. For this endeavour, the National Drug Master Plan (NDMP) of 2013–2017 (CDA, 2013:5) proposed these strategies:

*“Devising solutions from the bottom up, rather than from the top down; Shifting from a national to a community approach to devising strategy (from one size fits all to a community-specific solution)”.*

Broughton (2017) reports that the CDA chairperson, David Bayever, stated that the NDMP strategies have failed yearly. David Bayever made this statement at the planning meeting of the 2018–2022 NDMP. The failure lies in the core aim of the NDMP that aspires to form a drug free society which is informed by the *American War on Drugs* ideology (Shelly & Hollowell, 2018:1–2). To date, this has still not been achieved. Additionally, Broughton (2017) has identified the following reasons for the failure of the NDMP strategies: firstly, the stringent drug policies which created draconian law enforcement strategies; secondly, drug users themselves were not included in the creation of the NDMP; lastly, the stigma faced by drug users. For more effective strategy formulations, the drug-crime relationship needs to be understood in more depth. This includes other factors influencing the relationship and more inclusive strategies for the NDMP, particularly in the aspects of gender and drug type.

As it stands, the drug-crime nexus (used interchangeably with drug-crime relationship) has been dominantly understood from a social-ill perspective. Thus, drug related

interventions, enforcements and policies have been tailored from that perspective. What has not been explored is the type of drugs (stimulants, depressants and hallucinogens) and their effects on criminal behaviour. Despite this lack of research, it is still a taken-for-granted belief that use of any drug invariably leads to violent criminal behaviour (Hirschi, 2017:303).

The principal tenets that currently inform the drug-crime nexus were proposed by Paul J. Goldstein in 1985, but he is by no means the pioneer of such thoughts. Goldstein's (1985) tripartite framework (TPF) argues that drug abuse and crime are definitively related but the framework over-simplistically presupposes that crime causes drug abuse and/or drug abuse causes crime (Caulkins & Kleiman, 2014:36; Da Agra, 2017:11). Yet Walters (2014a:147), in his article on crime and substance misuse among youth, establishes that, although there indeed is an evident relationship between drug use and crime, not all substance (ab)use leads to the involvement in crime. The author further highlights that the relationship is a complex one. Although the TPF is a framework, it is not used to underpin the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 3. TPF is mentioned here because its principal tenets pervade the knowledge and applications of the drug-crime relationship.

Despite all the existing knowledge on drug use and drug addiction, there are still gaps within the field, due to its complexity, particularly knowledge pertaining to gender associated with drug use and abuse and how it relates to crime (Belknap & Sharma, 2014:82). This is due to the historical gendered nature of global societies. Institutions tended to be more focused on drug addiction research with a dominance of male participants (Tuchman, 2010:127). There is however, currently, a move towards more inclusivity of females as participants in the field of research, including the South African context (Eliscu, 2015; Epstein & Menges, 2013; Marlow & Finch, 2016; Sorsdahl, Stein & Myers, 2012; Tshitangano & Tosin, 2016). While psychology and the medical field are leading initiatives of inclusivity, Criminology, as a field of study, has relatively little research done in the area that informs the drug-crime relationship (Raine, 2018; Tupper, Wood, Yensen & Johnson, 2015). A recent study by Mnguni (2020) situated women within the larger drug market subculture, rather than informing the drug-crime relationship.

Recent initiatives are most likely due to women themselves demanding enfranchisement within larger society, stemming from the first wave of the feminist movement (Selden, Widdowson & Brooker, 2013). The second wave of feminism also played a role in the demand for inclusion of women in all spheres of life. The movements put pressure on institutions (state and academic) to highlight women's issues (Eichhorn, 2013:15–16) but research into the drug-crime relationship still marginalised women even though there is no empirical evidence to support the claim that women do not engage in criminal and related drug activity because of limited social freedoms.

As substance (ab)use was considered to be primarily a male problem and substance abuse studies were conducted with a predominance of male participants (Kendler, Karkowski, Neale & Prescott, 2000), it is assumed that intervention strategies mostly catered for males. Recent studies (Cicero, Ellis, Surratt & Kurtz, 2014; Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, Schulenberg & Miech, 2016) however, indicate significant gender differences in the substance-related epidemiology, social factors and characteristics. Thus, the aim of this research was to *explore* the variables of gender, specifically the female gender, and drug type, and their effects on the drug-crime relationship in SA. A further aim of the research was to investigate the propositions offered by Goldstein's (1985) tripartite framework, so as to allow other researchers a platform to critique the framework and thus create more comprehensive models of the drug-crime relationship.

Goldstein's (1985) tripartite framework (TPF) forms one of the first attempts at understanding the complex relationship. The model incorporated into the relationship, three aspects: the economic compulsion, systemic, and psychopharmacological effects (Goldstein, 1985:493). These three aspects are interlinked and explored how the violent drug subculture is maintained. The TPF synthesised the economic motivation, systemic, and psychopharmacological models. The result of this was the highlighting of the inherent violent nature of the drug subcultures.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The concept of the drug-crime relationship (pertaining to users and abusers) is complex and multi-factorial (Brochu, Brunelle & Plourde, 2018:5–18). It is well documented that

those dependent on drugs are responsible for a disproportionate number of crimes, particularly crimes committed for financial gain (Felson & Staff, 2017:387). Involvement in income-generating crime may, to an extent, reflect users' need to obtain funds to support their drug use (Hughes, Payne, Macgregor & Pockley, 2014:27). Consistent with this, the association holds for those who are opiate or crack cocaine dependent and appears strongest for those who are dependent on both (Pierce, Hayhurst, Bird, Hickman, Seddon, Dunn & Millar, 2015:53). There is also support for an association with the use of other drugs, such as powder cocaine or amphetamines (Kiluk, Serafini, Malin-Mayor, Babuscio, Nich & Carroll, 2015:231).

Recent investigations of opioid treatment cohorts in Wales suggest higher rates of offending by men than women (Compton, Jones & Baldwin, 2016). Other studies (Crane, Godleski, Przybyla, Schlauch & Testa, 2016) of alcohol and gender argue that, whilst women occupy the home sphere, men occupy the public sphere and that this leads to different possibilities regarding drinking and intoxication (Erol & Karpyak, 2015). In contrast to the alcohol field, research on drugs in relation to crime with gender as a variable is scarce, more so in the South African context. This is evident in the few results from a search in South African journal repositories. Most of the studies on gender and drugs focus on problematic and marginal drug users, and not necessarily on the impact of substance abuse of female offenders and crime (Magidson, Dietrich, Otjombe, Sikkema, Katz & Gray, 2017; Myers, Carney & Wechsberg, 2016; Myers, Louw & Pasche, 2011).

Nordic drug research has further focused on pregnancy, parenting and prostitution in relation to female drug use (Simonsen, Edvardsen, Thelander, Ojanperä, Thordardottir, Andersen, Kriikku, Vindenes, Christoffersen, Delaveris & Frost, 2015; Gøtzsche, 2018; Room, 2018). Similar to the literature on alcohol, research on drugs also highlights the violation against traditional feminine roles in respect of women's drug use. Tomlinson, Brown and Hoaken (2016:27) note that involvement in criminal behaviour, such as drug use, might lead to the enhancement of a positive masculine image, whilst for women there is no similar enhancement of personal identity.

These aforementioned studies do not however reveal the gender differences and their influence on the drug-crime relationship when observed in the general public. There is a lacuna in studies that inform the South African context in this matter (Magidson et al, 2017; Mnguni, 2020; Myers et al, 2016; Myers et, 2011; Sorsdahl et al, 2012). This knowledge is necessary for formulating a more proactive approach to crime and formulating more effective strategies in drug addiction interventions.

### **1.3 STUDY CONTRIBUTION**

Goldstein's (1985) TPF largely ignores the actors, i.e., the individual(s) who use and/or traffic drugs, and their experiences that led them to drug use and or criminality. This remains underexplored and vague, more so in the South African context. The prevailing knowledge on the drug-crime relationship in South Africa is largely informed by Western ideologies. To form a more comprehensive understanding of the drug-crime relationship, it is necessary to study other variables influencing the relationship.

Goldstein's (1985) TPF offers a very simplistic perspective of looking at crime and drug abuse, particularly the tenet that crime causes drug abuse and vice versa. The notion of crime causing drug abuse is extremely limited since it only focuses on people who steal money to support their drug addiction. The biopsychosocial factors are completely ignored. The TPF does not explore other contributing factors to either drug addiction or crime causation. The psychopharmacological effects of drugs do not necessarily always lead to crime. The type of drug used can be a determinant of whether a user will engage in criminal activity or not.

Additionally, the World Drug Report issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2018:11) indicates that males are more likely to use drugs than females, and this in itself need not be related to crime. Furthermore, most research done on drugs in relation to crime tends to focus on male participants. Therefore, a systematic exploration of the influencing effects of gender and drug type on the drug-crime nexus provides a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship. The exploration of these two factors may aid the formulation of better interventions, which are gender



specific, for substance abusers.

The primary contribution of this research is, therefore, to contextualise the general strain theory (GST) and associated models as well as the TPF in relation to the female drug-crime relationship in the South African context. The purpose of this is to confirm or reject the applicability of these theories to the female drug-crime nexus in the South African context. Therefore, this study makes a significant contribution to the knowledge field in South African Criminology.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH AIM**

The primary aim of this research was to conduct a systematic exploration of gender and drug type influence in drug-crime nexus. Addendum to this was to gain a comprehensive understanding of this relationship to aid the development of gender specific interventions for female substance (ab)users. The objectives of this research were thus the following:

##### **1.4.1 Research objectives**

- To investigate whether drug use plays a role in female criminality and vice versa;
- To explore the factors that influence the drug-crime relationship of female offenders;
- To explore the effects of licit and illicit drug types (depressants, stimulants and hallucinogens) on the female drug-crime relationship; and
- To assess the applicability of the general strain model in relation to the female drug-crime relationship in the South African context.

Based on the above research objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

### 1.4.2 Research questions

- How do various drug types affect female criminality?
- What influence does gender have on the drug-crime relationship?
- Does drug use result in criminality and vice versa?
- Is the general strain model applicable in relation to the drug-crime relationship in the South African context?

Before moving further, key concepts need to be defined for this study.

## 1.5 KEY CONCEPTS

To conduct effective research, the following key concepts are defined for contextual understanding:

- **Addiction**

The term *addiction* applied to drug use, relates to the relatively uncontrollable use of drugs, with a disregard for the negative impacts that result from use (Storbjörk, 2018:726). More specifically, the addiction to drugs involves a compulsion to seek out drugs for the express purpose of using them at the expense of other productive activities. Furthermore, there is an inability to stop the drug use because of possibilities of a relapse (DeBeck, Kerr, Bird, Zhang, Marsh, Tyndall, Montaner & Wood, 2011:6). To date, however, there is still no consensus as to how to measure an individual's use of alcohol and other drugs such that it can be deemed as addiction (Potenza, 2015; Sussman & Sussman, 2011; West & Brown, 2013). For the purpose of this research however, addiction will refer to the state where the use of a substance no longer can be controlled by the individual. This lack of control causes the user to be dependent on the substance.

- **Intoxication**

A condition that follows the administration of a psychoactive substance that results in

disruptions in levels of consciousness, cognition, perception, effect of behaviour or other psycho-physiological functions and responses. Furthermore, the substance must be responsible for the physiological effects experienced by the individual.

- **Harmful use**

Harmful use is defined in relation to the use of a psychoactive substance. The harm could be either detrimental to the physical or mental health of the individual. Physical harm is not limited to the pharmacological effects of the drug, but also includes the harm that results from the mode of administration. For example, the contraction of hepatitis from injecting a psychoactive substance into the blood stream or, in the case of mental health, this could be episodes of depressive disorder secondary to heavy consumption of alcohol.

- **Dependence syndrome**

This encompasses psychological traits such as cognition, behaviour and certain physical phenomena that take place after repeated use of the psychoactive substance. It includes the insatiable desire to continue using the drug, leading to difficulties in controlling the use despite the harmful effects incurred. Furthermore, drug use is given a higher priority over other activities and responsibilities in the individual's life. As the use continues, the individual may build up a tolerance and may experience physical withdrawal symptoms. The dependence syndrome may be present for a specific psychoactive substance (e.g. tobacco, alcohol, or diazepam), for a class of substances (e.g. opioid drugs), or for a wider range of pharmacologically different psychoactive substances.

- **Offender**

An offender is an individual who is a parolee or a probationer or person awaiting trial under the system of community corrections. For the purpose of this study, the definition of offender will not include those awaiting trial, but rather those that have already been tried and incarcerated. The individuals could be male, female or other.

- **Female offender**

An offender who identifies as female.

## **1.6 DELIMITATIONS**

It was not the interest of this research to discover all the possible effects as well as other variables contributing to the drug-crime relationship. The study was bound within the context of female offenders. Moreover, it was also not the objective of this research to create intervention plans for drug users and abusers, albeit a recommendation of the research. The interest of this research was to highlight the shortfalls of the drugs and violence nexus by Goldstein which has shaped countless substance abuse intervention plans and policies on a global scale. Despite the global influence of Goldstein's TPF, the focus of the research was the South African context.

## **1.7 RELIABILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF RESEARCH DATA**

Reliability in the context of research refers to both the qualitative and quantitative research phases. Reliability is the ability of a research method (data collection and analytical procedures) to reproduce congruent findings under consistent conditions (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 2014:290). Reliability can be increased by observing five key aspects: (1) the status of the researcher in comparison to that of the participants; (2) the choice of participants; (3) the social situations and conditions (e.g. academic or social); (4) the analytic constructs and premises that includes constructs, definitions and units of analysis, as well as their assumptions; and (5) the methods of data collection and analysis (Zohrabi, 2013:260). Reliability in this study was achieved by adhering to these aspects.

Trustworthiness refers to the truth value of data, analysis and interpretation to ensure the quality of a study (Connelly, 2016:439). Lincoln and Guba (1985:301–327) outline four criteria which constitute trustworthiness. These four criteria were observed throughout the research process and are discussed below:

### **1.7.1 Credibility**

Credibility is the most important criterion in establishing trustworthiness in qualitative

research (Polit & Beck, 2014:259). It means that a study must be conducted in such a manner that it increases the believability of the findings. Credibility is the “fit” between participants’ views and the researcher’s representation of them (Ryan, Coughlan & Cronin, 2007:743). This criterion was established in this study by following the standard procedures of conducting qualitative research (see section 4.2.2). The researcher examined the data repeatedly then presented findings in Chapter 5. By doing this, rigour was applied to the analysis process, thereby adhering to the processes of insuring credibility as prescribed by Patton (1999:1190).

### **1.7.2 Transferability**

Transferability relates to the study’s ability to be generalised. This does not however imply generalisability of qualitative findings but to a case-to-case transfer (Anney, 2014:278) where the cases display similarities in populations, phenomena and situations in order to allow for a transfer (Connelly, 2016:436). A study is also said to have reached transferability if readers are able to personally identify with the findings of the study. To achieve transferability in this study, detailed descriptions of the participants, location and context of the study were provided.

### **1.7.3 Dependability**

Dependability refers to the stability of data over time and over conditions. Stability of conditions in the context of qualitative research relates to the direction of the study (Cope, 2014:89). To achieve dependability, a process log was taken by the researcher, which provided evidence of decisions taken and choices made with regards to methodological and theoretical issues of the study as it progressed.

An audit trail is a rich and transparent description of the steps taken while conducting the research from the conceptualisation stage to the findings. Records are kept of what was done in the study, decisions and choices made regarding sampling, research design, data collection as well as steps taken to manage, analyse and report data. An audit trail also documents the rationale for the decisions and choices made (Amankwaa, 2016:123, 126).

The researcher kept records of raw data, transcripts, field notes and a reflexive journal which the supervisor audited.

#### **1.7.4 Confirmability**

Lastly, confirmability refers to a researcher's ability to remove their personal biases from the data. It also refers to the objectivity of the study. The researcher needs to illustrate how conclusions and interpretations were reached and how bias was avoided when doing interpretations. The findings of the research also need to relate to the responses of the participants (Cope, 2014:89). According to Guba and Lincoln (1989:243), confirmability is achieved when dependability, transferability and credibility are all achieved. Furthermore, to achieve confirmability for this study, reasons for the choices of theoretical, methodological, and analytical approaches were stated throughout the research. Lastly, to prove that resulted themes truly did emerge from the data, rich quotes from the participants are presented (see Chapter 5).

Over and above the research methodology the researcher also considered the ethical issues of the research.

### **1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Due to the social nature of criminology, criminological research uses humans as subjects (Jones, 2012:2) that leads to ethical concerns regarding the civil rights of vulnerable people. In human subject-based research, researchers, knowingly or unknowingly, have an influence over the subjects due to the knowledge and authority perceived to be inherent in the researcher. This perspective may lead to improper research practices which could place subjects in harmful situations (Lumsden & Winter, 2014:2).

Criminologists however face a myriad of ethical issues because of the nature of the field that include:

- sensitive nature of subject matter;

- vulnerability of research participants;
- attitudes of criminal justice institutions;
- relatively powerful position of corporate and state bodies; and
- insensitivity of research ethics governance (Israel, 2004:vi).

For ethical research practice, certain protocols were followed. Before data were collected, a research proposal was submitted to the University of South Africa (UNISA) College of Law (CLAW) Research Ethics Committee for ethical clearance. Moreover, after the CLAW Research Ethics Committee issued an ethics certificate (reference number: ST68), an application for permission to conduct the research at the correctional facilities was submitted. This research was guided by the UNISA Ethics Policy of 2016. Moreover, the following ethical concerns were observed in this study:

### **1.8.1 Informed consent**

A standard requirement for ethically acceptable research is that human participants provide their consent to participate. Furthermore, consent must be both voluntary and informed, and the person giving it must be competent to do so. To assure the authenticity of the consent, participants were requested to sign an informed consent form prior to participating in the research. It was clearly stipulated in the consent form and further explained that participation in the research was completely voluntary.

The female offenders, who were participants of this research, were classified as a vulnerable group, firstly, because they were incarcerated and, secondly, because they may also have been addicted to drugs. Therefore, in order to obtain legitimate consent, the researcher provided an overview of the research as well as the data collection process to the participants prior to the interviews. Furthermore, the potential discomforts, risks and expected benefits were explained. The participants were also notified that they were at liberty to not divulge information they were not comfortable with and could withdraw from of the research at any point. Lastly, in cases where the researcher noted that participants

were not comfortable, the researcher paused during the interview and asked the participant if she wanted to continue.

### **1.8.2 Non-maleficence (do no harm)**

Research projects also vary in the risk of harm that they pose to their participants. In the context of research into drug addiction this raises three interlinked ethical concerns (Fisher, 2011:731):

- What counts as a benefit/risk of harm when it comes to drug addiction?
- Who should make this decision?
- Is it acceptable to enrol drug addicts/users as participants in research that may pose some risk to them, or may not benefit them?

These questions were answered when the addict/user was competent to make the decision for themselves. They were only permitted to participate if they decided the benefits/risks of participation were acceptable. Care was taken in this study by asking officials of the correctional facility to evaluate whether a participant was of sober mind. This ensured minimum risk to the participant. Only the researcher and the participant were present during the interview process. However, to further ensure no harm to both the researcher and female offender participants, personnel (social worker or official) were present in the vicinity but not necessarily in the interview room. However, a constant line of sight was kept by the personnel at all times therefore the door to the room was kept open during the interviews.

Another major ethical issue involving drug addicts or users as research participants is the potential benefit to the participants of the study. The researcher explained that there were no overt benefits to the individual participant however this research could be used to further understand the under-researched topic of women in relation to crime and drug use. In addition, care was taken to assure the offender participants that the information provided will not get them into any sort of trouble such as raising further criminal charges



against them. However, if they felt that their participation would get them into further legal troubles, they were informed that they were free to discontinue with the interview.

### **1.8.3 Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy**

By the situated nature of criminal justice research involving crime, participants were required to disclose information related to their criminality that might not have been disclosed to authorities. Therefore, the researcher remained ethically obligated to keep shared information confidential. Assuring participants of their confidentiality, anonymity and privacy, promotes the garnering of rich data. Therefore, to ensure this, no information pertaining to the recorded interviews was shared with any third party, except the researcher's supervisor. Full anonymity could not be ensured in this research as the participants were interviewed face to face. However, names were redacted from the written documents and replaced with pseudonyms and codes. In this way, partial anonymity was maintained.

The collected written data were scanned and stored in a password protected laptop that only the researcher has access to. The hardcopies were destroyed by shredding after the information was scanned. The digitally recorded data were also stored in the password protected laptop. The data will be stored for five years and thereafter destroyed by permanently deleting it from the laptop.

## **1.9 STRUCTURE OF THESIS**

**Chapter 1** provides the objectives of the study as well as the background and an outline of the research problem. Furthermore, the reliability and trustworthiness of the data is discussed. Lastly, the ethical considerations were also presented and how they were adhered to, for the purpose of good research ethical practice.

**Chapter 2** provides the literature review and conceptualisation of drug use and the drug-crime relationship. It also outlines female criminality in relation to drug use. The gaps in literature also discussed throughout the chapter.

**Chapter 3** focuses on the discussion of the pertinent theory and models underpinning the research. An extensive outline of GST and the models attempting to explain the drug-crime relationship are presented.

**Chapter 4** presents a detailed outline of the research methodology and all the steps followed from the beginning to the end of the research. It also briefly outlines the challenges incurred while conducting this research.

**Chapter 5** provides the findings that emerged from the data analysis process. These are provided without the discussion as they are relatively lengthy.

**Chapter 6** provides the discussion of the findings. A discursive discussion relevant to the aims and objectives of the study is presented.

**Chapter 7** provides the conclusion and the recommendations of the study. A summary of the study is also outlined.

## **1.10 SUMMARY**

This chapter served as an introduction to the overall topic by placing it in the general context and broader field of criminology. The relationship between substance use and criminality was explained and problematised to validate this research project. Following the problematisation, research aims, objectives and questions were outlined within the context of the problem. Significantly, the ethical considerations were presented based on the vulnerabilities of the research participants, i.e., female offenders. It was shown how care was taken to protect these participants from harm as well as other ramifications resulting from the research. The officials participants were also afforded the same protection.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a historical background of women in conjunction to crime and drug use to identify gaps in the existing literature relating to gender (Torraco, 2016:407). This shows that the study has been developed upon a basis of solid research (Hart, 2018:12) and will impact the field of criminology (Ridley, 2012:23).

A case for the need of female centred research, especially within the South African context is also made. Focus is also placed on literature that discusses crime in relation to drugs, with the influencing variable/factor of gender. The chapter outlines women's involvement in criminality and drug use and why it is important to carry out research that incorporates women as subjects. It commences with the influencing factors of female offending.

### **2.2 DRUG-CRIME RELATIONSHIP: FEMALE OFFENDERS**

Before the mid-90s, female participants were excluded from most research. This was based on the belief that women are more biologically complicated than men and that women were too preoccupied with caring for their children to participate in substance and crime related studies (Baskin & Sommers, 1990:149; Box & Hale, 1983:35; Faupel & Klockars, 1987:57; Flowers, 1995:18; Hoffman-Bustamante, 1973:117–118). In the United States of America (USA), federal agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), have been instrumental in advocating for women to be included in clinical research (Larkey, Staten, Ritenbaugh, Hall, Buller, Bassford & Altimari, 2002; National Institute of Child Health & Human Development [NICHD], 2000; Yancey, Ortega & Kumanyika, 2006).

Chesney-Lind and Rodriguez (1983:47) conducted an early study identifying severe and repeated child abuse among incarcerated female offenders. These researchers laid the groundwork for others in describing an “interface” between victimisation and justice

involvement for women. Subsequent studies by Browne, Miller and Maguin (1999), Gilfus (1993), and Richie (2012) reveal physical and sexual victimisation as an overarching theme in the lives of incarcerated women. In Fagan's (2001) review of research on effects of child maltreatment on criminal offending, most studies found a substantial majority of female offenders, particularly youthful offenders, had experienced physical and/or sexual abuse. In a study of 444 incarcerated boys and girls, Belknap and Holsinger (2006:58) found that girls witnessed higher levels of verbal, physical and sexual abuse perpetrated against family members as compared to boys. Furthermore, the abuses had also been experienced by the majority of girls in the sample. When asked whether a form of abuse led to their delinquent offending, over half of girls indicated it had (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006:57).

In addition to victimisation, many of the young girls described nonvictimisation adversities that may have influenced their involvement in delinquency. These adversities include parental abandonment due to psychiatric disorders or death (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006:65). The researchers indicate that research on female offending needs an expanded conceptualisation of trauma that addresses factors such as parental desertion and parental mental illness as well as childhood victimisation (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006:65). Similarly, DeHart, Lynch, Belknap, Dass-Brailsford and Green (2014:143) note that intersecting traumas, such as death of a loved one in combination with childhood victimisation, magnified challenges faced in the lives of incarcerated women. In an earlier study of 100 incarcerated girls, DeHart (2009) found that a majority had experienced adverse childhood events such as death or serious illness of a family member, parental addiction or incarceration, or persistent family conflict.

The Girls Study Group (Zahn, Agnew, Fishbein, Miller, Winn, Dakoff & Chesney-Lind, 2010:5), commissioned by the USA Department of Justice to examine contributors to female offending, noted a consistent relationship between child maltreatment and female offending, but indicated that little was known about the role of intervening variables in that relationship.

Mounting evidence exists that substance abuse may be one such key intervening variable. Salisbury and Van Voorhis (2009:543) studied pathways to female offending

and emphasised that “victimisation and trauma often lead to depression and other internalized mood disorders, which then frequently lead to self-medicating behaviour by abusing drugs”. These authors identified three gendered pathways to female offenders’ incarceration, two of which explicitly included substance abuse in association with coping with victimisation and other struggles. Salisbury and Van Voorhis (2009:546) further note that, although addictive behaviours may precede mental illness in the lives of abused women, female offenders more frequently describe “self-medicating behaviours to manage depression and symptoms related to posttraumatic stress disorder”.

Several research teams (Brown & Shillington, 2017; Cavanaugh, Petras & Martins, 2015; Debowska & Boduszek, 2017; Forster, Gower, Borowsky & McMorris, 2017; Larkin, Aykanian, Dean & Lee, 2017; Roos, Afifi, Martin, Pietrzak, Tsai & Sareen, 2016; Shin, McDonald & Conley, 2018) examined childhood adversity including child maltreatment as well as factors including parental alcohol and drug abuse, parental unemployment, parental incarceration, and death or serious illness of a family member. These research studies indicate exposure to multiple adversities in childhood and adolescence as an important risk factor for the onset of psychological disorders and/or drug dependence. The studies underscore the importance of the family context in determining how substance abuse fits within female pathways to crime. This complements research indicating that parenting styles and family relationships impact development of children and the likelihood of drug involvement (Alizadeh, Talib, Abdullah & Mansor, 2011; Johari, Zulkifli & Mamat, 2011; Mensah & Kuranchie, 2013; Sarwar, 2016). Kiesner, Poulin and Dishion (2010:13) conclude that there is a strong correlation between poor parenting and juvenile drug use. In addition, Mounts and Steinberg (1995:918) identify an association between low levels of authoritative parenting and higher levels of peer influence on drug use. Kiesner et al (2010:4) emphasises that, when parents are absent or neglectful, having substance using friends puts a child at risk for the initiation or escalation of substance use. In addition, negative parental involvement may also be associated with adolescent drug use. Bahr, Maughan, Marcos and Li (1998:981), for instance, found that adolescents are more likely to smoke, drink, or use marijuana if they have seen family members use these substances.

Women's stories of substance use and association with other criminal activity also illuminated the association between substance use and other crimes. Addiction led to difficulty holding down jobs. With unemployment, the women began to support their drug habits through unconventional means – often criminal and/or antisocial activity. In correctional centres throughout most of the world, female offenders have been reported to use harder drugs such as cocaine, amphetamines and heroin in comparison to male offenders who prevalently use cannabis (Baltieri, 2014:118–121; Fazel, Yoon & Hayes, 2017a:1728–1733). One reason given for this difference in male and female offender drug use in correctional centres is that women use drugs more as a coping mechanism for psychological distress (Baltieri, 2014:123). There is also a difference in male and female offending patterns. Females generally tend to commit crimes, such as shoplifting, dealing in stolen goods and fraud, whereas males commit more violent crimes (Campaniello, 2019:4–5).

### **2.2.1 The gender lens**

Looking at the world through a gender lens began in most areas of social science during the second wave of the women's movement in the late 1960s to the 1970s (Crenshaw, 2004:32). During this time, feminist researchers began questioning science's conclusions by pointing out male-oriented biases in research questions, hypotheses, and designs. Unfortunately, the gender lens did not appear in substance use research until the early 1980s (Brochin, 2018:167). Prior to the 1970s, most studies of alcohol and other drug use were conducted on male cohorts. Early studies that included women suffered from the "add women and stir approach" (Datzberger & Le Mat, 2018:61). This meant that females were added to samples, but no gender-related concepts were used. Gender was merely used as a descriptive category or variable. Gender should however be used more discursively as an analytical category. This would imply that a focus on gender norms, power and inequality based on gender, and the intersections of gender with other categories of social difference needs to be employed in research that is gender orientated (Covino, 2015:76).

As a consequence of the “add women and stir approach”, women's and men's drug use were viewed through a male lens. The gender lens requires the careful study of substance use to recognise the impact of social and cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity on individual and group drug use (Kaya, Iwamoto, Grivel, Clinton & Brady, 2016:55). Despite the increase in gender-oriented research since the early 1980s, there is still insufficient information about female drug use. An example of gender-oriented work is Rosenbaum's (1980) book that focused on women heroin users. It was one of the first major U.S. publications to challenge conceptual frameworks on drug use, abuse, and treatment by gender socialisation by investigating gender roles.

In the past, medical and drug research was conducted mainly on men therefore there can be dangerous consequences for women who receive the same intervention plans as their male counterparts (Kaya et al, 2016:73). Generally, women's needs are different from those of men (Jules-Macquet, 2015:5). From a criminological perspective however the male model is still being dominantly used across all genders, binary or otherwise (Felson & Eckert, 2017:89).

### ***2.2.1.1 Gender in relation to crime***

Gender is the single best predictor of criminal behaviour simply because men commit more crime than women (Smart, 2013:27). According to a study conducted by the Office of the National Statistics in the United Kingdom in 2008, it was discovered that 80% of the correctional centre population was male (West, Sabol & Greenman, 2010:6). The general consensus that males populate correctional centres more than females is accepted across the world. The same pattern emerged in the USA (Bronson & Carson, 2019:3) where statistics established that there are 14 times more male offenders than females. In South Africa, males constitute 98% of the correctional centres' population with only nine operational female centres in the country (Africa Check, 2017b).

Most efforts to understand crime have focused on male offenders, since males have greater involvement in criminal activity (Messerschmidt & Tomsen, 2018:83). No

distinction is drawn between the two sexes. Both males and females have low rates of arrest for serious crimes, such as homicide or robbery, and high rates of arrest for petty property crimes such as theft, or public order offences that include alcohol and drug offences or disorderly conduct (Kopak, Vartanian, Hoffmann & Hunt, 2014:294). This trend is prevalent and pervasive in most countries (Barberet, 2014; Belknap, 2020). In South Africa, it is evident in country's annually released crime statistics (SAPS, 2020).

Male and female offenders have similar age-crime distributions, although male levels of offending tend to be higher than female levels at every age and for virtually all offences (Farrington, 2017:111). The major exception to this age-by-gender pattern is for prostitution, where the age-curve for females displays a much greater concentration of arrests among the young, compared to an older age-curve for males (Wagenaar, Altink & Amesberger, 2017:38). A variety of factors account for this difference. For example, males arrested attempting to solicit a prostitute may be men old enough to have acquired the power or the money to be customers. The younger and more peaked female age curve clearly reflects differing opportunity structures for crimes relating to prostitution. Older women become less able to market sexual services, whereas older men can continue to purchase sexual services from young females or from young males (Holt, Blevins & Fitzgerald, 2016:14).

### **2.2.2 Gender in relation to alcohol and other drugs**

The role of substance abuse in aggression and violence is central in terms of increasing aggressive reactions and lowering inhibitions (Feingold, Tiberio & Capaldi, 2014:8). Fazel, Yoon and Hayes (2017b:187) note a higher incidence of substance abuse problems in England and Wales among female than male correctional centre populations (22% and 10% respectively). Scott, Dennis and Lurigio (2015:40), on researching a small group of women serving sentences for murder or manslaughter in New York State, discovered the prevalence of substance abuse as a major factor in their offences. Mir, Kastner, Priebe, Konrad, Ströhle and Mundt (2015:29) also note that a higher proportion of incarcerated women offenders than men committed their offences under the influence of drugs or alcohol.



Substance abuse among women federal offenders has been extensively reviewed by Lightfoot and Lambert (1991) and by Kendall-Tackett, Williams and Finkelhor (1993) but not in terms of its links to violent behaviour. Loucks and Zamble (1994), in a preliminary comparison of federally sentenced men and women, found higher rates of alcoholism among men and of drug abuse among women. Goodwin (2006:667) explored the relationship between alcohol, drugs, smoking and anger among women in the community, and established that prescription drug use was higher among women who felt anger, and among older women who drank more heavily. De Vogel, Stam, Bouman, Ter Horst and Lancel (2016:151) see substance abuse among women as symptomatic of other aspects of their lives.

Despite all these studies (most being outdated) however, very little research has been done in the drug-crime relationship. More so as gender being incorporated as a variable or an analytical tool for the relationship, especially in the South African context, hence the need for this research. The information presented above also serves to highlight the discrepancies that exist between genders when drugs are used.

### **2.3 ILLICIT AND LICIT SUBSTANCES: THE RESEARCH**

Most research on the drug-crime relationship does not factor in the differences in psychopharmacological effects of different types of illicit drugs and their relation to crime or violence (Meyer, Cummings, Proctor & Stahl, 2016:547). There are four main categories of drugs, namely, depressants, stimulants, opioids and hallucinogens (Liu & Vivolo-Kantor, 2020:4). Depressants retard the communication between synapses and are considered to be “downers”. In layman’s terms, they have a downer effect. Stimulants have an opposite effect to depressants; they speed up communication between synapses in the brain and therefore are referred to as “uppers”. Lastly, hallucinogens have the pharmacological ability to alter a person’s perception of reality, and he/she starts to hallucinate (Tracy, Wood & Baumeister, 2017:2–3). The differentiation between substances is due to the different pharmacology of each substance and the way they affect the biological reaction (O’Brien, 2011:90).

Stimulants, such as cocaine, methamphetamines, barbiturates and amphetamines, have been labelled as catalysts for the causal link of the drug-crime relationship (Bean, 2014:4; Felson & Bonkiewicz, 2013:336–337). These drugs are described as inducing violence within the individuals who use them (Brecht & Herbeck, 2013:469). There is however little empirical evidence for depressants, such as cannabis and heroin, or hallucinogens having the psychopharmacological effects that result in violence (Reingle, Staras, Jennings, Branchini & Maldonado-Molina, 2012:1570). The discussion of literature below presents empirical support for psychopharmacologically induced violence focusing specifically on illicit drugs. The four categories of drugs that are detailed include: cannabis for depressants, cocaine, methamphetamines and amphetamines for stimulants, heroin for opioids and phencyclidine and polysubstances for hallucinogens. These drugs are the most commonly used in South Africa (World Drug Report, 2020a:44).

### **2.3.1.1 Depressant drugs**

#### **2.3.1.1.1 Cannabis**

As reported by the World Drug Report (2020b:3), cannabis is the most widely used drug in most parts of the world. It has been made legal in some countries, remains illegal in others, and in certain countries its legal status is still being debated by law makers (World Drug Report, 2020b:13). Cannabis use is reported to peak during adolescence through to early adulthood (Hasin, Shmulewitz & Sarvet, 2019:633). This drug has gained notoriety globally as a gateway drug, presupposing that its use will lead the user to other more addictive substances (Secades-Villa, Garcia-Rodríguez, Jin, Wang & Blanco, 2015:135). However, according to Kamber (2015:77), there is insufficient empirical evidence for this presupposition, as most people who use this drug do not graduate to more addictive substances. Studies have however proposed that cannabis users are more prone to interpersonal violence (De Mooij, Kikkert, Lommerse, Peen, Meijwaard, Theunissen, Duurkoop, Goudriaan, Van & Beekman, 2015:520). There is a similarity between the cannabis-aggression studies and the alcohol-violence relationship, as hypothesised by the three theories attempting to explain the alcohol-violence relationship

discussed in the following sections (see section 2.3.2).

Pertaining to psychopharmacologically induced violence, cannabis in moderate doses has a more calming effect with mild euphoria. In cases where the threshold of intoxication has been reached, it can induce anxiety, paranoia and panic attacks (Karila, Roux, Rolland, Benyamina, Reynaud, Aubin & Lançon, 2014:4114). When ingested orally, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) can produce stronger psychotropic effects than when inhaled (Crane, Easton & Devine, 2013:119). The adverse effects are hypothesised to negatively affect cognition and the emotional state to an extent where the individual could react aggressively to perceived provocation (Johnson, Wu, Winder, Casher, Marshall & Bostwick, 2016:247; Shorey, Haynes, Strauss, Temple & Stuart, 2017:18; Rodríguez-Arias, Miñarro, Arenas & Aguilar, 2016:831; Testa & Brown, 2015:8). Secondly, some studies propose that aggression and violence could result from the withdrawal phase after smoking or ingesting the cannabis (Lee, Schroeder, Karschner, Goodwin, Hirvonen, Gorelick & Huestis, 2014:235; Marshall, Gowing, Ali & Le Foll, 2014:7). The user is observed as more irritable and with higher degrees of anger (Livne, Shmulewitz, Lev-Ran & Hasin, 2019:171). These explanations however, seem to be slightly deterministic.

When considering both animal and human testing, laboratory studies have not reached the same results in the cannabis-violence relationship (Kehr, Ichinose, Yoshitake, Goiny, Sievertsson, Nyberg & Yoshitake, 2011:1952). Some studies allude to moderate doses of cannabis possessing a dampening effect on aggression and violence (Gray, Subramaniam & Budney, 2016; Jacobus, Squeglia, Infante, Castro, Brumback, Meruelo & Tapert, 2015:11; Perna, Theunissen, Kuypers, Toennes & Ramaekers, 2016:3339; Pham, Chen, Tamayo, Bryant, Yang & Ford Jr, 2016:4183). While, in other studies, it was revealed that users are at more risk of involvement in violent behaviour. The tests in the latter studies were, however, confounded with other influential factors such as biology, environment and exposure to guardian substance use (Schoeler, Theobald, Pingault, Farrington, Jennings, Piquero, Coid & Bhattacharyya, 2016:3).

Mixed results have also been produced from longitudinal research designs investigating

the cannabis-violence relationship (Reingle et al, 2012; Scholes-Balog, Hemphill, Evans-Whipp, Toumbourou & Patton, 2016; Wilkinson, Stefanovics & Rosenheck, 2015). In research attempting to study the links between early use of cannabis in teenagerhood and later onsets of violence in adulthood, a positive link has been reported (Exner-Cortens, Eckenrode & Rothman, 2013:77; Foshee, Reyes, Gottfredson, Chang & Ennett, 2013:727; Haberstick, Young, Zeiger, Lessem, Hewitt & Hopper, 2014:159). A Norwegian longitudinal study by Norström and Rossow (2014) included 2681 participants from a 1994 cohort of a mean age of 16 and a 1999 cohort of a mean age of 21. The study explored the cannabis-violence relationship. Confounding factors such as erratic behaviour, gender, age, peer pressure, drinking and proclivity for violence were accounted for. The study concluded that there was a positive link between cannabis and violence.

There are discrepancies in the abovementioned studies as they do not yield the same positive result. The study by Cunradi, Todd and Mair (2015) on partners' heavy drinking and marijuana use and how that affected intimate partner violence (IPV) also evidenced discrepancies. Despite the comorbidity factors also being accounted for in Cunradi et al's (2015) study, a positive association was not found between cannabis and violence.

In a Norwegian study, Norström and Rossow (2014:361) found that a 0.4% increase in violent behaviour was associated with a 10% increase of cannabis use. The study however failed to highlight the source of the violence, since it did not mention or test whether the violence resulted from the states of intoxication or the withdrawal phases. The study also did not test for participants' cannabis dependency. A comparison study by Lee, Sukavatvibul and Conigrave (2015:830) in Australia did however conclude that cannabis users are four times more likely to engage in violence than non-cannabis users. Thus far, the findings of these studies remain inconclusive despite the complex methodologies employed. Similarly, the Lee et al (2015) study could not conclusively report on whether the violence was a result of victimisation, perpetration or both. Using community anecdotes however, Lee et al (2015:833) noted that violence increased when there was a shortage of cannabis. This implies that violence ensues from the withdrawal

from cannabis, rather than the intoxication thereof. To date, no study has established such a conclusion.

Conversely, the study by Lee et al (2015:833) concluded that cannabis' psychopharmacological effects during severe intoxication impair attention, motor coordination and concentration. The set of cognitive processes that are necessary for the cognitive control of behaviour (selecting and successfully monitoring behaviours that facilitate the attainment of chosen goals) is also heavily impaired (Goschke, 2014:45). Along with these impaired functionings, the intoxicated individual also experiences time and space in a distorted manner (Neavyn, Blohm, Babu & Bird, 2014:274–275). Lee et al (2015:834) suggest that violence can result from the impairments in conjunction with the distortions. This suggestion makes no sense and needs to be argued from a different perspective. Observably, the body would be incapacitated from the intoxications. Thus, the physical strength required to be violent will be compromised. It can therefore be assumed that cannabis users are more prone to victimisation than being perpetrators themselves (Nelson, 2018:115). There is a plethora of factors concomitant in the cannabis and violence relationship to assume a positive link between the two. Studies show that the main contributing factor to the cannabis-violence relationship is mental illness (Dellazizzo, Potvin, Beaudoin, Luigi, Dou, Giguère & Dumais, 2019; Dugré, Dellazizzo, Giguère, Potvin & Dumais, 2017; Moulin, Baumann, Gholamrezaee, Alameda, Palix, Gasser & Conus, 2018).

The studies on the psychopharmacological effects of cannabis, with respect to severe intoxication, agree that mood and emotions are significantly altered during use. The withdrawal phase is also met with altered mood states that could contribute to incidences of aggressive behaviour. What has been gleaned further from cannabis studies is that the altered moods are also different, depending on the user. Some users experience relaxation and/or elation, while others experience anxiety and/or agitation (Volkow, Swanson, Evins, DeLisi, Meier, Gonzalez, Bloomfield, Curran & Baler, 2016:294). The altered moods, along with their severity, appear to be determinants of aggressive behaviour (Perna et al, 2016:3332). Self-reported variability of cannabis intoxication may

be accounted for by different stages of intoxication, individual variability with respect to the descriptions of intoxication (e.g. variations in the definition of euphoria) and whether the experience of cannabis intoxication is multidimensional (Pacheco-Colón, Limia & Gonzalez, 2018:14).

There are several variables pertaining to the influence of how intoxication will be experienced individually. These include genetics, emotional states before use, the path to use, personality, history of use and the user's expectations of the drug use (Cosker, Schwitzer, Ramoz, Ligier, Lalanne, Gorwood, Schwan & Laprévote, 2018:104). These variables also influence the cannabis-violence relationship. It is evident that the variables allude to a subjective intoxication experience (Wiers, Shokri-Kojori, Wong, Abi-Dargham, Demiral, Tomasi, Wang & Volkow, 2016:2602). Colizzi and Bhattacharyya (2018) researched this subjectivity of cannabis intoxication and note that there is variability in the effects of cannabis on participants. The studies reviewed showed a consistency in participants reporting effects which were opposite to those of other participants. This was irrespective of where the studies were conducted, whether in a laboratory or in a natural setting. Also, variations were evident irrespective of single use and multiple uses.

Results from studies on the psychopharmacological effects of cannabis and the link to violence and other criminal behaviour are both inconsistent and in agreement. The cannabis-violence/crime relationship is weak and is influenced by a number of individual variables. There are also many inconsistencies in results with respect to the effects of dosage and the subsequent behaviour. In some instances, it was reported that moderate doses of cannabis actually impede violent behaviour (Baradaran, 2014:233). In other instances, violence associated with cannabis is accounted for by effects of the withdrawal phase, and when there is a limited supply of the cannabis (Lee et al, 2015:833). During withdrawal, the user may experience agitation and physical discomfort, and these experiences may result in aggression (Cafferky, Mendez, Anderson & Stith, 2018:9). To reiterate, the link between cannabis, violence and crime appears to be weak and inconclusive on a nomothetic level and unpredictable on an idiographic level.

### **2.3.1.2 Stimulant drugs**

#### **2.3.1.2.1 Cocaine**

The focus of most research pertaining to cocaine has been on violent offences and IPV with far less focus on minor crimes. An exploratory study by Clarke, Harris, Zweifler, Lasher, Mortimer and Hughes (2016) employed gender, age and environment as factors and discovered that violence was commonly associated with male cocaine users. An early study by Leigey and Bachman (2007) focused on crack cocaine (the base form of cocaine) and minor crimes and other crimes that did not involve violence. They discovered that crimes committed by crack cocaine users could successfully be predicted. Generally, crack cocaine users perpetrated shoplifting, robbery, burglary and prostitution and avoided violent offences. This was confirmed by Comiskey, Stapleton and Kelly (2012:408).

Since cocaine is a stimulant, it could potentially promote violent and aggressive behaviour psychopharmacologically by affecting the serotonergic signalling system (Spronk, Van Wel, Ramaekers & Verkes, 2013:1839). Despite neuroscience's vast knowledge about neurotransmitters, little is still known on the direct effects of cocaine on aggression (Haller, 2013:106). The effects of cocaine appear almost immediately after consumption. Sometimes these effects last only a few minutes, other times they may last over an hour (Spronk et al, 2013:1840). The substance induces feelings of euphoria and high energy. The cocaine user also feels mentally alert and feels their sensory perceptions are heightened, especially vision, hearing, and touch (Johnson, Roache, Ait - Daoud, Gunderson, Haughey, Wang & Liu, 2013:408). Mental effects may include loss of contact with reality, an intense feeling of happiness or agitation (Riezzo, Fiore, De Carlo, Pascale, Neri, Turillazzi & Fineschi, 2012:5626). Physical symptoms may include a fast heart rate, sweating, and large pupils. High doses can result in very high blood pressure or body temperature (Havakuk, Rezkalla & Kloner 2017:104).

Consequently, shortly after the extreme feelings of elation and happiness, the cocaine

levels drop, and this results in levels of low mental states and mood. This state is likened to a temporary clinical depression (Lecca, Meye & Mamei, 2014:1172). Users counter this low state by taking another hit of the cocaine to restore the elation and mental alertness (Potvin, Stavro, Rizkallah & Pelletier, 2014:370). This repeated cycle could lead the user to keep taking multiple hits over prolonged periods of time – possibly days (Zhang, Zheng, Zhou, Chen, Jin, Deng, Zhan & Zheng, 2017:2). Using cocaine habitually diminishes the need to eat and sleep so the user continues to feel stimulated, even when sleep deprived (Berro, Santos, Hollais, Wuo-Silva, Fukushiro, Mári-Kawamoto, Costa, Trombin, Patti, Grapiglia Tufik, Andersen & Frussa-Filho, 2014:131–132). According to Bjorness and Greene (2018:91), it is in these states of sleep deprivation that the violence may ensue. They hypothesise that the continued stimulation, along with other psychopharmacological effects of cocaine, such as paranoia, work together with the social environment that results in violence in the form of physical altercations and assaults when the user is provoked.

In addition to the consumption factor of cocaine and how it fosters violence, personality has also been studied. There are a number of personality traits that researchers have identified that are common among those who develop a cocaine use disorder and also engage in violent behaviour. Impulsivity is one such trait (Cunningham & Anastasio, 2014:461; Fernández-Serrano, Perales, Moreno-López, Pérez-García & Verdejo-García, 2012:674; Moreno-López, Catena, Fernández-Serrano, Delgado-Rico, Stamatakis, Pérez-García & Verdejo-García, 2012:212), along with thrill seeking (Nielsen, Ho, Bahl, Varma, Kellogg, Borg & Kreek, 2012:116–117) and anti-social personality disorder (Alcorn III, Gowin, Green, Swann, Moeller & Lane, 2013:230). The difficulty in establishing a causal relationship between cocaine use, violence and criminality lies in separating these personality traits from the psychoactive effects of cocaine and criminal behaviour. In attempting to make the separation, researchers explored the manner in which cocaine is administered (Gold, 2012; Karila, Petit, Lowenstein & Reynaud, 2012; Jones & Comer, 2013). Users primarily administer cocaine orally, intranasally, intravenously, or by inhalation. When people “snort” the drug (intranasal use), they inhale cocaine powder through the nostrils, where it is absorbed into the bloodstream through



the nasal tissues. Users also may rub the drug onto their gums (oral use). Dissolving cocaine in water and injecting it (intravenous use) releases the drug directly into the bloodstream and heightens the intensity of its effects. When they smoke cocaine (inhalation), they inhale its vapour or smoke into the lungs, where absorption into the bloodstream is almost as rapid as by injection (Pomara, Cassano, D'Errico, Bello, Romano, Riezzo & Serviddio, 2012:5652). The speed and the manner in which cocaine is administered have also been attributed to involvement in violent behaviour (Illangasekare, Burke, Chander, & Gielen, 2013:942).

Early research by Miller, Gold and Mahler (1991:1080) found that the way cocaine is administered was associated with the level of self-reported violence in a sample of 101 cocaine users (77 men, 24 women who were assessed for treatment). Despite these findings, the cocaine-violence relationship could not be established simplistically. The difficulty in establishing the causal link was that participants (cocaine users) of the self-report study engaged in forms of violence that require sustained action, for example, assault against other people and family members, as well as intimate partners (Kraanen, Vedel, Scholing & Emmelkamp, 2014:537). Kessler, Terra, Faller, Stolf, Peuker, Benzano, Brazilian ASI Group and Pechansky (2012:377) also focused on other criminal offences, such as robbery, sexual assault and burglary that also require sustained action. The collaborating researchers discovered that there were no significant statistical differences associated with the manner of cocaine administration. Also, Kraanen et al (2014:376) concluded that proximal situational factors may be of equal importance when considering the cocaine-violence relationship.

Research exploring cocaine use and its influence on IPV, has also yielded inconsistent results. There seems to be no consensus on whether there is a causal link between the psychopharmacological effects of cocaine and users perpetrating IPV (Crane, Oberleitner, Devine & Easton, 2014:10). A meta-analysis study by Mallory, Dharnidharka, Deitz, Barros-Gomes, Cafferky, Stith and Van (2016) concentrated on different types of IPV incidents such as sexual, psychological, physical and mixed aggression. They related these incidents to a range of drug use and discovered a composite effect between drug

use and IPV. Mallory et al's (2016:118) study revealed that the probability of IPV being perpetrated was three times more when there is regular use and abuse of drugs within a relationship.

The different types of drugs and how they impact and affect IPV were also investigated by Mallory et al (2016). When compared with other types of drugs, cocaine had a notably greater effect than the other drugs. This was evident in all forms of measured aggressions (i.e., sexual, psychological, physical and mixed aggression). Although there is a strong association between cocaine and IPV, the causal link between the psychopharmacological effects of the substance and the IPV could not be concluded. It is unclear whether the psychopharmacological effects of cocaine itself cause the specific violence. This lack of clarity is due to the study's limitations as it could not account for the user's alcohol consumption levels as well as the use of other drugs in conjunction with cocaine, during the perpetration of IPV. The use of other substances could potentially have led to the exaggeration of the results.

An early study by Parrott, Drobles, Saladin, Coffey and Dansky (2003) did not find an association between cocaine and IPV. A more recent meta-analysis study by Alhusen, Lucea, Bullock and Sharps (2013:475) however does acknowledge the presence of a relationship between aggression and the psychopharmacological effects of cocaine, but it refutes the causal link thereof. Regarding general criminality, Alhusen et al (2013:475) also conclude that there is insufficient evidence to definitively conclude that cocaine causes crime. They propose that pre-existing individual factors, such as a lack of self-regulatory systems and anti-social personality traits, are the mediators of the cocaine-crime relationship. The use of cocaine and cannabis does not conclusively cause crime as there is a complex drug-crime relationship.

#### ***2.3.1.2.2 Amphetamine and methamphetamine***

Although both amphetamine (contracted from alpha-methylphenethylamine) and methamphetamine (contracted from methylamphetamine) are psycho-stimulant drugs,

they act differently on the body and the mind. Unlike amphetamine, methamphetamine is neurotoxic to the human midbrain dopaminergic neurons. Methamphetamine is manufactured by using its parent drug, amphetamine (Gilbreath, 2015:512). Over the last decade, methamphetamine has received a large amount of publicity throughout the world due to the serious abuse of and addictions caused by the drug (Parsons, 2014:154). In low to moderate doses, methamphetamine can elevate mood and increase alertness, concentration and energy in fatigued individuals, reduce appetite, and promote weight loss. At relatively high doses, it can induce psychosis, breakdown of skeletal muscle, seizures and bleeding in the brain (Northrop & Yamamoto, 2015:4). Chronic high-dose use can precipitate unpredictable and rapid mood swings, psychosis (e.g., delirium, paranoia, delusions and hallucinations) and violent behaviour as a result of the psychosis (Cadet & Gold, 2018:17). Recreationally, methamphetamine's ability to increase energy has been reported to lift mood and increase sexual desire to such an extent that users are able to engage in sexual activity continuously for several days (Lorvick, Bourgois, Wenger, Arreola, Lutnick, Wechsberg & Kral, 2012:388).

Amphetamine, on the other hand, has been available for a longer period, has been prescribed by doctors and can be found in various medications, for example, for the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), narcolepsy, and obesity (Castells, Blanco-Silvente & Cunill, 2018:7). At therapeutic doses, amphetamine causes emotional and cognitive effects such as euphoria, change in the desire for sex, increased wakefulness, and improved cognitive control. It induces physical effects such as improved reaction time, fatigue resistance, and increased muscle strength (Fallah, Moudi, Hamidia & Bijani, 2018:89). Larger recreational doses of amphetamine may impair cognitive function, induce rapid muscle breakdown and lead to drug addiction but these symptoms are unlikely to arise from typical long-term medical use at therapeutic doses (Bell, Lucke & Hall, 2012:27). Very high doses can result in psychosis (e.g., delusions and paranoia) (Castells et al, 2018:48).

Research in the past has established a positive link between amphetamine use and increased levels of aggression. Bailey and Shaw (1989), Doane and Marshall (1996),

Logan, Fligner and Haddix (1998) and Rasmussen, Cole and Spiehler (1989) note that there is evidence of high amphetamine use in assault and homicide offences. Within more controlled settings however, tests on laboratory mice with acute administration of methamphetamine produced inconsistent results. Some tests reported more aggressive behaviour displayed by the mice (Hirabayashi & Alam, 1981:929; Miczek & Tidey, 1989:70), while Bell and Hepper (1987) did not observe any behavioural changes. The difference in the path of administration however was noted to produce different results by more recent studies. Lederer, Fouche, Wilson, Stein and Uhlmann (2016) propose that it is the chronic administration of methamphetamine as opposed to the acute administration that results in aggressive behaviour but these tests were on mice and not on human subjects.

In a laboratory of mice as a sample, Golden, Heins, Venniro, Caprioli, Zhang, Epstein, and Shaham (2017:346) discovered that aggressive behaviour only increased after eight weeks of methamphetamine injections (chronic administration). Further, it was established that there was no resultant aggressive behaviour from acute administration. From the increased knowledge base of neuroscience, scientists have been able to explore and understand the neurocircuitry of the brain as it is affected by the chronic and acute use of methamphetamine (Taylor, Lewis & Olive, 2013:34). Other various parts of the brain have also been explored as well as the emotional processing initiated by methamphetamine use (Halpin, Collins & Yamamoto, 2014; Kousik, Graves, Napier & Carvey, 2012; Marshall & O'Dell, 2012; Thanos, Kim, Delis, Ananth, Chachati, Rocco, Masad, Muniz, Grant, Gold & Cadet, 2017). The wealth of knowledge has increased understanding of the psychopharmacological relationship between methamphetamine and aggressive behaviour. The parts of the brain that are affected by methamphetamine are the amygdala and prefrontal cortex regions where abnormalities were found in users. There are also differences in serotonergic markers that are associated with harm avoidance, cognition, low mood, insight and aggression (Zanos, Wright, Georgiou, Yoo, Ledent, Hourani, Kitchen, Winsky-Sommerer & Bailey, 2014:73). From a neurological perspective, changes in the densities of serotonin transporters, as well as the increased microglial cell expression are responsible for changes in behaviour (Büttner, 2011:122)

that include decreased emotional insight, impulsivity and hostility. In combination, these behaviours could result in increased levels of aggression (Machalova, Slais, Vrskova & Sulcova, 2012:220). These findings are laboratory based.

In naturalistic settings, early evidence for the causal relationship of methamphetamine and violence was garnered from medical case studies of incidents where methamphetamine users displayed violent behaviours (Fagan, 1990; Fujiwara, Sakurai, Kiyota, Shimazoe, Ohta, Shibata & Ueki, 1985; Martin, Smith & Byrd, 1990). Wardlaw (1983) explored the methamphetamine-crime relationship with convenience samples and surveys of offenders. These studies concurred that methamphetamine users are more violent than non-users (Sadava, 1984; Wardlaw, 1983; Wish, Klumpp, Moorer, Brady & Williams, 1988). However, Greenberg's (1976:112) early study found that amphetamine use had a weak association with crime when used in conjunction with other types of drugs. Heischober and Miller (1991) also disputed the link between the psychopharmacological effects of amphetamine use and aggression for both long and short-term use. However, an updated study on effects of methamphetamine, using a survey sample of over 200 methamphetamine users, reported that almost 30% of users had perpetrated between 80 and 90 violent acts while under the influence of the methamphetamine (Wermuth, 2000:427).

A more recent study by Goldsmid and Willis (2016) was conducted in New South Wales where a sample of 400 multiple drug type (methamphetamine, heroin and polysubstances) users were compared. The sample population provided self-reported incidents of violent offending. The study discovered that the rate of violent victimisation across all groups in their lifetime of use was closer to a universal agreement. At least half of the sample also attested to being victims of physical assault within the previous year. The regular methamphetamine users were more likely to self-report being involved in violent offending behaviour. The results of the research also revealed that one-third of the regular heroin users reported involvement in recent violent offending behaviour, and half of the regular methamphetamine group reported recent involvement in violent behaviour.

General forms of criminality have also been associated with methamphetamine use and dependency. From the use of secondary data in the form of court records and interviews of 200 offenders (77.5% males and 22.5% females) in a Colorado correctional centre, Kilmer, Reuter and Giommoni (2015) explored the relationship between different types of crime and methamphetamine use. The 200 self-reported participants were classified into three groups. Group A constituted those who used methamphetamine as their drug of choice or used it frequently (n=80); group B were those who reported trying methamphetamine (n=89); and group C consisted of participants who had never used methamphetamine (n=31). A chi-square test and analysis of variances was completed, with group A participants as the fixed factor, to explore the relationship between methamphetamine use and criminal behaviour. The study revealed that 60% of all the participants were under the influence of methamphetamine at the onset of their first offence. The groups did bear statistical differences. Only 44.4% of group C members reported being intoxicated, while 60.2% of group B and 71.2% of group A reported being methamphetamine intoxicated at the time of arrest.

The criminal histories of group A users (regular methamphetamine users) were found to be more widespread than those of the other groups. Group A users were also more likely to commit property crimes and be remanded for drug offences. Despite this, content analysis conducted by Kilmer et al (2015), of the interviews and the criminal histories, could not provide proof of the link between the psychopharmacological effects of methamphetamine and the commission of violent crime. It is evident from the literature that proving a causal link between the psychopharmacological effects of amphetamines and criminality is complex and difficult. What contributes to the difficulty are the premorbid risk factors, i.e., factors that could already be in existence in the individual, predisposing that individual to act violently, without the use of the substance (McKetin, Lubman, Najman, Dawe, Butterworth & Baker, 2014:804).

McKetin et al (2014) conducted a within-subject (fixed effects) analysis to a longitudinal panel of data from a sample of 300 participants. The sample was drawn from the larger Methamphetamine Treatment Evaluation Study (MATES) conducted across two sites in

Brisbane and Sydney. Using the criteria for methamphetamine dependence in the Diagnostic Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV), McKetin et al (2014) selected participants aged above 16 and eliminated participants who had mental illnesses, mania and schizophrenia. The advantage of the within-subjects design employed by McKetin et al (2014) was that each participant is their own control. Therefore, confounding factors, such as trauma, gender, personality and genetic traits, were not measured in the research as they did not change over the duration of the study. McKetin et al (2014) conducted individual structured interviews at the beginning of the study, then followed up at intervals of three months, one year and finally three years later. The interviews were conducted either telephonically or in person. The interviews required the participants to recount violent behaviour, methamphetamine and other substance use, psychotic symptoms and socio-demographic indices from previous months. The factors that remained the same throughout the study were gender, childhood delinquency, duration of methamphetamine use and how the substance is administered. A random-effect logistic model assessing the relationship between violent behaviour and methamphetamine use was then applied over the period of the study to predict and model the probabilities of an event occurring.

This study established that violent behaviour is six times more likely to occur when the participants had used methamphetamine as compared to incidents of non-use. A further finding revealed that the methamphetamine use in relation to violent behaviour was heavily dependent on the dose. Low doses of the methamphetamine were reported to increase involvement in violent behaviour at least fourfold, while high doses resulted in a fifteen fold increase. When considering the use of other drugs, psychotic symptoms and socio-demographics, the probabilities for involvement in violent behaviour remained high at a tenfold increase. McKetin et al (2014) claim that, although psychotic symptoms worsen the risks of involvement in violent behaviour, the methamphetamine-violence relationship remains independent of psychotic features or heavy alcohol consumption. This study has demonstrated sufficient support for a causal link between chronic methamphetamine use and violent behaviour. While the results support the existence of a causal relationship, the direction of the relationship remains unclear. Further, the mechanisms that underpinned the relationship are also vague. McKetin et al (2014) and

other researchers discussed above that support a causal relationship failed to establish the root cause of the violent behaviour. It is still unknown whether it is the psychopharmacological effects of acute intoxication or the chronic structural neurological changes that caused the increase in violent behaviour.

### **2.3.1.3 Opioid drugs**

#### **2.3.1.3.1 Heroin**

Much like the drugs discussed above, heroin also has a connection to criminality (Brochu, Da Agra & Cousineau, 2017:107; Hayhurst, Pierce, Hickman, Seddon, Dunn, Keane & Millar, 2017:8; Leal & Mier, 2015:1; Miller, 2015:226). High frequencies of heroin use have been reported to lead to a high number of arrests and convictions (Schwartz, Kelly, Mitchell, Gryczynski, O'Grady & Jaffe, 2017:389). Despite evidence of the heroin-crime relationship, the connection is also complex. Attempts at collecting evidence for the causal link between the psychopharmacological effects of heroin and criminal behaviour proved to be a difficult endeavour (Brochu et al, 2017:110).

Heroin is an opioid with pain relieving properties and is believed to have effects that create dependency (Jones, 2013:95) such as intense pleasure, strong feelings of wellbeing and pain relief. The pain relief serves as a form of positive reinforcement for heroin when alleviating severe withdrawal symptoms from other substances (Gonçalves, Martins, Baptista, Ambrósio & Silva, 2016:760). Due to opioids' pain-relieving properties, it is logical to assume that heroin is not associated with violent behaviour (Compton et al, 2016:155). There has been no evidence of violence amongst heroin users (Coomber, Hunt & Milhet, 2011; Kenworthy, Ayyub, Rtveladze, Wright, Xia & Fordham, 2017; Rivera, Havens, Parker & Anthony, 2018). Heroin bears a similarity to cannabis, in that moderate doses of the drug reduce aggressive responses and violent behaviour (Darke, 2014:112).

The non-violent association to heroin use is however ideal and within the scope of controlled use. Beyond that, the effects are not as simple. Jessell, Mateu-Gelabert, Guarino, Vakharia, Syckes, Goodbody, Ruggles and Friedman (2017:2930) suggest that



the long-term use of opioids could contribute to violent behaviour when the individual goes through withdrawal symptoms. The individual is bound to experience severe bouts of hostility, irritability and other emotional symptoms, which increases the risks for violent behaviour (Havnes, Bukten, Gossop, Waal, Stangeland & Clausen, 2012:308; Murphy, McPherson & Robinson, 2014:43; Sutherland, Sindicich, Barrett, Whittaker, Peacock, Hickey & Burns, 2015:212). In this sense, heroin has gained its notoriety in its association with involvement in criminality. The heroin-crime relationship is believed to be strong and independent (Gryczynski, Kinlock, Kelly, O'Grady, Gordon & Schwartz, 2012:37) and there is also an association with suicide (Molero, Zetterqvist, Binswanger, Hellner, Larsson & Fazel, 2018). The relationship has not been proven for its causal link however heroin has merely been identified as one of the factors that contribute to criminal behaviour (Soyka, Träder, Klotsche, Haberthür, Bühringer, Rehm & Wittchen, 2012:1525–1526). Other concomitant contributing factors could be, but are not limited to, psychiatric symptoms experienced by the individual and more generalised risk factors for the development of substance use disorders as well as aggression (Coccaro, Fridberg, Fanning, Grant, King & Lee, 2016:131–132).

Early researchers did not study the psychopharmacological effects of heroin, but rather the economic factors in relation to violence and crime (Bennett, 1990; Hammersley, Forsyth, Morrison & Davies, 1989; Hammersley, Forsyth & Lavelle, 1990; Parker & Newcombe, 1987). More recently, Hart (2013:322) investigated heroin addicts and concluded they usually did not engage in violent crime, but rather crimes that generated an income to support their expensive drug habits. Heroin is therefore consistent with the economic compulsion model (refer to Chapter 3) in explaining crime. Heroin-related crime, violent or nonviolent, is therefore economic compulsive rather than psychopharmacological or systemic. Advocates for the legalisation of heroin make their argument from this perspective. They propose that if heroin is made available with affordable prices, then there would be no ensuing heroin related crimes (Bukten, Skurtveit, Gossop, Waal, Stangeland, Havnes & Clausen, 2012:398). Citing several studies supporting the non-violent associations of heroin use and crime (Birdsong, 2001; Hoaken, Hamill, Ross, Hancock, Lau & Tapscott, 2012; Oser, Knudsen, Staton-Tindall &

Leukefeld, 2009; Ostrowski, 1989), the heroin legalisation advocates believe that heroin users are peaceful people. An early study by Inciardi (1979) documented criminality in both male and female heroin users. He interviewed 356 individuals and found most crimes were committed to support the drug habits of the user.

The book by Inciardi, *The War on Drugs: Heroin, Cocaine, Crime, and Public Policy* (1986), describes a study on Miami drug abusers. Inciardi interviewed 573 participants and discovered that violent crime was not salient as it only accounted for 2.8% of all offences committed. Although this percentage is relatively small, in terms of actual numbers, it counts for a total of 6 000 violent crimes. Nevertheless, Inciardi (1986) still maintains that heroin does not significantly cause crime. In a recent study by Krebs, Huang, Evans, Urada, Hser and Nosyk (2017:110), Inciardi's hypothesis was tested, along with the hypothesis that drug treatment reduces drug use, and *ipso facto*, drug treatment reduces crime. A few offenders who use drugs were interviewed in the testing process. Their criminal behaviour, drug treatment over several months and the nature of their drug use were examined. The study concluded that heroin use fosters income generating crimes and forgoes violent criminality. The study did confirm that heroin users mostly engage in criminality that is profit oriented, so they can support their expensive drug habit. Furthermore, the drug treatment reduces crime hypothesis was also confirmed. Krebs et al (2017:111) noted a decrease in income generating crimes when users had completed drug treatment successfully. Their literature offers support for reducing drug use through treatment. Both Inciardi (1979, 1986) and Krebs et al (2017) support Goldstein's (1985) explanation of the drug-crime relationship through the economic compulsion model. However, Goldstein's (1985) over-deterministic explanations apply the explanation to all drug types but the types of drugs already discussed show that this is not always evident.

#### **2.3.1.4 Hallucinogenic drugs**

##### **2.3.1.4.1 Designer drugs**

A designer drug is a structural or functional molecular construction of a drug that has been

designed to mimic the pharmacological effects of the original drug (Brandt, King & Evans - Brown, 2014:588). Through designing, the drug can avoid the classification of illicit substances and detection through standard drug tests (Weaver, Hopper & Gunderson, 2015:2). Designer drugs, such as ecstasy, “bath salts” and synthetic marijuana (Weaver et al, 2015:6), have provided many users with a way to circumvent the law since individuals can simply use their own devices and ingredients to create substances similar to illegal drugs. These types of drugs have been in production since the 1960s but recently their use has increased and forms part of the rising trend of legal highs (Farré, Papaseit, Fonseca & Torrens, 2015:260).

The appeal for designer drugs is found in their strong psychoactive effects, their undetectability through routine drug screenings and their ease of availability (Baumann, Solis, Watterson, Marusich, Fantegrossi & Wiley, 2014:15154). However, due to their “backyard basement” production methods, their psychopharmacological effects are largely unknown and little research exists pertaining to them (Creagh, Warden, Latif & Paydar, 2018:1). The situation is further compounded as new designer drugs are constantly being created. One such South African designer drug is *nyaope* that is a designer drug cocktail containing various substances such as heroin, cannabis and other adulterants (Masombuka, 2013:42). Exactly what these other adulterants are is not known, but it has been rumoured to contain antiretroviral (ARV) drugs (Mthembi, Mwenesongole & Cole, 2019:187), local anaesthetics, caffeine, antibiotics and plasticisers (Khine & Mokwena, 2016:94). However, not all *nyaope* compositions contain all these adulterants because not all laboratory tests for the compositions of *nyaope* returned the same results (Mthembi et al, 2019:118–119).

*Nyaope* is reportedly commonly used by youth in townships and informal settlement areas. Typically, these places have a poor socioeconomic background and thus the use of *nyaope* is favoured in these areas because of its affordability and availability (Khine & Mokwena, 2016:92). Mthembi et al (2019:187) state that the drug is mainly used by African and coloured males due to psycho-social factors such as unemployment, dropping out from school, lack of family and social support, homelessness and peer pressure (Mokwena & Morojele, 2014:379–381). Mokwena and Huma (2014:358) further

state that *nyaope* users usually resort to theft and other criminal activities to support their drug habit. The psychopharmacological effects of *nyaope* include elation and euphoria at initial consumption. After use, then drowsiness and a feeling of relaxation overtakes the initial effect (Mokwena, 2016:138), which is similar to the effects of heroin (Comer, Walker & Collins, 2005:672) that is reported to be the base substance of *nyaope* (Mokwena, 2016:138).

Since designer drugs are designed to mimic the psychoactive effects of the base drugs that their molecular structure is based on, the assumption is that the psychopharmacological responses will also be mimicked. Therefore, the drug-crime relationship of designer drugs should be akin to the base drug's drug-crime relationship. This assumption was tested on bath salts (part of the cathinone group). The name is derived from the white powder, granules, or crystals that resemble bath salts, such as Epsom salts, and its base drug is methamphetamine. German, Fleckenstein and Hanson (2014:4) investigated the severe intoxication effects of bath salts and discovered that it increases aggressive behaviour as well as psychotic symptoms like hallucinations, much like its base drug. Other studies (Baumann & Volkow, 2016; Karila, Megarbane, Cottencin & Lejoyeux, 2015; Majchrzak, Celiński, Kuś, Kowalska & Sajewicz, 2018; Weaver et al, 2015) have also found similar results but, due to the lacuna in research concerning bath salts as well as other designer drugs and their association to violence and criminality, establishing a causal link is problematic.

The potency of these designer drugs is highly variable and, as a consequence, overdoses tend to occur unintendedly (Weaver et al, 2015:3). Adams, Banister, Irizarry, Trecki, Schwartz and Gerona (2017:239) suggest that the variability also contributes to an involvement in criminal activity and that the wide range and variable potency of designer drugs has contributed to the delay in research efforts. Adams et al (2017:239) state that research exploring both the pharmacological effects of intoxication and the psychopharmacological effects on resultant behaviour, including criminal behaviour, is a difficult endeavour to pursue.

Phencyclidine (PCP) (a synthetic drug) has also been associated with aggressive behaviour and perpetrations of assault (Miller & Potter-Efron, 2016:1). PCP has been on

the market for about 60 years and was initially used in the medical field as an intravenous anaesthetic. After observing that patients would wake up displaying postoperative delirium with hallucinations, its use was halted in the medical field (Atli, İbiloğlu & Asoğlu, 2017:107). The street names for PCP include angel dust, hog, ozone, rocket fuel, shermans, wack, crystal and embalming fluid. Low to moderate doses of PCP are reported to induce feelings of detachment from surroundings and self, numbness, slurred speech and loss of coordination accompanied by a sense of strength and invulnerability. Catatonic posturing, resembling that observed with schizophrenia, is also observed (Domino & Luby, 2012:915). Higher doses of PCP produce hallucinations, where the physiological effects are increased blood pressure, rapid and shallow breathing, elevated heart rate and elevated temperature. Chronic use of PCP can result in dependency with a withdrawal syndrome upon cessation of the drug. Chronic abuse of PCP can impair memory and thinking. Other effects of long-term use include persistent speech difficulties, suicidal thoughts, anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal (Peters, Tuffnell, Pinter, Van Der Harst & Spruijt, 2017:35).

Early research (Brody, 1990; Fagan, 1993; Goldstein, 1987; Siegel, 1980) on the psychopharmacological effects of PCP and its association to violent behaviour established a strong link between the two. However, recent research (Crane, Easton & Devine, 2013; Crane et al, 2014; Walsh, Hendricks, Smith, Kosson, Thiessen, Lucas & Swogger, 2016) refuted this strong link as it discovered the supposed resultant behaviour was extremely unpredictable and subject dependent. One of the collaborative researches that refuted the strong link was Herrero, Torres, Rodríguez and Juarros-Basterretxea (2017) who used an ethnographic research design drawing from samples in six different cities. They found that socio-cultural factors and the region the participant resided in determined the behaviour in relation to PCP. Thus, the moral panic over PCP causing violent crimes was based on the unpredictable effects of the drug.

Another early empirical research by Gelles (1993:190) did however provide support for the phencyclidine-violence relationship. Gelles (1993) claims that PCP was responsible for acts of self-harm, homicides and senseless aggression. A more recent study by Miller and Potter-Efron (2016) explored the same phenomenon and found mixed results. Miller

and Potter-Efron (2016) investigated close to 2 000 individuals who were suspected of being involved with illicit substances. Around 337 of the participants were classified as having a PCP use disorder, although this was in conjunction with alcohol and cannabis use. A positive association was found between the PCP use and IPV and violence towards others. According to Miller and Potter-Efron (2016), the majority of the drug offence related groups within the CJS were PCP users. Unfortunately, these participants did not only use PCP therefore the polysubstance use limited the establishment of PCP use and its direct association to IPV.

#### **2.3.1.4.2 Polysubstance use**

Polysubstance use refers to the use of three or more drugs (including alcohol) at the same time or within short periods of each other (Cicero, Ellis & Kasper, 2020:245). A person with polysubstance dependence is psychologically addicted to being in an intoxicated state without a preference for one particular substance (Connor, Gullo, White, & Kelly, 2014:12). Users often believe that more than one substance amplifies the psychoactive effects of one of the drugs, rather than adding to the effects (Connor, Feeney, Kelly & Saunders, 2016:299). Attempts to study the psychopharmacological effects of polysubstance use and the association to crime have, in the past, only focused on one drug that was used without considering others. The confounding effects were also ignored (Pollack, 2017:166). This makes proving a causal relationship futile. Recent researchers however have made a positive link between polysubstance use and increased involvement in the CJS (Winkelman, Chang & Binswanger, 2018:2). Furthermore, Racz, Saha, Trent, Adger, Bradshaw, Goldweber and Cauffman (2016:208) have proven that polysubstance users' criminal behaviour patterns vary as compared to those that only use one drug at a time.

Using a cluster analysis on secondary data from a drug institute and correctional centre records, Ab and Brunelle (2016:88) discovered that both men and women who have polysubstance dependence have varying patterns of offending. These individuals were also found to be of a lower social class and required more attention in drug treatment

programmes. Another study by Skjærvø, Skurtveit, Clausen and Bukten (2017:248) further suggested that polysubstance dependent individuals were more likely to engage in income generating crimes (when compared with non-dependent drug users) in order to support their drug habits. These studies do indicate a relationship between polysubstance use and patterned criminal behaviour, but there exists some uncertainty. The direction of the relationship is vast and remains unclear. One hypothesis by Grella, Polinsky, Hser and Perry (1999:43) is that polysubstance users are mostly those who belong to a lower socio-economic class, which leads them to use multiple substances as available. Investigating the psychopharmacological effects of polysubstance use and crime remains an under-researched area.

There is little research devoted to directly addressing how the different drugs react with each other and the resultant criminal behaviour thereof. Thus far, research has only acknowledged the scattered patterns of criminal behaviour of multiple substance users but such research is limited by costs and availability of participants because, much like research on a single class of drug, numerous variables need to be explored. These include: the types of drugs consumed, the quantity consumed in ratio to the size of the individual, tolerance levels, experience with the drug, the environment where the drugs are consumed, the purity of the substances, gender, genetic factors, psychological predispositions, etc. To establish a causal link between the psychopharmacological effects and violence and criminality, additional temporal ordering or sequencing as well as evidence of association needs to be observed. Temporal ordering or sequencing refers to the arrangement of events in time (Hayhurst et al, 2017:2). Thus, it needs to be ascertained whether the consequent criminal behaviour is a result of the use of the drugs (Lundholm, Frisell, Lichtenstein & Långström, 2015:105).

The literature into the drug type has demonstrated that support for the psychopharmacological model explaining the drug-crime relationship is limited and, at times, contradictory. In some instances, the same drug has been associated with the increase and decrease of involvement in violence and other forms of criminal behaviour (e.g. heroin and cannabis). Research that has established the causal link between drugs and crime is that of alcohol and IPV. On the other hand, the research has also

acknowledged the complexities inherent in this relationship. The empirical evidence brings the direct link of the causal relationship into question. Premorbid and comorbid factors need to be carefully examined when researching alcohol and its association to crime. Additionally, it is important to examine the pharmacological effects, social context, personal expectancy, and biological and psychological vulnerabilities (Bardo, Neisewander & Kelly, 2013:264).

For most other illicit substances, a definitive direct psychopharmacological causal link has been difficult to establish and replicate. The interactional effects of other variables, such as different classes of drugs, user expectancies, social and cultural norms of use, physiological tolerance, environmental conditions and other extraneous variables, have all been found to influence intoxication (Badiani & Spagnolo, 2013:3; Binswanger, Nowels, Corsi, Glanz, Long, Booth & Steiner, 2012:5; Lyons & Kersey, 2020:23). The drug user's resultant behaviour during intoxication and withdrawal thereby undermines the direct causal link between drug intoxication and criminal behaviours. Further, researchers investigating the direct psychopharmacological impact of drugs on violent behaviour and criminality have established that some classes of drugs (e.g., opioids) produced a sedative effect (Alam & Juurlink, 2016:63). This then reduces the risk of involvement in criminal behaviour (Schwartz et al, 2017:570). It finally needs be noted that, in all the research discussed above, the variable of gender was not the central focus.

### **2.3.2 Alcohol-violence relationship: Offender based samples**

The offender population seems to be the holy grail of participants for researchers of behaviours that contravene society's norms and values. It is therefore no surprise that research on effects of alcohol consumption have been underway since the late 1950s. An early study by Wolfgang (1958) focused on an offender population of 588 inmates in Philadelphia between the late 1940s and early 1950s. The offenders were incarcerated for homicide. In almost 55% of the cases, Wolfgang discovered that the offenders were consuming alcohol at the commission of the homicide. Conversely, over 50% of victims were intoxicated in some of the cases. Combining the data of victims and offenders, it was discovered that nearly 64% of either or both parties were consuming alcohol. Wolfgang's (1958) study has been replicated throughout time and space, and similar



statistics were reported (Chan, Beauregard & Myers, 2015; Jaffe, Steel, DiLillo, Hoffman, Gratz & Messman-Moore, 2017; Lowe, 2016; Marshall et al, 2014). One early study by Murdoch and Ross (1990) discovered that 50% of violent offenders were intoxicated while committing the crime. Yet another study that sampled offenders and parolees in the USA also reported that almost 40% of the offenders were drinking alcohol at the commission of their crime (Greenfield & Weisner, 1995). Similar to these early studies, Greenfield and Henneberg (2001:23) discovered that individuals who consume large amounts of alcohol were 2.67 times more likely to be gunned down during an assault than those that did not consume alcohol. In South Africa, studies also show that victims of homicide are more likely to be intoxicated at the time of their death (Kuhns, Wilson, Clodfelter, Maguire & Ainsworth, 2011:65; Mathews, Abrahams, Jewkes, Martin & Lombard, 2009:324; Swart, Seedat & Nel, 2015:599).

Even more recently, a meta-analysis study by Kuhns, Exum, Clodfelter and Bottia (2014) researched the saliency of alcohol in relation to homicides. The research reviewed 23 studies with a combined sample population of close to 30 000 homicides and incorporating over nine countries (England, Sweden, Wales, Ireland, Russia, Australia, Scotland, Finland and USA). The study also ranged periodically from 1954 to 2010 with homicide data ranging from 1948 to 2008. Most of the data concerning alcohol use and intoxication at the time of the crime were obtained through self-reporting, questionnaires and criminal justice files. To a lesser degree, the data were obtained through clinical urine tests. The motivations for the homicides were not evident in the 23 studies; what was evident however, was the use of weapons. Stroebe (2013) then differentiated the types of weapons into two: firearms and other types of weapons. It was then discovered that, on average, across the studies, 48% of homicide perpetrators had alcohol in their system and a further 37% were intoxicated at the commission of the crime. The statistics were consistent across all the locations, including with gender, race and age. With regard to the type of weapon used in the homicide, it was discovered that where other weapons, instead of firearms, were used, the offender was more likely to have consumed alcohol. There is a similarity in the results when comparing alcohol consumption of homicide offenders and toxicology reports of homicide victims. Hedlund, Ahlner, Kristiansson and

Sturup (2014) conducted a meta-analysis study of alcohol use amongst homicide victims and discovered that 48% of them tested positive (through toxicology reports) for alcohol use and, in some instances, they were even acutely intoxicated. Factors that contributed to the deviation in alcohol consumption between victims and perpetrators were gender, age and racial grouping (Delker, Brown & Hasin, 2016:9). When comparing these contrasting results across the two meta-analytic studies, Kuhns and Maguire (2012:249) suggest that the role that alcohol plays among homicide offenders may be more uniform across a broad range of countries and cultures when compared to homicide victims.

The bulk of offender sample-based research on alcohol use seems to focus on more serious crimes rather than minor criminal behaviour. Research pertaining to minor criminality is less developed than serious forms of violent criminal behaviour. Researchers (Clinard, Quinney & Wildeman, 2014; Heaton, 2012; Hunt, Peters & Kremling, 2015) attempting to close this gap used the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring II of 2010 that includes arrestee data of 10 different countries and 10 different states across the USA. The research was an exploratory study on the relationship between alcohol and illicit substance dependency and certain criminal behaviour. In total, their sample population was 3 006 remanded participants, of which 60% were remanded for minor offences. In determining the likelihood of alcohol or substance dependence, arrestees were more or less likely to be arrested for serious crimes as compared to non-dependent arrestees when a logistic regression analysis was used (Boden, Fergusson & Horwood, 2013:32). After factoring in prior arrests and substance use, it was found that those who were dependent on illicit substances or alcohol were 32% less likely to be remanded for serious offences. This was in comparison to the non-dependent groups. The initial hypothesis was that those dependent on alcohol were more likely to be charged with serious offences; this was however contrary to the findings (Hunt, Asmussen Frank & Moloney, 2015:11). Nonetheless, a large number of arrestees were charged with minor offences such as public drinking, drunk and driving, disorderly conduct and minor domestic violence (DV). This could potentially account for the contrary findings (Shabani, Setareh, Mousavinasab & Falahatgar, 2014:156).

In 41.7% of charges of alcohol dependent offenders, the charges were of a violent nature, more commonly, forms of assault and other aggravated offences. DV was at a little more than 30% (Crane et al, 2014:7–8). Conrow, Aldstadt and Mendoza (2015:199) conducted a cluster analysis on 377 arrestees of which 85% were males. They identified that male arrestees were typically arrested for public-nuisance drinking. These include public order offences such as disturbing the peace or resisting arrest. Goldstick, Brenner, Lipton, Mistry, Aiyer, Reischl and Zimmerman's (2015:6–7) findings were also consistent with Conrow et al's (2015:203–204) findings with regard to the alcohol dependent offenders being more likely to be charged with minor criminal offences. The research by Conrow et al (2015) was part of the Pennsylvania Substance Abuse and Need for Treatment among Arrestees study. They maintained that the nuisance-drinkers were likely to evidence lower levels of alcohol dependency and that they were mostly Caucasian. They were also mostly not married and were employed in lucrative sectors. It can be argued from a psychopharmacological perspective that acute alcohol consumption results in displays of unruly conduct in public spaces. The consequence of the misconduct is charges being laid against the individual (Kimpton, Corcoran & Wickes, 2017:312). Misdemeanours such as these are of no interest to this research as they are not committed with intention.

Of interest is that those with alcohol use disorders and displaying violent tendencies, are most likely to be married and are much older than the casual users of alcohol (Fowler & Westen, 2011:608; Ureña, Romera, Casas, Viejo & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015:53; White & Gorman, 2000). Of further interest, they also are employed in lucrative sectors of the financial markets (Ferreira, Lauve-Moon & Cannon, 2017:573). Although gender differences were noted in the community and offender samples, the violent alcohol use disorder cluster was the same across the entire sample. A cluster analysis of males and females in the violent alcohol use disorder group revealed similarities between the two genders. Like males, females were also more likely to be married, employed and well-off, and possess at least a high school diploma (Morgan & Wells, 2016:405). This finding demonstrates that alcohol abuse and violent behaviour is not only a male phenomenon, but rather cuts across all genders, and is prevalent in intimate partner relationships (Christ, Watkins, DiLillo & Stoltenberg, 2018:86). Regarding illicit substance use, similar findings were found in polysubstance users in various types of crimes (Lundholm,

Haggård, Möller, Hallqvist & Thiblin, 2013:112).

In summary, there is a large body of research that has consistently established an irrefutable link between alcohol use and violent behaviour, particularly in IPV and sexual violence (Davis, Rotheram-Borus, Weichle, Rezai & Tomlinson, 2017; Gass, Stein, Williams & Seedat, 2011; Hatcher, Colvin, Ndlovu & Dworkin, 2014; Mthembu, Khan, Mabaso & Simbayi, 2016). Despite these bodies of research however, there is less consistency across research studies with respect to the psychopharmacological effects of alcohol and involvement in more general criminal behaviour. Despite White, Fite, Pardini, Mun and Loeber (2013:220) concluding that there is a definitive link between alcohol and violence, the cause of why some who use alcohol behave in an aggressive manner while others do not, remains contentious (Mohr, Arpin, McCabe & Haverly, 2016:319). Irrespective of the theory or explanation offered, it is evident that the psychopharmacological effect of alcohol on the potential to engage in criminal behaviour is heavily influenced by a range of interacting pharmacological, endocrinological, neurobiological, genetic, situational, environmental, social and cultural factors (Csiernik, 2016:9–10).

## **2.4 GENDER, DRUGS AND CRIME**

As previously established drug use relates to and affects criminality in one way or the other, even across genders (Piquero, Schubert & Brame, 2014:536). In attempting to explain the criminal careers of the two genders (binary male and female), criminologists have, historically, used traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Women's criminalities were largely related to shoplifting, prostitution and other forms of sexual deviance (Bjerregaard & Smith, 1993:334). Street deviance was, to a lesser degree, due to restricted freedom of movement as women were assumed to be relegated more to the home. These types of crimes were closely related to their roles in society, and family life (Klein, 1973:9). In contrast to this, crimes perpetrated by males were described more as a fulfilment of cultural aspirations, peer approval and failure to conform to societal norms (Farnworth & Leiber, 1989:273). Theft of workplace material, body snatching for medical classes and gang related acts and violence were commonplace deviant behaviour for men (Bjerregaard & Smith, 1993:340). Needless to say, these historical accounts of crime

trends for females have changed over time.

On the contrary, before the changes were noted, researchers neglected female criminality. Using the late 1900s differences of involvement in criminality between the two genders, social scientists focusing on female offending argued that female involvement in criminality was insignificant (Bowker, Chesney-Lind & Pollock, 1978; Steffensmeier & Haynie, 2000; Steffensmeier & Streifel, 1992). However, Baskin (2018:1–16) showed that female criminality was and is significant. Baskin's (2018) study was conducted utilising secondary data from 1989 sources, which included the forms of arrest and prosecution logs, state corrections databases and files of other researchers who had access to women. In-depth interviews with 170 female participants were also conducted, focusing on their engagement in violent street crimes of New York City. Baskin (2018) highlights women's initial onset of criminal activity to the entry and persistence of violent street crimes and for some, the eventual desistance of their criminal careers.

Yet another study by the Australian Institute of Criminology studying Drug Use Careers of Offenders (DUCO) proved that female offending is not merely confined to "home" life or gender stereotypes (Naffine, 2015:89). The study included interviews with 470 females and 2 135 males who were incarcerated. Gender differences were identified in the progression of drug use and crime. To identify this, data about the self-reported onset of drug use and direct criminal involvement were collected. The data demonstrated that females were equally divided in the progression of their drug use and offending onsets. The DUCO study references both the drug-use-causes-crime model and the crime-causes-drug-use model. A proportion of female participants (35%) reported drug use before offending and 34% reported offending prior to drug use. Male participants were more likely to have engaged in offending before drug use (54%) and were less likely than women to have used drugs prior to offending (17%). These results suggest that drugs may play a different role in the development of a criminal career for women as compared to men. One aspect that becomes apparent is the effectiveness of treatment programmes as the numbers of female offenders increase in the CJS due to drug related crimes. The question is: are they effective for females? Tripodi, Bledsoe, Kim and Bender (2011:29)

suggest that intervention programmes appear to be effective but, due to mixed results, more rigorous research is needed. One of the areas that rigorous research can be focused on is the drug-crime relationship, especially as it pertains to women. In attempting to understand the nuanced relationship between crime, drug use and gender, certain studies opted to focus on two aspects involving women that are both drug use and the women's roles within distribution networks (El-Bassel & Strathdee, 2015; Le & Gilding, 2016; Maher & Daly, 1996; Wickersham, Loeliger, Marcus, Pillai, Kamarulzaman & Altice, 2016). The studies yielded conflicting results but have successfully illuminated both the roles of women in the illicit drug market and its changing nature.

The focus of these research endeavours was on the street-level drug markets where women's opportunities were explored (Baskin, 2018; Daly, 2017; Draus, Roddy & Asabigi, 2015; Fleetwood, 2014; Grundetjern, 2015; Moloney, Hunt & Joe-Laidler, 2015). These studies established the age-old problem of sexism that still existed even within these illicit drug markets. Although street-level drug markets are described as well organised structures of distribution (Rengert, 2018:1), they are still dominantly run by men. Women mostly occupy the lower ranks in these structures. There is also evidence of cultural segregation (Baskin, 2018:145). Much of this research has been qualitative in design, providing a discursive descriptive analysis of women's participation in illicit drug markets within specific neighbourhoods and cities in Western societies.

Concerning drug use, researchers focused on heroin use by women as well as gendered roles within this specific drug type (Edwards, Mills, Reynolds, Verona & Kiehl, 2020; Reid & Piquero, 2014; Shand, Degenhardt, Slade & Nelson, 2011; Syvertsen, Agot, Ohaga & Bazzi, 2019). Prostitution was flagged as the main means for women to acquire the funds to support their drug habit. Other noted illegal means of acquiring funds were robbery and theft (Hunter, 2020:5; McCurdy, 2014:154). The nature of the illicit drug market has changed since the 1980s and that has led to shifts in females' involvements in both drug use and markets (Morash, 2017:69). The hypothesised reason for the changes is the increased availability and ease of use of inexpensive cocaine products (Marsh, Park, Lin & Bersamira, 2018:80). It is also theorised that societal bonds and expectations that

limited women's movements and participation in the economic sector were weakened. This afforded women opportunities to be involved in illicit drug markets (Moloney et al, 2015:4). To further explain the increase of female participation in illicit drug markets, researchers postulated on the economic freedom that women gained (Campbell & Herzberg, 2017; Horyniak, Stoové, Degenhardt, Aitken, Kerr & Dietze, 2015; McClellan, 2017). Some scholars offered suggestions that women were afforded access to higher ranking positions within the drug market thereby avoiding prostitution (Fleetwood, 2014:94; Morash, 2017:113; Sanders, Maggie & Pitcher, 2017:17). These suggestions however have been met with little consensus. Some studies disagree with the economic freedom hypothesis, as well as growth in the cocaine market. They suggest rather that women still face economic exclusions in the high-ranking positions of the drug distribution structure. Moreover, they still resort to prostitution to support their drug habits (Ludwick, Murphy & Sales, 2015:9). Women continue to exist on the peripheries of the drug markets (Grundetjern, 2015:274).

Gender stratification and how it influences women's involvement in the illicit drug market is the common theme that emanated from most studies conducted in this area of research. These studies illustrate the perpetuated gender stereotypes and female marginalisation from equal participation in the illicit drug market. This reflects the current "normal" practice that occurs in legitimate economic world markets (Anderson & Kavanaugh, 2017:347). Due to stereotyping, it is still maintained that women lack the capabilities to carry out certain tasks of the drug trade (Grundetjern & Sandberg, 2012:631). Women in the drug market are regarded as unreliable, untrustworthy, and incapable of demonstrating the necessary capacity for violence. Thus, their roles in these illicit drug markets are usually minimal and they are relegated to be subordinates (Grundetjern, 2015:273). There are studies (Anderson & Kavanaugh, 2017; Dahl & Sandberg, 2015; Miller & Carbone-Lopez, 2015) however, that are not entirely supportive of this view or rather how it is presented. These studies propose that the view is limited in that it focuses on research that is dominated by male participants. Therefore, contrasts in the gender roles are drawn from a masculine perspective. Some research (Hunt et al, 2015) maintains that women do take on more powerful and independent roles within the

illicit drug market. This is contrary to the traditionally held beliefs that women are incapable of occupying such spaces. Other studies offered a more nuanced perspective, claiming that women transition in the roles within the drug market (Arsovska & Begum, 2014; Siegel, 2014; Vernaglia, Vieira & Cruz, 2015) but, to be able to transition successfully, a network is required (Fleetwood, 2014:99).

#### **2.4.1 Female criminal networks**

Since men in the illicit drug market act as gatekeepers, they work to exclude women from criminal networks. For women to enter criminal networks, they would usually have to already be acquainted with a male figure within the criminal network (Broad, 2015:1061). This borrowed entry by women into networks was also noted by Billings, Deming and Ross (2016:15) who observed that, for women to be part of a burglary network, they had to come through the pre-established acquaintance of a male offender. Brantingham and Brantingham (2017:61) suggest that this setup is a result of societal gender norms. Broad's (2015) study highlights the segregation and marginalisation of women within criminal markets and activities. The borrowed entry can be likened to a sealed contract. Once the woman enters the criminal network through the male acquaintance, it becomes unlikely that they will join another network (Billings et al, 2016:1066). This then leads to a loss in opportunities to engage in crime. A similar study by Liu, Patacchini, Zenou and Lee (2012:22) established that, if a woman's intimate male partner is associated with a criminal drug network, that woman is most likely to also engage in the drug trade. According to Becker and McCorkel (2011:81), this phenomenon could be attributed to a survival mechanism, more so for women of low financial status. The main purpose of women's presence in illicit drug networks is for shelter, companionship, safety and drug use (Jones, 2008:160) which is still prevalent (Sutton, 2017:144). Of note however, is that females display the same amount of violence as their male counterparts (O'Neal, Decker, Moule Jr & Pyrooz, 2016:53; Petersen & Howell, 2013:495; Wong, Toh, Hung & Ang, 2013:789).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2018:43), through the World



Drug Report reported a significant increase in arrests of women with drug related offences, on a global scale over the years. The statistics in the report describe female arrests accounting for half of the increase in arrests for drug related offences. Males, conversely, only account for a third of the increase (UNODC, 2018:4). Noticing certain drug related trends, some feminists proclaimed that the war on drugs is actually the war on women (Mintz, 2014; Muehlmann, 2018:321). The Drug Policy Alliance (DPA, 2013:1) asserts that, although men are the main targets of drug law enforcers, women are the majority of the victims. The growing number of women in correctional centres is accorded to the draconian drug laws globally (Carey, 2014:17). The DPA (2013:2) further asserts that a large number of incarcerated women are single mothers who, more often than not, have substantially low incomes. Therefore, bail and making calls to their families is unaffordable for them. Furthermore, they cannot afford ancillary services, such as babysitters, that are a requirement for probation.

Race is also a factor in this war against women. Women of colour, particularly African American women, have been disproportionately incarcerated for drug offences since the inception of the war on drugs (Alfred & Chlup, 2010:3; Bush-Baskette, 2010:102; Gross, 2015:28; Hari, 2015:53; Jordan - Zachery, 2008:236; Lawson, 2018:8; Provine, 2011:43).

These incarcerated black women are generally uneducated, unskilled, poor mothers with high rates of mental and physical illness (Bush-Baskette, 2010:102). These demographics describe only a component of the broader scenario in the drug related criminalisation of women. It is therefore imperative to determine the rationale and motivations of these women.

In South Africa, a qualitative study done in Durban by Harm Reduction International (HRI, 2020:1) in collaboration with the South African Network of People who Use Drugs (SANPUD), discovered that women who use drugs usually experience discrimination, violence and abuse at the hands of law enforcement officers (HRI, 2020:1). The HRI (2020:3) further states that arrests for women who use drugs are arbitrary as the Durban women reported that they were illegally searched. The women also report that, at times, law enforcement officers planted drugs on them. Consequently, it is still the case that

non-drug related offences are still linked to drug using environments as alluded to in Lilley's (2017) research. Prostitution is one such environment where drug use and trade are still viewed as intersecting and co-existing facets (Roberson, 2017:52). Prostitution can serve two instrumental purposes. Firstly, it can be used to generate funds through monetary trade for sex in order to support the drug habit. Secondly, it can be used directly to trade sex for drugs (Boyer, Greenberg, Chutuape, Walker, Monte, Kirk, Ellen & Adolescent Medicine Trials Network, 2017:91). Depending on the level of addiction, some women can use extreme measures just to get their next fix. Disparagingly, women are subjugated to their gendered roles in the street economy (Roe-Sepowitz, 2012:572), a place that is becoming increasingly dangerous for women (Dewey & Germain, 2016:128). Ross, Crisp, Månsson and Hawkes (2012:108) state that the dangers are increased by desperate acts to make money, leading the women to engage in riskier behaviour. An age-old hierarchy that mirrors the legitimate labour market is also observable within the drug dealing market. This is where women also find themselves on the lowest and most exploitable positions. They mostly act as drug mules and low-level dealers (Fleetwood, 2017:283; Klein, 2020:99–100; Mnguni, 2020:142). This sustains the status quo which is similar to that which exists in society, i.e., the hegemony of masculinity.

With few available options for obtaining money within the drug market and networks, poor women revert to sex work (Rash, Burki, Montezuma-Rusca & Petry, 2016:183). In a sense, the proverbial glass ceiling still exists in both the legitimate and illegitimate markets. This shows a link between women's offending and poverty. The poverty, in this case, is a feminised poverty (Gimenez, 2018:211), which is prevalent in South Africa and the rest of the world (Amoateng & Setlalentoa, 2015:60). Sex work is not the only crime linked to drugs; theft, fraud and embezzlement are included (property and economic based crimes) (Eck & Weisburd, 2015:10; Felson & Staff, 2017:385). A study by Kuhns, Blevins, Bolin, and Cambareri (2017) reports that women involved in burglaries are more likely than men to be addicted and under the influence of drugs while committing the crime. The property and/or money that are acquired from the burglary are traded for drugs. These are regarded as acts of desperation (Hunter & Greer, 2011:210; Meyers, 2016:91; Chesney-Lind, 2017:136; Rojas, Smith, Scott-Mclaughlin II, 2017:225) but

Moyle and Coomber (2015) disagree. Luongo, Dong, Kerr, Milloy, Hayashi and Richardson (2017:163) suggest that the criminal acts that these women engage in give them a sense of accomplishment and provide a lucrative income, as well as thrills and excitement. This implies that they regard crime as a career, much like their male counterparts (Farnworth & Leiber, 1989:272).

Prostitution has a link to these property and economic based crimes (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012:12–23). Using their sexual capital, women make use of viccing to rob their male clients (Miller, 2015:17). Viccing is when women use gender stereotypes to feign sexual interest or availability, which results in the male customer dropping their guard. As soon as their guard is down, the women then rob them. This occurs before any sexual contact (Wesely, 2019:423). While viccing could be framed as a strategy of resistance, this activity is situated within the larger gendered arrangement of the streets. In this realm, participants are typically at the mercy of male customers and at a high risk for violence (Dewey & Germain, 2016:111). Women in these situations often use drugs. Viccing is a street survival strategy, much like drug use. It is not uncommon for drugs to be used as a coping mechanism from stress and depression (Heilemann & Santhiveeran, 2011:70). The notion of drug use as a coping mechanism is well documented (Asberg & Renk, 2012; Bayliss, 2016; Bhunu & Mushayabasa, 2012; Ellis, Griffith, Allen, Thorpe Jr & Bruce, 2015; Goldenberg, Strathdee, Gallardo, Rhodes, Wagner & Patterson, 2011). There is a plethora of reasons as to why people use drugs, to cope with stress and depression to sexual and physical abuse (Svingen, Dykstra, Simpson, Jaffe, Bevins, Carlo, DiLillo & Grant, 2016:270). A population-based study by Milivojevic, Fox and Sinha (2015), where specific stressors were identified in individuals, emphasises that stress is one of the factors that lead to the development of addiction and increases the incidences of relapse.

#### **2.4.2 Gender inclusive drug prevention programmes**

Women's criminality is another area where drugs are used as a form of coping (Yule, Paré & Gartner, 2015:252). Such women face severe consequences when they are apprehended by law enforcements. When incarcerated, these women begin detoxing

from the drug addiction and show physical symptoms that include headaches, chest tightness, anxiety and depression (Hector & Khey, 2017:205). This detox process is usually experienced with little support from the correctional centre and the knowledge that they will not be able to consume drugs while they are incarcerated (Rich, McKenzie, Larney, Wong, Tran, Clarke, Noska, Reddy & Zaller, 2015:356). They also realise the effects that drug addiction has had on their mental, physical and emotional well-being and on the people around them, especially their children (Schafer, 2011:8). Thus, they become aware, on a conscious level, of what they were trying to escape by using drugs (Mowen & Visher, 2015:340). This can be a harrowing process, so suicidal ideation is a possibility (Matza & Morgan, 2017:271). It therefore becomes imperative that drug rehabilitation programmes be tailored to offer women emotional and physical support in the short and long term (Golden, 2013:34). Due to the short-staffed correctional centres, the facilitation of treatment programmes could be outsourced.

From the studies referred to above, it is clear that women who use drugs have complex issues and social problems that last over their lifetimes with poverty and the environments conducive for drug use being prevalent. One can imagine this scenario: A little girl grows up in a crime ridden and drug infested neighbourhood, where both her parents are drug users and/or abusers. With consistent exposure to such an environment, it is almost inevitable that this little girl will grow up to be a woman who uses drugs herself and takes part in the local drug markets. Not only does this scenario refer to social learning, but also intersectionality that points to the cycle of poverty and how criminality becomes an option.

These studies also reveal that some women suffered childhood abuse and neglect that prompted them to look for alternative means of survival. Adult women who were in abusive relationships also turned to drugs as a coping mechanism. Drugs become, for these women, an agent for numbing the pains of abuse. In time, the drug habit led to criminality (theft, burglary, prostitution, etc.) as a means of supporting the habit and survival. In some instances, the women's partners were also drug users, and the women supported their drug use. This became a cycle of drug use and criminality. Other social problems include poor or a lack of education, a lack of sufficient work experience and

their own addictions. This led to a gendered issue as no legitimate means of support were available for addicted women. Petersen Williams, Jordaan, Mathews, Lombard and Parry (2014:2) relate narratives of women from South Africa attempting to discontinue drug use because of motherhood. Their children became a reason to desist from the life of criminality and drug use as shame and guilt prevailed. Motherhood became the most important role of their lives, despite their circumstances.

The women's rehabilitation needs are beyond the scope of those offered by correctional centres, as they are mostly short-term. Also, most rehabilitation programmes were formulated from the male perspective (Evans, Li, Pierce & Hser, 2013:293) hence the necessity to revise such programmes for women to recognise the interconnectedness of their lived experiences. A drug-addicted woman may also be a survivor of child abuse, a battered woman, a mother, a prostitute, and/or homeless, therefore any effort to address one need, must also be cognisant of other concomitant factors. Countries like the USA have recognised the need for gender inclusivity in their programmes (Bahr, Masters & Taylor, 2012:165; Messina, Calhoun & Warda, 2012:1555; Saxena, Messina & Grella, 2014:420–421), but South Africa is yet to do so. Pettinati, O'Brien and Dundon (2013) propose that even the terminology in the fields of therapy should be changed. Reference to multiple problems is referred to as "co-occurring disorders" (Pettinati et al, 2013:23) even though they may not be disorders but areas of concern or challenges, as they are a result of overlapping social problems. Use of such medicalised terminology supports an individualist explanation for problems, rather than a broader recognition of the social circumstances that have produced and reinforced the forms of abuse and oppression criminalised women experience throughout their lives.

## **2.5 SUMMARY**

This chapter contextualised the knowledge that exists in the field of drug-crime relationship, as well as topics related to the field. The chapter further identified gaps in the knowledge, especially relating to women, in connection to the drug-crime relationship. Significantly, how female research participants have been mostly marginalised in the

research field. Furthermore, how the research that was done remains largely deterministic and ignores other variables that could affect the relationship.

In addition, the chapter also discussed the four categories of drugs, namely, depressants, stimulants, opioids and hallucinogens. The psychopharmacological effects of these drug categories and that of alcohol were discussed and how they affect the drug-crime relationship. There was however also very few female participants and those present merely served for comparison reasons. Because drugs affect people differently, they have diverse influences on individuals' behaviours therefore it is not conclusive that all types of drugs lead to criminality.

## **CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING THE DRUG-CRIME RELATIONSHIP**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a discussion on the theoretical framework underpinning this research. The term, “theoretical framework” comprises two words, theory and framework. According to David and Sutton (2011:75), a theory is an explanation of a natural or social phenomenon. Drawing from the social perspective, as this research does, a theory is a system of interrelated constructs or concepts and the relationship between these constructs (propositions). Together they offer an explanation of a phenomenon and predict the behaviour of the phenomenon (Neuman, 2014:24). A theory however does not operate without boundaries or conditions; therefore, no single theory can holistically explain or predict a phenomenon.

It is not adequate for a theory to only predict a phenomenon as predictions can be done using sets of predictors. A well-formed theory also explains why a phenomenon takes place in the way that it does (Babbie, 2020:41). To form a prediction, the only requirement needed is an established correlation (association) between variables. For explanations however, causation is required, i.e., the cause and effect relationships need to be established and understood (Babbie, 2020:55). It is also important to understand what a theory is not. A theory is not merely empirically collected data or facts and taxonomies. A collection of facts is not a theory, just as a collection of bricks is not a house. A theory goes beyond constructs and includes explanations as well as boundaries and conditions. It operates at more than just an observational level, but rather a conceptual level based on logic (Neuman, 2014:25).

Theories are however not without limitations because they offer simplified explanations of a complex world. Their constructs and associated relationships are also limited. Thus, as already stated, no single theory can offer a complete and holistic explanation of a phenomenon. By their very nature, theories are designed to be parsimonious and simple explanations of a phenomenon, despite a complex world (Ball, 2016:16). The major

limitation to the use of theories however, is that they potentially limit researchers' ability to explore beyond the imposed boundaries and conditions. This could make researchers miscue concepts that are not contained within the theory. For this reason, frameworks are needed (Anfara Jr & Mertz, 2014:9).

A framework, within the context of social science, can be defined as a set of ideas or tools used when forming decisions and judgements concerning a project (Casula, Rangarajan & Shields, 2020:13). In general, a framework is the description or explanation of a problem that uses concepts or variables to explain why and how the problem exists. Furthermore, it also guides the researcher in identifying what can be expected to be discovered, based on the relationships between concepts or variables within the larger problem (Kivunja, 2018:48). Essentially, frameworks aid researchers to better understand their own intentions and expectations when conducting research. Frameworks also guide the development of the research questions, design and methodology (data collection methods, instruments and data analysis approach). This study was also guided by frameworks but frameworks cannot however be proven – only supporting evidence can be provided. They can, on the other hand, be refuted. The supporting evidence is in the form of the evidence that the relationships expected to be observed between determinants really do exist, and these will be outlined in this chapter.

Therefore, whereas a theory is used to predict and explain a phenomenon, the purpose of a framework is to provide a structure that can be used to explain the relationships between the variables of a phenomenon (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013:24). Theory and framework separately are not enough to structure the research project, thus it is necessary to combine them.

A theoretical framework is thus a combination of theory and the way the theory is used to situate the research design and the expected outcomes of the study in which the research design is shaped (Lederman & Lederman, 2015:594). In other words, a theoretical framework structurally summarises theories and concepts that arise from previously tested and established literature. These summaries are then synthesised to form a theoretical background for the research and a basis for analysis and interpretation of the data. A theoretical framework essentially supports and holds the theory of research



(Swanson & Chermack, 2013:122). It tends to be more abstract and broader in its scope as compared to conceptual frameworks (Kivunja, 2018:47). It attempts to explain the relationship between very broad and general ideas and constructs. In contrast, a conceptual framework is more specific and proposes an explanation for the relationships between specific concepts or variables used to measure abstract constructs of interest (Varpio, Paradis, Uijtdehaage & Young, 2002:4). Since the nature of this research was exploratory, a theoretical framework is therefore more apt than a conceptual framework.

For this research, the relevant theory that will be used in forming the theoretical framework is the general strain theory (GST). The theory and the models explaining the drug-crime relationship are discussed in the sections that follow.

### **3.2 GENERAL STRAIN THEORY EXPLAINED (GST)**

Agnew (1992) developed GST after noting the limitations of Merton's (1938) strain theory that focused on financial or economic strain, thus delineating it to the economically disadvantaged groups of society. The tenet of the strain theory was that people who could not attain socially ascribed goals through socially acceptable means would turn to socially unacceptable means, i.e., criminality, in order to achieve those goals. Agnew (1992:66) agreed with the major tenets of Merton's theory however, he believed that there are other subjective stressors or strains that could influence individuals to commit crime or act out delinquent behaviour.

Thus, Agnew proposed GST, which is broken down into three basic variables that form the model, namely, strain, negative emotion and coping. Agnew emphasised that strain increased the likelihood of experiencing negative emotion that, in turn, increases the likelihood of coping in a negative manner (Agnew, 1992:59). But strain does not always lead to negative coping, but rather merely increases the propensity thereof. The model is therefore not deterministic, but rather probabilistic. This means that there are variables that influence the probability of an individual coping with strain by displaying delinquent behaviour. This is in contrast to deterministic theories which definitively state a cause and effect outcome, despite evident variables. This acknowledgement by GST of the influence of variables suited this study as it explored influencing variables of the drug-crime

relationship. GST can be applied to all classes in a society, whereas Merton's strain theory could only be applied to the economically disadvantaged.

### **3.2.1 The effect of strain**

The first part of the GST model is strain that is disaggregated into three different types: failure to achieve positively valued goals; removal of positive stimuli; and presentation of negative stimuli (Agnew, 1992:56–58). These different types of strain are consistent with Merton's (1938) strain theory. Merton and Agnew ascribe success and failure as the mechanisms that effect strain. The first type of strain alludes to the differences between aspirations, expectations and achievements that are categorised into three types: (1) The difference between aspirations and achievements; (2) the difference between expectations and achievements; and (3) the difference between actual outcomes and just and fair outcomes (Agnew, 1992:56). These three categorisations are what individuals desire to achieve contrasted against what they actually achieve. In this context, expectations are not shaped by the broader societal success ethos but rather by specific references within an individual's environment. For example, this could be the expectation impressed upon an individual from the neighbourhood.

The second type of strain, removal of positive stimuli, implies that when something positive is removed from an individual, that is a strain (Agnew, 1992:57). Examples include the loss of a job, loss of a spouse through divorce or the loss of a friend. The third type of strain, presentation of negative stimuli, can overlap with the second type. It implies that strain is something negative that is introduced into the life of an individual (Agnew, 1992:57) such as an abusive relationship.

Agnew (1992) emphasises that not all strains have the same weight or impact due to their subjective nature. There are also objective strains that almost universally weigh almost the same, for example, the loss of a family member. However, the impact and magnitude of a strain on the individual is what is important (Agnew, 1992:65).

The aforementioned types of strains may lead to negative emotions that include anger, depression and fear, but anger is the emotion that creates the strongest predisposition to

delinquency (Agnew, 1992:73). When an individual experiences these negative emotions, they are compelled to take corrective actions to dispel them that include delinquency and drug use (Agnew, 1992:49, 60) as a form of corrective action or coping.

### **3.2.2 Strain and coping strategies**

Agnew (1992:66–70) names three different types of coping strategies or mechanisms, namely, cognitive, behavioural and emotional. Cognitive coping strategies refer to the interpretation of strains or stressors that minimise the subjective strain effect. According to Agnew (1992:67–68), these are the common phrases that an individual may use to cope cognitively, that include: “it’s not important”, “it’s not that bad”, and “I deserve it”. Cognitive coping strategies can be regarded as a form of rationalising the strain so that it is not experienced thereby curbing the pressure for other forms of coping.

Agnew (1992:69) proposes two major types of behavioural coping strategies. The first type seeks to minimise or eliminate the source of strain and the second type seeks to satisfy the need for revenge. Behavioural coping strategies serve as a prelude to delinquent behaviour. An example for the first type could be a student skipping mathematics classes because he is bad at the subject. The source of strain, i.e. mathematics lessons, is eliminated through his behaviour of skipping classes. The second type of behavioural coping strategy can include acts of violence and aggression that may be a prelude to criminal behaviour. The emotional coping strategies act directly on the negative emotions that result from strains or stressors (Agnew, 1992:69). Coping actions can include the use of illicit and licit drugs, meditation, exercise and other actions that can alleviate the negative emotion. In most cases, these actions can be nondelinquent, but there is also a propensity for them to be delinquent (Agnew, 1992:70).

There are however constraints to the coping strategies discussed above that determine whether an individual will cope in a delinquent or nondelinquent way (Agnew, 1992:71–72).

- *Individual coping resources*

Individual coping resources refer to an individual’s characteristics. These are qualities

that include self-esteem, problem solving skills and creativity. These characteristics allude to an individual's resilience and whether they will cope in a delinquent manner or not (Agnew, 1992:71). For example, a person with a high self-esteem is likely to respond to strains in a positive and nondelinquent manner whereas a person with low self-esteem is more likely to respond in negative manner.

- *Conventional social support*

Conventional social support includes informational, instrumental and emotional social support (Agnew, 1992:71). Persons with social support are more equipped to respond to objective strains in a nondelinquent manner. An example is an individual who grows up in an impoverished community and turns to wood carving art as a form of coping. This individual is more likely to have a significant amount of social support. On the contrary, another individual grows up in the same impoverished community, but turns to crime to cope. The second individual conversely received insufficient social support. However, this does not mean that sufficient social support will invariably result in positive coping mechanisms. Individualistic characteristics also have an influence.

- *Ecological constraints*

Constraints to coping also include the *macro environment* and the *cost and benefits of different types of coping strategies* as well as *independent social control* (Agnew, 1992:72). An element of the macro environment that serves as a constraint to delinquent and nondelinquent coping includes a cultural emphasis on status or money. This emphasis can create an increased sensitivity to strain and reduce an individual's cognitive ability to cope (Agnew, 1992:72). The result is that nondelinquent behavioural coping becomes more difficult to attain. Agnew (1992:72) also identifies the cost and benefits of different types of coping strategies and social controls as constraints. He states that the cost of delinquency and the presence of social controls minimise the likelihood of delinquent coping. These aspects that serve as constraints to coping influence an individual's choices of delinquent or nondelinquent coping and mediate the association between the experience of negative emotion and engaging in delinquent coping (Agnew, 1992:72).

GST also enumerates a number of factors that influence the disposition to delinquency

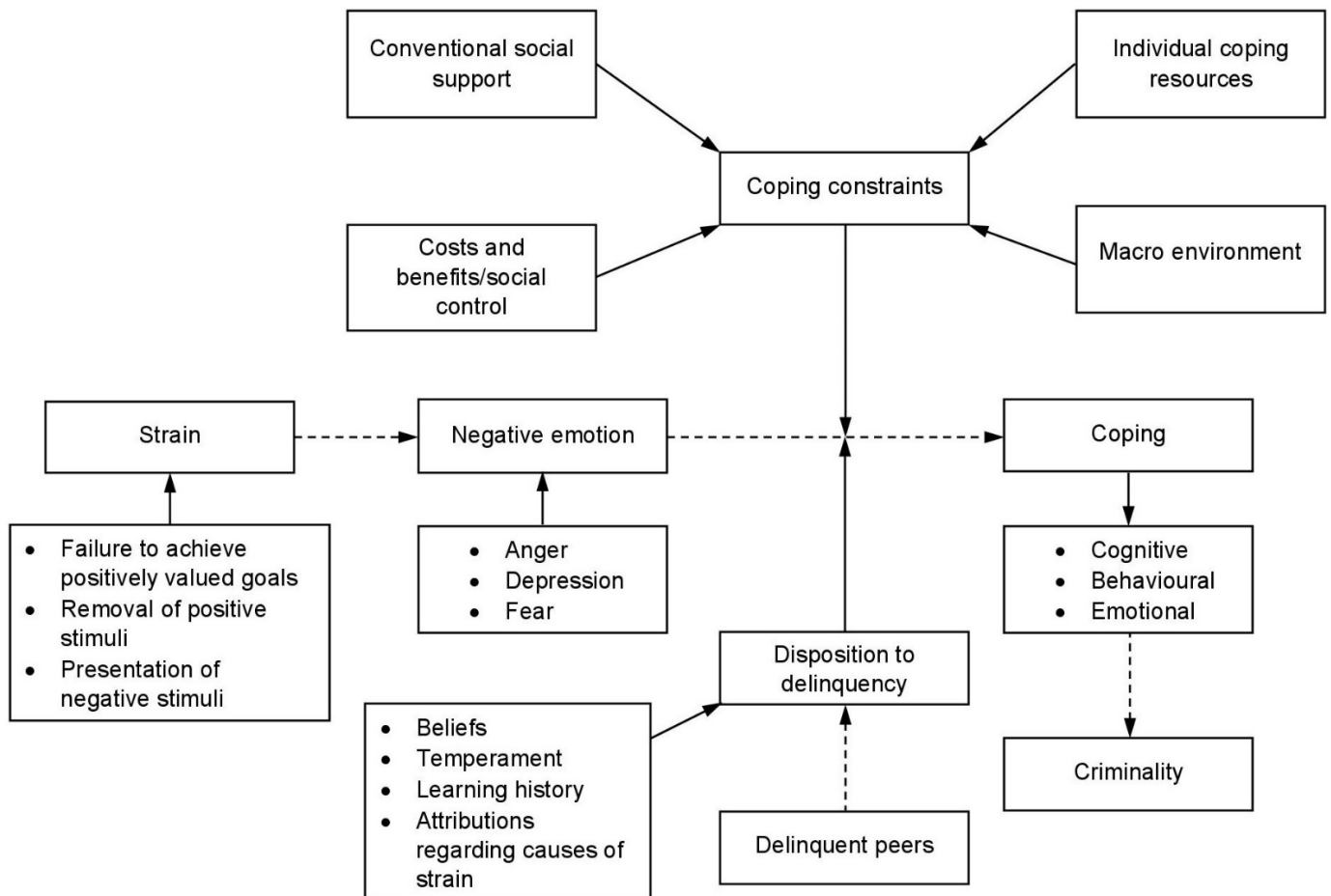
as they mediate the association or shape the relationship between negative emotion and coping strategies. According to Agnew (1992:73), factors affecting the disposition to delinquency include: certain temperamental variables; prior learning history of the adolescent, in particular, the extent to which delinquency was reinforced in the past; beliefs of the adolescent, in particular, the rules that define appropriate responses to provocations; and the adolescent's attributions regarding the causes of their strain. Agnew (1992:73) states that the disposition to delinquency is influenced by delinquent peers who, for example, can contribute to a learning history or beliefs that are supportive of delinquent coping.

Whether an individual will end up committing a crime or not is dependent on a number of factors, in particular, how the individual ends up perceiving the strain (Agnew, 1992:75). For example, employee one is laid off for no reason, according to their perspective. That employee may feel that they were unjustly laid off, i.e., the strain is perceived as unjust. Compared to employee two who was retrenched because the company was struggling financially due the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown regulations. Employee two may feel that, although the circumstances are unfair, they are inherently not unjust. Since employee one views their strain as more unjust, they are, according to GST, more likely to develop a criminal coping mechanism.

Furthermore, a high magnitude strain is also most likely to determine whether an individual will cope criminally (Agnew, 1992:65). For example, an individual missing their bus to town for an important meeting is not a high magnitude strain when compared to an incident where a family member on a farm is murdered by farm attackers which is a high impact strain where the farmer might seek revenge to cope. In addition to the factors that determine criminal coping is social control (Agnew, 1992:76). An individual experiencing or perceiving low social control may respond in a criminal manner in order to cope. If the farmer, in this example, perceives that there is no help from the police or the community regarding the attack, he/she will most likely respond in a criminal manner against the attackers.

The last of the determining factors to a criminal coping mechanism is the incentive or pressure created towards criminal coping (Agnew, 1992:50). If the nature of the strain

itself creates an incentive to act criminally, the individual will most likely act accordingly. For example, if an IT technician at a bank is laid off unfairly, according to their perspective, they could decide to crash the servers of the bank or take some other malicious action. The *sine qua non* of GST is the idea that variation in strain and resultant emotion can increase the likelihood of acts of crime and delinquency. Figure 3.1 is a researcher created diagrammatical representation of GST and the path to potential criminality.



**Figure 3.1: Representation of the general strain theory (Researcher’s conception)**

### 3.2.3 The applicability of the GST to the current study

The GST has accumulated a substantial amount of empirical evidence since being developed (Bao, Haas & Pi, 2007; Brezina, 2017; Brody, 2001; Piquero & Sealock, 2004; Sigfusdottir, Kristjansson & Agnew, 2012). It is appropriate for the exploratory nature of this research because it is a micro theory, i.e., it focuses on behaviours of individuals

(Mouzelis, 2016:68) that allows for a deeper exploration of a phenomenon (Reiter, 2017:131). In this research, GST was used to analyse the behavioural coping strategies for the negative emotions that incarcerated females present. GST further aligned with the aims and objectives of the research as it allowed for the exploration of contributing factors to the drug-crime relationship of female offenders.

The appeal of the theory is that it can be applied in all three paradigms of research, positivism, constructivism, and pragmatism (Broidy, 2001:11). As already discussed in section 4.3.3, this research is contextualised within the constructivist paradigm. GST further supports qualitative research (Broidy, 2001:11:29), thereby accommodating the research design of this study. Lastly, it also supported one of the aims of this research that was to assess the applicability of the general strain model in relation to the drug-crime relationship.

Although the *sine qua non* of GST remains, there have been theoretical and empirical advancements around the theory in relation to gender. The following section discusses gender differences in GST-related processes that affect criminal behaviour.

### **3.2.4 Gender and general strain theory**

Gender is a variable of interest in criminological research and GST is a theory that informs criminal behaviour in relation to the gender variable (Eriksson & Mazerolle, 2013; Ngo & Paternoster, 2013; Posick, Farrel & Swatt, 2013). In the early years of the conceptualisation of GST, Broidy and Agnew (1997:276) believed that GST is able to explain the cause of female criminality. The theorists also argued that GST can be used to explain the differences in offending rates between males and females. Broidy and Agnew (1997:277) suggest that the reason why males criminally offend more than females is because, firstly, males experience more strain than females and, secondly, the strain experienced by males is different from that of females. They add that criminal behaviour is more likely to be a coping mechanism for males. The reason for the differences lies in the gendered perception of strain (Broidy & Agnew, 1997:289). Men and women perceive the same strains differently and therefore will react differently to them. The differences are influenced by the social positioning of the genders. The third

reason for a higher male criminality than female criminality is the gendered response to strain. Males' emotional responses to strain are different from those of females as they foster criminality. Lastly, males are more likely to respond to strains with anger than females (Broidy & Agnew, 1997:282). Literature on the psychology of anger however contradicts this (González-Iglesias, Gómez-Fraguela & Luengo-Martín, 2012; Hamdan-Mansour, Dardas, Nawafleh & Abu-Asba, 2012; Keck, 2019; Salerno, Phalen, Reyes & Schweitzer, 2018). In truth, males and females are likely to respond to strain equally with anger (Morrison, Noel & Ogle, 2012:911).

Broidy and Agnew (1997:284–286) outline five reasons why males are more prone to respond to strain with delinquency: (1) males have a higher self-esteem compared to females leading them to respond to strains with delinquency and that females are more likely to respond to strains with nondelinquent and self-destructive behaviour. This can include alcohol and drug abuse, as well as eating disorders (Broidy & Agnew, 1997:284); (2) males have less social support than women. According to Broidy and Agnew (1997:284), women are afforded opportunities to cope with strains more legitimately because of their intimate social circles. Through communication with close friends about their problems, they are able to curb criminal or delinquent behaviour. Additionally, the social circles serve as crime deterrents as women seek to preserve the stability of their social circles as they believe that criminal acts jeopardise their close friendships; (3) according to Broidy and Agnew (1997:285), males have more freedom of movement and access, thereby affording them more opportunities to commit crimes. This is because the social control placed on females is said to be more than that placed on males; (4) the researchers allude to the differences in socialisation of males and females with regards to responses to strain, for example, an aggressive response to anger is deemed acceptable for males but not for females (Broidy & Agnew 1997:285); (5) Broidy and Agnew (1997:286) refer to the differences in dynamics of female and male peer associations. They state that males tend to socialise with large groups of peers who share less intimate friendship connections, whereas females do the opposite.

In summary, Broidy and Agnew (1997) believe that there is a difference between males and females with regards to the availability of coping resources. Women are more open



to receiving resources, and this results in them being less prone to respond to strains in a criminal and/or delinquent manner.

### **3.2.5 Research on gender, offending and the general strain theory**

Although Broidy and Agnew (1997) assert that anger is a typical response to strain from males, and females resort to internalisation of strains, other researchers disagree. Boman (2003), Joon Jang (2007), De Coster and Cornell Zito (2010), Moon and Morash (2017) and Posick et al (2013) reveal that men and women display similar levels of anger and that females also experience additional negative emotions to strain, such as depression and guilt, that are inversely related to offending (Isom Scott & Mikell, 2019:394; Joon Jang, 2007:530; Kaufman, 2009:415; Drapela, 2006:256).

Agnew and Brezina (1997) carried out a GST study that focused on gender. This research discovered that the interpersonal strain in females is significantly linked to offending. These same strains in males, however, serve more as predictors to male offending (Agnew & Brezina, 1997:88). Hoffmann and Su (1997) also studied the differences between males' and females' strain experiences and how they affect offending. Support for the *sine qua non* of GST was found, but it was weak when examining gender differences (Hoffmann & Su, 1997:70). Mazerolle's (1998) study also agreed with Hoffmann and Su's (1997) study in spite of multiple measures of strain being incorporated into the study. Mazerolle (1998:85) also concluded that strain affects offending, but levels of strain and their effect on offending do not differ by gender. Other early researchers, such as Hoffmann and Cerbone (1999), also could not find support for gender being a moderator for offending.

Another early study by Eitle (2002) used a sample of young female adults and discovered that gender discrimination, among other forms of discrimination, was a predictor for criminal behaviour as well as substance use disorders. Similarly, Sharp, Terling-Watt, Atkins, Gilliam and Sanders (2001:178), also using female university students, investigated purging. The research concluded that anger is indeed related to purging, but that depression was also a high influencer of purging. Sharp, Brewster and Love (2005) expanded on the research by Sharp et al (2001) to include male and female university

student participants. The relationship between strain, negative emotion, and criminal coping and purging behaviours was investigated. The study reports that males were more inclined to acts of crime and females leaned more to purging. Although anger is also a response to strain from both males and females, females additionally responded with other negative emotions that were inversely related to criminal behaviour. Sharp et al (2005:151) then concluded that anger, in addition to other negative emotions to strain in females, was the reason for the gender disparities in crime.

In conclusion, expansions on GST have proven the central premise of GST that there is an observable general process in the lead up to crime and delinquency. This is similar for both males and females, but the difference is that each gender experiences the precluding indicators in a distinct qualitative way. Hence GST does present its own strengths and weaknesses.

### **3.2.6 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF GENERAL STRAIN THEORY**

The main strength of GST is that it can be applied to all social classes in South Africa (elite, middle class, vulnerable, transient poor and chronic poor). Furthermore, GST is able to offer an explanation to why some individuals commit crimes by correlating negative emotion to criminality. However, this strength, concurrently is also a weakness as it fails to explain why some individuals do not commit crimes. This is irrespective of the severe strain the individuals may experience (Zavala & Spohn, 2013:124).

Another downfall of GST is the inability to explain all forms criminality, more so the genderedness of crime. The theory still remains moderately stereotypical in differentiating the responses to strain of the two genders (male and female). Conventionally, men are ascribed physical responses to strain, whereas women emotional responses (Agnew, 2015:142). In the current social climate, this might not hold true any longer, hence the need to explore the applicability of the theory. Although a robust theory, GST was not the only theory considered for the theoretical framework of this research. Alone it cannot account and offer explanations for other aspects of the nuanced drug-crime relationship focused on females. Hence, other models attempting to explain the drug-crime

relationship were also drawn upon.

### **3.3 DRUG-CRIME RELATIONSHIP: THE WORLD VIEW**

In attempting to explore the drug-crime relationship, research has drawn upon a variety of situational contexts such as economic pressures, and psychopharmacological effects (Walters, 2014b; Walters, 2016; Da Agra, 2017). From the existing body of research on the field, Farrington (2017:10) describes four salient theoretical models: (1) crime causes drug use; (2) drug use causes crime; (3) the common cause model, in that both drug use and criminal behaviour are caused by a common set of factors; and (4) the coincidence model. The fourth model alludes to how the association between drug use and crime has a spurious correlation, thus it is coincidental. This is to say that drugs and crime are related, but not causally related. Seeing that proving a coincidence does not require empirical research, only the initial three models are discussed. The drawback to these models, however, is that each of them only focuses on one aspect of the drug-crime relationship being the violent subcultures of the drug markets (Berg & Loeber, 2015:33; Copes, Hochstetler & Sandberg, 2015:39; Johnson, 2016:1467). Nonetheless, over time and through the advent of more complex research approaches and technology, the drug-crime relationship is seen as more nuanced and dynamic beyond the four theoretical models (Da Agra, 2017:12).

Contributing factors to the drug-crime relationship, as well as drug use and involvement with associated behaviours, have come to be identified over time. Goldstein's (1985) tripartite framework (TPF) forms one of the first attempts at understanding the complex relationship. The model incorporated three aspects into the relationship: the economic compulsion, systemic and psychopharmacological effects (Goldstein, 1985:493). These three aspects are interlinked and explore how the violent drug subculture is maintained. The TPF brought together the economic motivation, systemic, and psychopharmacological models. The result of this was the highlighting of the inherently violent nature of drug subcultures. The effects of intoxication and the economic pressure were also assumed to be associated with funding drug use. Furthermore, these are

assumed to overlap to influence initiation and fluctuations in criminal involvement (Muncie, 2014:246).

Early drug-crime relationship models have been mainly critiqued for being overly deterministic. The criticisms stem from the fact that the relationship itself has been understood and shaped as a whole, even though it has constituent parts (Da Agra, 2017:30). These parts further interact with each other, thus creating more complexities. These early models were prodigiously bio-pharmacologically orientated, at the neglect of context and human agency (Walters, 2017:209). Goldstein's (1985) TPF is the most referred to and also the first attempt to comprehend the drug-crime nexus. It used the overlap of drug intoxication and the economic pressures felt in pursuit of funding drug use to explain how criminality is initiated. But, like other models, it received heavy criticism for its lack of inclusion of the social contexts, psychological processes and the changing nature of the relationship over time (Powell, 2011:18).

Despite all the wealth of knowledge and the increasing interest in understanding the drug-crime relationship and its many nuances, little attention has been paid to the issue of drug type and gender as much of the research to date has been conducted on male drug users (O'Brien, 2011:649), with few longitudinal studies comparing the criminal careers of different genders (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction [EMCDDA], 2014; Everitt & Robbins, 2016; Fernández-Montalvo, López-Goñi & Arteaga, 2012; Matza & Morgan, 2017). Within the South African context, there exists no research or data pertaining to the two variables, gender and drug type and how they influence the drug-crime relationship. Thus far, there are models that exist, attempting to explain the drug-crime relationship, which are detailed below.

### **3.3.1 Models explaining the drug-crime relationship**

Since the 1930s, attempts to explain the relationship focused on linking drug use with aggression, anti-social behaviour and crime (Powell, 2011:12). Most of these explanations originated from generalised studies that focused on crime involvement. More recent studies (Durlauf & Nagin, 2011; Hughes & Stevens, 2007; Jennings, Piquero, Farrington, Ttofi, Crago & Theobald, 2016; Stevens, Trace & Bewley-Taylor, 2005)

however have concentrated on drug users and different types of criminal behaviour. Despite the progression in studies, there still remains only four broad classifications for drug-related crimes that are: (1) legally sanctioned prohibitions against substance related acts, e.g., use of illicit drugs; (2) drug distribution; (3) crimes directly attributed to the psychopharmacological effects of a particular drug, e.g., crimes committed in a drug induced state; and (4) acquisitive crimes committed directly to fund drug use (Kruithof, Davies, Disley, Strang & Ito, 2016:16).

To explain the drug-crime relationship, a number of models describe the initial stage of drug use, the subsequent involvement in criminality and the continual behaviour thereof. In the formulation of these theories, not just drug related crimes were considered, but also non-drug related and victimless crimes (Copes et al, 2015:40). While some models explain the cause of drug use, others focus on the association of drug use and crime. Different types of participants, offence types and environments were used in the formulation of these models, but they still did not factor in the gender and drug type.

The four broad models within which more specific models have evolved are: the drug use causes crime, crime causes drug use, common cause model and coincidence model (Felson & Staff, 2017:383; White, 2016:348; White & Gorman, 2000:151). These broad theoretical categories (used interchangeably with model) have contributed to the development of the more specific theories such as the psychopharmacological model, the economic motivation model, the systemic model and Goldstein's (1985) TPF model. Each of these sets of theories is outlined below and the empirical research that supports and disputes each model is discussed. While there has been research across psychology, criminology, philosophy, neurobiology and economics that have attempted to explain the association between substance use and crime, there have been few deviations away from the aforementioned theoretical categories and the long-standing research upon which they were founded that was tested across time, culture and geography.

The issue of causation and association in exploring the drug-crime relationship describes the nature of the relationship. Early attempts to explore the relationship searched for a direct link between crime and drug use (Clayton & Tuchfeld, 1982; Harrison, 1992; Harrison & Backenheimer, 1998; White, 1990), but this was overly simplistic. The

rudimentary findings of these explorations were that drug use causes criminality and/or vice versa (Shelley & Melzer, 2008:47). To support this primary finding, researchers used prevalent studies of drug users and incarcerated offenders to argue for a causal link (Taylor, Brownstein, Parry, Plüddemann, Makkai, Bennett & Holloway, 2003:271; Watters, Reinerman & Fagan, 1985:363; White, Johnson, & Garrison, 1985:186). The consequence of these early explorations is that they formed the bases for subsequent inquiries into the relationship and prominent theories for the relationship were established within these undeveloped findings (Bennett & Holloway, 2009:527–529). There are indeed complex connections between drug use and crime but not all substance use leads to involvement in crime (O'Brien, 2011:650; Walters, 2014b:1239). More recent research demonstrates that there is little to no empirical data supporting the causal link (Dawkins, Gibson & Stoddart, 2016:162; Danieli, 2014:1238; Green, 2016:519–520).

If anything, the factors thought to reinforce the relationship are more likely to only influence it. Certain research studies (Walters, 2016; Da Agra, 2017; Gannoni & Goldsmid, 2017) are, at best, indirect and probabilistic rather than deterministic. This means that, for a direct link between drug use and crime to be established, there needs to be an intervening element or variable. For example, an individual consumes alcohol, then commits a crime of assault in a crowded *shebeen*.<sup>1</sup> The intervening variable in this case would be the crowdedness. Why the relationship in this case is considered to be probabilistic, is because it can be taken for granted that most drug users are not actively criminal. Also, as apparent in crime categories, not all crimes have a drug related element to them (Walters, 2014a:170). This is not to imply that drug use does not play a role in certain crimes, but it is to assert that certain crimes (such as acquisition and violent crimes) need to be facilitated by certain environmental conditions (MacDonald & Pyle, 2018:179).

Further, concerning the issue of intervening variables, there are two distinct causal factor categories, namely, developmental and intensification (Riordan, 2017:58). Developmental refers to factors connected to the initial involvement in both criminal behaviour and drug use. Intensification, on the other hand, refers to factors present when

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<sup>1</sup> A *shebeen* is defined as an outlet established mainly for the sale and consumption of alcohol.

involvement in drug use and criminal behaviour has already been established (Best, Man, Gossop, Harris, Sidwell & Strang, 2001:163). In the case of intensification, the desire for more drugs may compel an individual to criminality, or the monetary gains from crime might prompt drug use (Passini, 2012:578).

Holistically, it is no longer accepted within the empirical research literature that the drug-crime relationship is a simplistic direct and causal relationship but as an association of variables, thus making it complex and multifaceted. It also bears indirect causal factors that operate in an idiosyncratic nature over time, across individuals, cultures and genders (Copeland, 2016:87; Lorenzo-Blanco, Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, Rosiers, Huang, Villamar, Soto, Pattarroyo & Baezconde-Garbanati, 2015:29). The theories discussed below depict this understanding.

### ***3.3.1.1 Crime-causes-drug-use model***

The crime-causes-drug-use model operates on the assumed premise that individuals who associate with criminal sub-cultures are more likely to choose or easily be influenced into taking drugs, as compared to individuals not associated with criminal sub-cultures (White & Gorman, 2000:151). The assumption is that drug use is normalised, encouraged, contextualised and promoted within criminal subcultures (Cepeda, Saint Onge, Nowotny & Valdez, 2016:1544). The causal link in this context was established through early ethnographic studies that claimed to have found that engagement in crimes yielded a profit, and therefore led to the purchase of drugs (Weppner, 1977; Goldstein, 1985; Tonry, 1990; Blumstein & Wallman, 2006). These findings were then used to hypothesise that individuals, exercising free will, intentionally committed profitable crimes for the express purpose of purchasing drugs (Da Agra, 2017:30).

The reasons considered in supporting this model ranged from the benign to those of criminal intent. For example, an individual moving from self-medication to making excuses about engaging in criminal activity (Bennett, Holloway & Farrington, 2008:108). Essentially, the model relies on lifestyle choices and subculture explanations such as professional criminal life, remaining unmarried and the pursuit of hedonistic pleasures, which suggests living a transient life (White & Gorman, 2000:169).

Evidence for this model was collected between the 1950s and the late 1970s (Becker, 1955; O'Donnell, 1965; Becker, 1967; Kavalier, 1968; O'Donnell, 1969). Researchers considered the sequential occurrences to the drug-crime relationship. The early research discovered that drug users had prior engagements in criminal activity that were present long before the initial onset of drug use (McGlothlin, 1979:361). The early study by Wilner, Rosenfeld, Lee, Gerard and Chein (1957) serves as an example. The researchers used reports of 18 gangs with an overall sample population of 305 youths ranging from ages 16 to 20. The research participants were selected for their high rate of participation in intergang warfare and they were classified as displaying chronic anti-social behaviour. The study revealed that more than two-thirds of the youths had habitually participated in delinquent behaviour, more than half had been arrested at least once and a quarter had served sentences in correctional facilities for delinquent behaviour (Wilner et al, 1957:400). The study postulates that "it is precisely such high delinquency gangs that one might expect would be involved in drug use and selling activity" (Wilner et al, 1957:400). The conclusion to the study that was based on one particular type of drug, heroin (a depressant drug) in New York City, however, was that gangs in themselves do not foster the use of drugs. In fact, in some gangs, the use of drugs is often discouraged (Wilner et al, 1957:407).

The reason for studies that were conducted outside of Africa being referenced in this study is because of the lack of research done within the continent, the Global South or in the South African context. Because of this dearth, a model was adopted from the Global North without contextualising it. There have however been a few studies from South Africa, Brazil, Los Angeles and Mexico that investigated the link between poverty and drug use (Cheteni, Mah & Yohane, 2018; Inciardi & Surratt, 1998; Morales, 1984; Shirk, 2011) but, for reporting on the crime-causes-drug-use model in the South African context, studies from the Global North will continue to be referenced.

In Australia, Wardlaw (1978:22) analysed records of 1319 offenders, with fewer than 300 women and the majority of the sample being aged between 18 and 25 years. He collected the records from Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and other relevant police departments. Wardlaw (1978:30) examined the characteristics and criminal



histories of these offenders. He particularly focused on the first conviction to identify the offenders' drug use before and after the conviction. He sampled 837 offenders incarcerated for marijuana related offences and 482 offenders incarcerated for other types of drugs within the classifications: suppressants, stimulants and hallucinogens. He made comparisons between these two groups and discovered an insignificant difference pertaining to the background characteristics. Overall, considering the criminal history, he discovered that, prior to the onset of drug use, the majority in both groups had been convicted before.

Compared to the marijuana using group, the other group was more likely to have a prior conviction and higher rates of convictions (Wardlaw, 1978:40). The similarities between the two groups, however, lay in the types of crimes they committed. Nearly 50% of offenders from both groups engaged in property crime prior to drug related offences and/or drug use. In exploring the drug-crime relationship further, using the two sample groups, Wardlaw (1978:41), firstly, discovered that a drug offence was most likely to follow the initial offence. Secondly, there was armed robbery across the entire sample, albeit a small number, and a decrease in property crime. Wardlaw (1978:24) acknowledged that drug users do engage in large amounts of criminal activity, but that criminality does not have a direct contribution to drug use. He was rather of the opinion that criminality was merely an extension of prior criminality. To substantiate this claim, he suggested that crime patterns do not change much, following drug convictions. Therefore, claims of drug use causing crime are largely unwarranted (Wardlaw, 1978:41). Wardlaw's assertions allude to the possibility of misrepresentations of both crime and drug use. A drug related conviction does not indicate definitively that an offender has not used drugs prior to this conviction, nor that any prior criminal conviction was not in some way related to the offender's drug use.

The social context of research has to be acknowledged as it essentially shapes the outcomes of research. The study of the drug-crime relationship is evidence of this impact. Chaiken and Chaiken (1990:231), through their literature review of earlier research into the relationship, discovered that the relationship shifted over time, from the drug use comes before crime perspective, to the crime comes before drug use perspective.

Greenberg and Adler (1974:233) suggest that this shift could be because researchers changed their focus from the typical white middle-class opiate addict in 1920 to the young black heroin addict of a lower social class in 1950. This context was influential, both socially and politically, in informing the substances that were considered harmful to society (Thompson & Cox, 2020:29). The harm includes crime therefore, in exploring the drug-crime relationship, this context is important to note across cultures and genders.

From the 1980s, researchers (Clayton & Tuchfeld, 1982; DeLisi, Angton, Behnken & Kusow, 2015; Walters, 2017; Inciardi, 1986; Walters, 2014b) explored the drug-crime relationship where participants were individuals from the general public as well as convicted offenders. The aim was to replicate earlier research from the crime-causes-drug-use perspective (Bean, 2014:2). Replicated studies reported that at least two thirds of participants were involved in criminal activity prior to the onset of drug use (Allen, 2017:42; Hirschi, 2017:20). The crime-causes-drug-use model is further accepted as common truth as members of the general public who do not engage in criminal activity are far less likely to consume drugs of an illicit nature (Robert, 2018:128).

The three supporting aspects of the crime-causes-drug-use model are the financial, associational and recreational aspects (Tomlinson et al, 2016:10; Felson & Staff, 2017:376). The hypothesis is that engagement in criminal activity exposes individuals to environments and social settings that are conducive for drug use (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 2018:20). The crimes that follow are then acquisition crimes that are committed to gain financial means to acquire more drugs and alcohol (Hirschi, 2017:20). This perspective indicates the relationship of the financial and recreational aspects that can be evidenced through the idea that drugs and alcohol are purchased and used as a form of reward for a successful criminal undertaking (Felson & Staff, 2017:378). In this instance, crime serves two instrumental purposes, that of motivation and concurrent financial resources to use drugs in a recreational capacity (Tomlinson et al, 2016:11).

The crime-causes-drug-use model relates to the initiation into drug use. It also alludes to the assumption that continued involvement in criminality will prolong the use of drugs (Copes et al, 2015:40). It implies that the earlier/younger an individual engages in criminal behaviour, the longer the involvement in both criminality and drug use. Research

conducted on youth misbehaviour and offending has indicated yet again that criminal behaviour occurs before drug use (Walters, 2014a:211). This does not however lead to the assumption that both criminality and drug use will continue. A study by Jennings et al (2016) on the intersection between continued criminal involvement and drug use discovered that moderate to serious substance use may lead to adverse outcomes, but not necessarily crime. The results from the Jennings et al's (2016:99) study suggest that continued drug use, from youth to adulthood, was indicative of non-cessation of drug use throughout the individuals' lives. However, the resultant behaviour from drug use is not related to violent offending but rather to purely violence in itself. To reach this conclusion, the researchers examined 411 records of male drug users from adolescence to age 50. The men were examined at the age of eight (8) and, most recently, at age 48. The data were part of a longitudinal study of the development of offending and antisocial behaviour by the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development (CSDD) (Jennings et al, 2016:97).

In the literature discussed above, involvement in minor crimes seems to be a prerequisite to more serious crimes and subsequent drug use. This could be perceived as a form of initiation, but the causal link (i.e., crime causes drug use and drug use causes crime) weakens over time. The link shifts from being causal to becoming cyclical (Hirschi, 2017:47) that signifies the complexity of the drug-crime relationship. In some research on the relationship, mixed results were found, as in the work of Payne and Pritchard (2005). The researchers sought to investigate the relationship using 371 youth offenders aged 10 to 17 years that were remanded in detention centres in Australia (Payne & Pritchard, 2005:2). The findings for the exploratory study were mixed. In some cases, the use of marijuana and alcohol co-occurred with the crime (usually the crime was theft) and, in other cases, the use of drugs occurred before the commission of the crime. The crimes that co-occurred after the use of drugs and alcohol usually included vandalism, assault and burglary (Payne & Pritchard, 2005:2). From these results, the researchers recommended that the drug-crime relationship must factor in the type of crime that takes place and the type of drug used (Payne & Pritchard, 2005:6).

Payne and Pritchard (2005:4) further found that violent offenders had an earlier onset of drug use when compared to nonviolent property crime offenders. This is supported by

Jennings et al's (2016:103) study which revealed how violence is the resultant behaviour from prolonged involvement with criminality and drug use. The Payne and Pritchard (2005:2–4) data did not however illustrate the relationship between regular substance use and the age of onset. Consistent to the findings of other crime-causes-drug-use research, Payne and Pritchard (2005:5) also report that, in half of the cases, the involvement in the first offence preceded drug use. A quarter of their sample however reported drug use preceding criminal engagement, and the other quarter engaged in drug use and criminality concurrently within the same year. Overall, the results obtained by Payne and Pritchard (2005:4–5) are in support of the findings by Jennings et al (2016:99–102) that the two aspects of the drug-crime relationship reinforce one another, especially during adolescence.

The crime-causes-drug-use model has face validity. At its face value, it has an appeal for drug policy makers and drug law enforcement agencies (Meier, 2016:67). Its critique however is that it is reductionist in its approach to the drug-crime relationship (Brochu et al, 2017:3). It ignores the complexities of the relationship by excluding factors such as gender and drug type. This model continues to be utilised to shape programmes around drug addiction despite research indicating that not all individuals who engage in crime will inevitably use drugs (Fitzgerald, 2015:183; Resignato, 2000:687). While crime may contribute to involvement in some drug use, it may not contribute to involvement in the use of all classes and types of drugs (Hughes et al., 2014:28; Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1994:151; Nordstrom & Dackis, 2011:666). This warrants the need to research drug type and its association to crime, more so within the South African context.

### ***3.3.1.2 Drug-use-causes-crime model***

The drug-use-causes-crime model suggests that the use of illicit drugs, including alcohol, subsequently causes the involvement in crime. The suggestion is based on one of the three tenets proposed by Goldstein (1985:494–500) as earlier discussed in the first chapter about TPF (see section 1.1 & 3.3). The three tenets being the psychopharmacological effects, economic compulsion and the systemic connection.

The TPF model has gained favour among policy makers and most drug policies the world

over are founded in this model. Countries such as the United States, Philippines, China, Australia as well as South Africa (Keefer & Loayza, 2010:31; Csete, Kamarulzaman, Kazatchkine, Altice, Balicki, Buxton, Cepeda, Comfort, Goosby, Goulão & Har, 2016:4–6; Parry, Plüddemann, Louw & Leggett, 2004:180) are examples where the TPF has influenced drug policies. Drug policies are claimed to be based on empirical data that are collected from offender samples that are associated with alcohol and other drugs (Pierce et al, 2015:52–53; Marlowe, 2011:28–29). However informative these studies are, they cannot conclusively state that there is a causal relationship between drug use and criminality. The drugs-causes-crime model in policy making thus originated as a fear-based response to drug users. It was feared that the use of drugs outside medically approved psychotropics could cause violent behaviour irrespective of users' proclivities to violence or non-violence (McBride & Swartz, 1990:141–142). The fear originated from Anslinger and Tompkins' (1980) rhetoric that asserted (with no known evidence) that illicit drugs "cause a relentless destruction of character and releases criminal tendencies" (Anslinger & Tompkins, 1980:189–190).

Anslinger, as a government official serving in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in those days, had great influence on the public's perceptions of drug related matters. Similarly, within the South African context, the Minister of Police, Bhekokwakhe "Bheki" Cele, squarely places alcohol as the cause of violence and gender-based violence (Matlhare, 2021). While that is the case for alcohol related offences, the evidence for illicit substances is not clearly documented.

### **3.3.1.3 Common cause model**

Contrary to the drug-use-causes-crime model, the common cause model proposes that the drug-crime relationship is not causal. The model supports the notion that crime and drug use exist within a common social sphere, therefore they share similar explanatory factors (Watters et al, 1985:357). Early research which informed this model found that individuals who engaged in illegal behaviour were to be found amongst environments with heavy drug use and serious offending behaviour (Chaiken & Chaiken, 1982:155; Johnson, Wish, Schmeidler & Huizinga, 1991:212; Menard, Mihalic & Huizinga,

2001:271). This indicated to the researchers that the occurrence of crime and drug use was rather a result of the incidents sharing a common causal root, and not the individual incidents causing each other. Environmental and situational factors as well as psychological factors were therefore the causal roots. Early researchers (Finnegan, 1989; Watters et al, 1985; White, 1990; White & Gorman, 2000) also attributed genetics, parental relationships, parents' use of alcohol and other personality disorders as common factors for the occurrence of crime and drug use.

The situational and environmental factors include poverty, overpopulation, gang activity, social disorganisation and poor infrastructure in communities (Menard et al, 2001:279–280). These factors are more closely related to the South African context. Ford and Beveridge (2004:53) assert that a lack of legitimate means to reach financial goals or unemployment foster high crime rates and the abuse of drugs. Chaiken and Chaiken (1990:212) also earlier stated that a deviant environment also impacts on the youth in a negative manner. The more deviant, the greater the likelihood of the youth taking to using drugs and engaging in criminal behaviour.

The onset of drug use to the development of drug dependency is contingent on the user's daily lifestyle and environment that also contributes to the potential for involvement in criminality (DeLisi & Vaughn, 2015:291; Mercan, 2020:166; Walters, 2011:122; Wright, Tibbetts & Daigle, 2014:153). Certain environments contribute to the increased criminal activity and drug use. These environments include taverns or *shebeens*, sporting events, nightclubs or other areas where alcohol consumption takes place among a large group of people during the night-time and weekends (Lawhon & Herrick, 2012:2–5; Shidolo, 2019:67). Such areas also tend to attract drug sales (Isaac, 2019:5) that also negatively impact on disadvantaged communities as they make the selling of drugs seem lucrative and an easy way to make money. Ford and Beveridge (2004:53) further state that the sale of drugs directs youth away from legitimate means of generating income. As a result, communities' fear of crime and violence increases, and community social fragmentation occurs.

### **3.3.1.3.1 Common cause model: The explorative research**

The evidence for this model lies in research that uses the absence of evidence for the direct relationship between drug use and crime, either implicitly or explicitly. An example of implicit research is that of Zhang, Welte and Wieczorek (2001), carried out on homogenous sample groups. The study proves that there is little evidence that supports the relationship between drug use and criminal behaviour, particularly when the variables of demographics are constant. This is true even if the groups are vulnerable to violence, drug use and criminality. These assertions then imply that there might be a third set of variables that influence the involvement in drug use and crime.

Chaiken and Chaiken (1990:235) conclude that drug use and criminal behaviour co-occurs and that there is no overlap between heavy drug users and those involved in serious crimes. The research participants in their study reported that their onset of drug use and criminal behaviour occurred almost simultaneously. The relationship between amphetamine use and crime was investigated by Greenberg (1976) in post-war Japan, where conditions changed in terms of social dislocation and fragmentation. Coupled with this was increased poverty as well as the availability of amphetamines that resulted in an overall increase of amphetamine users and criminality.

Support for the common cause model is drawn from psycho-social and demographic variables that also apply to other social problems. For example, unemployment can be linked to drug use and abuse, poverty, lack of self-esteem and mental health issues, amongst others (El-Bassel, Shaw, Dasgupta & Strathdee, 2014:5–6; Burns, 2011:102). Furthermore, the variables can be used by individuals who justify one act (drug use or crime involvement) over the other (Masson & Bancroft, 2018:81). For example, English (2011:175) believes that moral reasoning can be used by drug users to condemn criminal acts as intrapsychic beliefs and attitudes influence drug users' actions. Intrapsychic beliefs refer to an individual's personality, psyche and mind (Efrati, Gerber & Tolmacz, 2019:618). Because the common cause model identifies common variables within criminal and drug use behaviour that lack specificity, this model fails to specify the variables that can explain the drug-crime relationship while excluding other social ills, like poverty, in the South African context.

### **3.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter focused on the theoretical framework that underpinned the study, namely, the general strain theory and models that attempt to explain the drug-crime relationship. GST offers an explanation for crime by analysing the strain faced by people in their daily lives. Agnew was the pioneer of GST and added to the work of Merton and Durkheim. Agnew's GST successfully explains adolescent, as well as adult criminality through the identification of cognitive, emotional and behavioural coping strategies but also found that individuals, who successfully minimise the effects strain, are less likely to engage in delinquent behaviour.

Agnew also collaborated with Broidy to explain why male crime rates are higher than females. The authors believe that males are more prone to react in an aggressive or criminal manner to feelings of anger than females. They agree that anger then dissipates in men. Women, on the other hand, are less likely to react to their anger but resistance only causes them more anger.

Agnew and Broidy also think that men pursue materialistic goals while females are more concerned with relational pursuits and forming social bonds. This leads men to commit more property and violent crime. They claim that females are restricted in their movements which contributes to female strain. Where women would rather respond with feelings of guilt, depression and fear, men react differently to this type of strain by feeling outraged at social injustice that propels men to commit more crime than women. Feminist movements (see section 2.2.1) mean that there more spaces created for females to be criminally active.

GST is a social-psychological theory (micro theory) and therefore does not take into consideration sources of strain coming from a macro level. Attempts to address macro-level strains were made by Agnew and Broidy by making references to socialisation and structural positioning of males and females in society. More research in this area is however still needed. Despite this shortfall of GST, it still remains a compatible theory with other macro-level theories that address gender and crime. GST thus remained a valuable analysis tool for this research.



Coupled with GST to structure the theoretical framework, three of the four models that explain the drug-crime relationship were also discussed in this chapter. These models were: (1) crime-causes-drug-use model; (2) drug-use-causes-crime model; and (3) the common cause model. These models offer a simplistic causal explanation for the drug-crime relationship. However, it has been shown through the literature that the relationship is more nuanced and complex therefore a direct causal relationship remains difficult to prove and establish. However, through the inclusion of drug use and criminality across gender, age, culture and other variables, more complex models can be formulated. Thus, it was important for this research to include the variable of gender to understand the drug-crime relationship from a nuanced perspective.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY?**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

All research is based on underlying assumptions about which research methods are appropriate for attaining the objectives of a particular study. This chapter introduces the philosophical assumptions and the design strategies that form the foundation of this research study. In this chapter the research methodologies, and design used in the study including strategies, instruments, and data collection and analysis methods, are explicated.

### **4.2 RESEARCH APPROACH**

A research approach is a complete set of procedures on which a researcher relies when implementing a study, collecting and analysing data and also interpreting that data. Thus, a research approach is a broad label that encompasses the research design, research methods and interpretive framework (Chumney, 2019:1). From the research approach, a broad perspective was taken on the research, and it was narrowed down through the research design (Grover, 2015:1). The research approach comprised three main aspects which informed the approaches, namely, inductive, deductive or abductive (Haig, 2018:35). The inductive research aspect implies that the beginning stage of research has a research question, which then guides the collection of data. Inductive moves from data to theory conceptualisation, as opposed to deductive, which goes from theory to data (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2013:17). This research followed an inductive research outline because it began with a research question which prompted for empirical data to be collected in order to answer the question. The collected data were further used to generate additions to the perception of Goldstein's (1985) tripartite framework (TPF) on the drug-crime relationship (see section 3.3).

Furthermore, concerning the research approach, there are three main research approaches, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. The decision for choosing which approach best suits a particular research, is influenced by the purpose of

the research (Babbie, 2015:92).

#### **4.2.1 Purpose of research: Exploratory**

There are three common purposes of social research, namely, exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Akhtar, 2016:73). Although research can have multiple purposes at once (Babbie, 2015:92), this research mainly adopted an *explorative* nature because this type of research has not been conducted in the South African context before. The main aim of an explorative research is to discover new ideas and precise problem statements so that more accurate investigations can be done. It is especially essential when there is little known about a phenomenon (Akhtar, 2016:73). Explorative research has two forms. Firstly, the researcher takes well-defined theories and applies them to a newly emerged phenomenon to see if these theories fit the emerged phenomenon (Swedberg, 2020:18). Secondly, according to Swedberg (2020:19), the researcher forms their own theories concerning a phenomenon. For the purpose of this study, the first instance was followed.

Through the nature of exploratory research, new ideas and assumptions can be generated, as well as tentative theories and hypotheses (Rahi, 2017:2) as alternatives or additions to Goldstein's (1985) TPF. The new ideologies that were generated in this research included the long-held beliefs that the use of drugs invariably means that the user will be directly involved in criminal activity.

#### **4.2.2 Qualitative approach to research**

Due to the purpose and nature of this study being explorative, a qualitative approach was employed to conduct the research. A qualitative approach complements inductive research (Gioia et al, 2013:18). It is defined as “the nonnumerical examination and interpretation of observations for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships” (Babbie, 2013:390). This research approach is suitable for dealing with words. Therefore, qualitative research approach can further be defined as “a strategy for systematic collection, organisation and interpretation of textual information” (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013:1). The foundation of qualitative research is in examining

relationships among entities. The entities in this research were drug users and crime, *ipso facto*, the criminal justice system (CJS). A qualitative approach is also suitable when attempting to generate propositions and tentative theories/models (Katz, 2015:140), which was one of the objectives of this research.

A qualitative approach was deemed suitable for this research based on some of the reasons stated above. It further suited this research because of the scarcity of information on this particular topic, particularly in the South African context. The qualitative approach also allowed the study to discover the underlying meanings of the drug-crime relationship in depth, focusing on the variables of gender and drug type.

### **4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design can be explained as a strategy in research for guiding the selection of methods. It is specific in outlining the methods where a research approach is generic (Grover, 2015:2). Simply defined, a research design is a plan to achieve the research goals (Gorard, 2013:3–4).

This research adopted a qualitative approach therefore a complementary research design was required. There are four major types of research designs in qualitative research, namely, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and case study (Astalin, 2013:119). Owing to the nature of the research being exploratory, phenomenology and case study research designs were used in this study.

#### **4.3.1 Case study research design**

A case study is defined as an analysis of events, periods, persons, policies, decisions and institutions. Included in the analysis are other bounded systems (time and place) that are studied holistically by a single method or multiple methods (Astalin, 2013:122). A case study also implies that a phenomenon is studied within its context which is the exact opposite of an experiment where variables are controlled by the researcher (Yin, 2017:11). When a case study design is followed, the researcher does not want to be part

of that particular context. Cases are selected as a phenomenon and their relationship with the context or other cases within the same context are studied (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017:16). The main advantage of a case study design is that it can be implemented in all three study natures, i.e., exploratory, analytical and explanatory (Tesch, 2013:55). When applied to an exploratory research, it can give the researcher initial insights into the phenomenon (Starman, 2013:31).

A case study can be employed when few to no studies exist on a particular topic, in this case, the drug-crime relationship with the inclusion of the variables of gender and drug type. To achieve new ideas and conceptualisations for the topic under study, concepts need to be refined to gain a better understanding, and case studies allow for this refinement (Starman, 2013:36).

#### **4.3.2 Phenomenological research**

A case study design implies the study of a phenomenon, therefore phenomenology was applied. Phenomenological research is concerned with determining people's lived experiences in relation to a phenomenon. This research design is employed in qualitative studies that seek to gain insight into a universal feeling or experience (Wilson, 2015:38). Unlike quantitative methods, phenomenology does not seek to quantify instances, but rather to gain deep understanding of individuals' human experiences (Fanon, 2008:130). Therefore, the essence of phenomenology is the universal commonality of the experience. This positions phenomenology at a place where solutions can be explored (Wilson, 2015:43) which is the core strength of the phenomenological method.

A strength of phenomenology is that the results or findings emerge from the data, instead of being imposed by a structured statistical analysis (Alase, 2017:9–10). Looking at the data from a "big picture" perspective, trends can be noted as they emerge from the data. The major drawback to phenomenology however, is that it relies heavily on the participants' ability to articulate their experiences effectively. If the participant has poor communication skills, the researcher is not able to collect good quality data about the lived experience (Creswell & Poth, 2016:11). To compensate for this drawback, in this

study, the researcher did more probing when conducting the interviews.

Phenomenology involves four steps: bracketing, intuiting, analysing and describing (Sorsa, Kiikkala & Åstedt-Kurki, 2015:9). The latter two steps are discussed in the data analysis section (see section 4.5) and intuiting simply refers to the researcher being immersed in the description of the lived experiences (Schunke, 2015:475). Bracketing refers to the setting aside of biases, personal experiences and preconceived notions about the research topic. Not only that, but previous knowledge from researches, as well as theories about the research field need to be set aside (Tufford & Newman, 2012:81). Bracketing can be done in one of three ways: dialogue; taking memos/journals during the research process; and writing about bracketing in the final research report (Sorsa et al, 2015:10).

For this research, bracketing was done through dialogue as this usually takes place before the research is conducted. The researcher talked with colleagues and the supervisor and discussed their personal biases and experiences. Past knowledge about the research topic was also discussed and these discussions were transcribed to keep the researcher in check. More steps to be taken in order to establish the reliability and trustworthiness of the research are discussed in section 1.7. Complementary to phenomenology, the data collection method used in this research was semi-structured interviews for both units of analysis (see section 4.4.1).

### **4.3.3 Research paradigm**

A paradigm is essentially a way of thinking about the world that is informed by the individual's ontology and epistemology. Ontology seeks to answer the questions: *What is true? What exists?* and *What is real?* (LaFollette & Persson, 2013:155). Epistemology, on the other hand, is a consequence of ontology (Schmitt, 2017:354) as it seeks to understand the relationship between knowledge and the researcher; it refers to how people come to know what they know (Killam, 2013:45).

Three main paradigms exist, namely, positivism, constructivism, and pragmatism

(Creswell, 2014:6). Due to its qualitative nature, this research falls within the parameters of a constructivist paradigm (De Kock, 2015:172). Constructivism originates from a social tradition known as phenomenology (Annansingh & Howell, 2016:40) (refer to section 4.3.3). The researcher, as a social constructivist, looks for complexities of views (through following the phenomenological research design) rather than a singular deterministic view of the phenomenon in question. The critique of the TPF and other social views (such as the War on Drugs) is that they are too deterministic thus lending themselves to a positivist paradigm that is not well suited to the social sciences but is more suited to the natural sciences where there are constants and not variables (Rahi, 2017:1).

#### **4.3.3.1 Sampling techniques and size**

Sampling is defined as an act of choosing a representative part of a specific population for the purpose of determining the attributes of the entire population. There are two main categories of sampling methods, namely, probability and non-probability sampling. Probability or random sampling entails a randomised selection of research participants. Non-probability or non-random sampling is the opposite of this, as it does not rely on randomisation but on the researcher who selects elements for the sample (Taherdoost, 2016:20–21).

The specific element – drug use – was used to select the female offender sample. Therefore, this falls within the parameters of the non-probability sampling method. Under the non-probability sampling category, which was utilised, is purposive sampling that, by its nature, is subjective as it relies on the researcher’s judgment on who can be part of the sample or not. However, it is still beneficial for exploratory qualitative research (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016:4). As the name suggests, participants are recruited thoughtfully and purposefully in order to answer the research question. Furthermore, critical case sampling (CCS), a sub-type of purposive sampling, was utilised in this research. This sampling technique is defined as a process of selecting a small number of important cases that are likely to yield relevant information thus furthering knowledge production (Suri, 2011:68).

This study focuses on one population (from which a sample was drawn), namely, female

offenders, specifically those who used drugs prior to incarceration, and professional members of staff who offer psychosocial and social support to incarcerated offenders (i.e., social workers and psychologists, hereinafter referred to as DCS officials). Cases representing female offenders that were likely to yield information were located in correctional facilities.

Due to the offender population being classified as a hard-to-reach research group, snowballing was further utilised to select the sample. Snowball sampling is also a non-probability sampling technique and it is employed in scenarios where samples possess qualities that are hard to find (Ghaljaie, Naderifar & Goli, 2017:2). The DCS does not categorically classify drug use during or before the commission of an offence, therefore, finding these participants required snowball sampling where existing participants were asked to refer other potential participants who met the criteria for participation (Waters, 2015:367).

For the purpose of sampling DCS officials, the non-probability sampling method, specifically, purposive sampling was employed as these participants were purposely chosen to partake in the study based on a specific characteristic or knowledge they possessed (i.e., offering psychosocial support to offenders who (ab)use substances and the impact of substance (ab)use on the user).

In attaining these specific participants, the Case Management Committees (CMC) at Johannesburg Correctional Centre where the interviews were started was approached. The CMC is responsible for creating sentence plans for each offender, as well as reviewing those plans to note progress and make amendments if necessary. However, in approaching the CMC, the list of potential female offender participants that they generated, did not fit the criteria as listed above. This was only discovered after the first five interviews were conducted. After this discovery, the social workers were approached and they suggested more relevant candidates who further recruited others (snowballing). In total, 25 female offenders were interviewed at Johannesburg Correctional Centre however four were excluded because they did not fit the female offender participant criteria.



Having gained experience at Johannesburg Correctional Centre, when commencing with interviews at Kgoši Mampuru II, the social workers were approached directly. The same process of attaining female offender participants at Johannesburg Correctional Centre was then followed with participants at Kgoši Mampuru II. However, the female offenders at Kgoši Mampuru II were less willing to participate in the research. The researcher wanted to conduct an equal number of female offender interviews as at Johannesburg Correctional Centre (21 interviews) for comparison purposes. However, after eight interviews, candidates declined participation. Despite the refusals of the relevant female offenders to participate in the research, saturation however had been reached already. Overall, these particular units of analysis form a small subset, thus making them more difficult to locate. This is true for both correctional centres used in the research.

#### ***4.3.3.1.1 Units of analysis and sample size***

Units of analysis refer to what or who is being studied. Although there is a plethora of units of analysis, in social research, this usually refers to people (Babbie, 2015:97). Primary units of analysis for this study were incarcerated females, and the complementary units of analysis were DCS officials from Kgoši Mampuru II and Johannesburg Correctional Centres.

A total of 29 females incarcerated at the two correctional centres participated in this study. The total number of participants in each group was determined by saturation. Saturation of data was reached when no new information was being generated from the sample. Additional data were collected from five (5) social workers and psychologists (cumulative) based at the two correctional facilities. This was done to supplement data collected from the primary unit of analysis (i.e., the female offenders).

The information for the selection criteria could not be identified in the offenders' CMC records. The selection criteria were as follows:

- Substance abuse prior to offending and incarceration;

- Individuals who were intoxicated as a result of substance use during antisocial or criminal behaviour;
- Incarcerated for drug related offences; and
- Offenders who committed crimes to support their drug use lifestyles.

#### **4.3.3.1.2 Geographical delineation**

Initially, four female correctional centres across South Africa were selected to form part of the study population. These correctional centres are located in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Kroonstad and Cape Town. Respectively, these correctional centres are Johannesburg, Kgoši Mampuru II, Bizzah Makhate and Pollsmoor. However, due to lack of funds and restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, only two female correctional centres were visited for the research. These were Johannesburg and Kgoši Mampuru II correctional facilities. Furthermore, the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA), NICRO, Khulisa, and Community Corrections were also approached for the purpose of conducting interviews there but, also due to the Covid-19 pandemic, access to these organisations was completely denied or prohibited. Therefore, they had to be removed from the research altogether.

## **4.4 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection refers to a process of gathering information on variables of interest to the research. This is not done haphazardly, but in an established systematic manner (Sullivan-Bolyai, Bova & Singh, 2014:287). There are two categories for data collection in research, namely, primary sources and secondary sources (Maxfield & Babbie, 2014:299). This study collected data from primary sources.

### **4.4.1 Data collection method**

Rigorous data collection is an integral part of qualitative research. Different data collection

methods are used in this endeavour. The most common are interviews, focus group discussions, observational methods and document analysis (Ranney, Meisel, Choo, Garro, Sasson & Morrow Guthrie, 2015:1103). Since this research sought to investigate people's lived experiences (see previous section on phenomenology), semi-structured interviews were used to collect data.

#### **4.4.1.1 *Semi-structured interviews***

A semi-structured interview is defined as a formal meeting conducted with research participants in order to ascertain information pertinent to the research topic. This form of interview does not follow a strict list of questions as opposed to structured interviews. Instead of specific questions being asked, themes are rather explored (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019:3). Open-ended questions are posed to participants to allow them to elaborate on their answers. It also allows the interviewer to probe the participant further so as to create a depth of data (Luo & Wildemuth, 2009:249). This would not be possible if a structured interview format was followed.

The main purpose of semi-structured interviews was to collect information from relevant participants. Specifically, these participants had a personal experience of the phenomenon under study (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019:2). Semi-structured interviews are also suitable for collecting data for exploratory research (Whiting, 2008:37), which was the direction of this research. Triangulation can also be conducted through semi-structured interviews by relating the collected data with other data sources (Irvine, Drew & Sainsbury, 2013:97). Semi-structured interviews also complement the qualitative aspect of the research approach. Furthermore, they can accommodate the formulation of tentative models (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019:7), which was part of the endeavour of this research. Essentially, the semi-structured interview form of data collection is well suited for a qualitative approach to research.

Semi-structured interviews have a few advantages. Chiefly, pertaining to this research, they allowed for sensitive and personal information to be collected from research participants (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019:5). Due to the topics of drug use, addiction

and crime in this research, sensitive and personal information was collected. Another advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they allow for unique aspects of each individual participant to be explored, thus affording the researcher the opportunity to form comparisons between participants (McIntosh & Morse, 2015:10). The major disadvantage of semi-structured interviews however is that they are less objective, thereby making the research harder to defend against critique (Hofisi, Hofisi & Mago, 2014:64).

A semi-structured interview schedule containing relevant guiding questions on the themes to be explored was used (Adams, 2015:492). For this study, these themes for female offenders included: family background (to assess any criminogenic factors); a history of drug use and its relation to involvement in criminal activity; and how the involvement of females relates to crime/antisocial behaviour. Additionally, DCS officials' themes sought to further elucidate on the drug-crime relationship in the context of female offenders.

#### **4.4.2 Data collection process**

The data collection process for both the offenders and the DCS officials was implemented through semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. The data collection commenced at the beginning of June, 2021 and ended in the middle of September 2021. The interviews were first conducted at Johannesburg Correctional Centre, where 21 female offender participants followed by two DCS officials were interviewed. Thereafter, eight female offenders followed by three DCS officials were interviewed at Kgoši Mampuru II Correctional Centre.

The interviewing process took almost four months to complete due to interruptions brought on by restrictions implemented by the South African government during the Covid-19 pandemic. The major restriction that disrupted the data collection was that visits to correctional facilities were prohibited for some periods during the year. When able to conduct the interviews, all Covid-19 protocols, as outlined in *A guide to planning, preparing for, and conducting fieldwork in the context of COVID-19* (Higher Health and Universities South Africa [USAf], 2021), were followed. The safety of the interviewees and the researcher remained a priority.

The interviews also included the capturing of demographic data, displayed in Table 5.1. The demographic questions served to support the research data by identifying other factors underpinning substance use and criminality. Before the interviews were conducted, participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the potential risks of the study and the rights of the participants within the study. The participants were also given surety of anonymity and confidentiality. All this information was contained in the Consent Form (Annexure A). The questions posed to all the offender participants are in the semi-structured interview schedule in Annexure B and the interview schedule followed when interviewing the DCS officials is found in Annexure C.

The questions posed to the participants were continuously modified as needed during the interviews to allow for follow up, clarification, and further probing. This allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences. Initially, the early interviews with individual female offenders took at least an hour to conduct. By the end of the interviewing process, when data saturation had been reached, individual interviews had reduced to 15 minutes. Since the interviews with the DCS officials took place after the female offender interviews, they were on average 30 minutes long. The reason for the short period was because the interviews were looking at a specific context, and rapport had already been established by the researcher coming frequently to the correctional facilities.

In order to collect data from the relevant female offenders, the social workers from both correctional centres were initially approached. They then provided a list of potential participants, however not all of the listed candidates were willing to participate. From the first willing participant, snowball sampling was then followed to ascertain more willing participants. During all the interviews, a digital voice recorder was used to record the interviews, with permission from the participants. Furthermore, during the interviews, thorough field notes were taken by the researcher to record visual cues from the participants. These cues were later used to capture the data more accurately. For example, if the researcher noted that the participant was stressed or tearful, this was captured to further refine the data collected. These cues, together with a voice recording, were used in conjunction with each other for richer data. After the data were collected,

they were then analysed. The data collection process was however not without its challenges.

#### ***4.4.2.1 Challenges during data collection in the field***

Due to the fact that this research was conducted during the height of the covid-19 pandemic, that presented a major challenge to the data collection timeline. Additionally, access to the desired units of analysis were also affected due to the pandemic. With the restrictions of movement and access due to the pandemic, the period for data collection was extended by a month. Furthermore, the other desired units of analysis, as stated in section 4.3.3.1.2, had to be dropped from the research, thus only leaving the correctional centre population. In terms of collecting the data from the incarcerated female offenders, interviews could not be slated to other forms of electronic communication. Offenders are restricted from use of devices; therefore, the researcher had no choice but to wait until restrictions to access were lifted.

Conducting research within a correctional centre also presents innumerable challenges, the main one being access to the relevant research participants. The first several participants were completely not relevant to the research. To resolve this, the researcher approached the social workers and they were able to create a short list of relevant participants. From there, the participants were able to suggest other suitable participants (snowballing). Furthermore, in reference of access to the centre itself, when the Centre Manager was not available, things were somewhat disorganised. If they were not at work that day, then the researcher could not effectively conduct the interviews, if at all. To curb this, the researcher coordinated their correctional centre visits with days that the Centre Manager was also going to be present. This was more so at the Johannesburg Correctional Centre. Overall, immense patience is required when conducting field work in a correction facility.

## **4.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Due to the qualitative nature of this research, thematic analysis (TA) was used to analyse the data. TA is mainly utilised for qualitative data as it is multi-faceted due to its ability to

deal with many different data sets and research questions (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013:400) and to identify patterned meaning within datasets (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen & Snelgrove, 2016). TA is an all-encompassing term for qualitative data analysis approaches that seek to identify themes in data sets. There are different versions of TA however they have a commonality in reflexivity in the social theory context as: “reflexivity is an act of self-reference where examination or action 'bends back on', refers to, and affects the entity instigating the action or examination” (Weinstein, 2008:222) (also refer to the research design section for phenomenology, section 4.3.2).

Owing to the exploratory direction of this research, a depth of data was sought. TA was therefore an appropriate method for structuring the data (Clarke & Braun, 2013:26) because it does not fall within any epistemological positions and can draw from any paradigm (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke & Braun, 2017:19). TA is therefore uniquely positioned as independent of epistemology and theory therefore it can be applied to any epistemological and theoretical approach (Clarke, Braun & Hayfield, 2015:223).

This research utilised inductive TA (iTA) which implies that the process of coding does not have to fit preexisting themes or the researcher’s preconceptions. The iTA approach is heavily data-driven as opposed to deductive TA which is theory-driven. The inductive approach entails that themes identified are linked to the data and bear no connection to the questions posed to the research subjects (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017:8). In this research however, the questions posed did inform the generated themes, but this was a result of consequence, not intention. It has to be acknowledged that pure induction could not be achieved because analysis was influenced by the researcher’s academic training, experience and worldview. To cater for this potential bias, the researcher stayed as close as possible to the meanings in the data, as advised by Clarke et al (2015:225). This means that the data were presented as is, and not as the researcher wished it to be. How this was achieved is further discussed in sections 1.7.1–1.7.4.

The data were analysed through ATLAS.ti 9, a software package that allows for quick coding and organisation of data. This software package enables data analysis more extensively than using a spreadsheet programme such as Microsoft Excel. ATLAS.ti 9

also supports the widest range of data sources and offers the most advanced analysis tools in qualitative research software. From the data collected, the salient codes were themed in the programme and analysed through the theoretical framework and the literature on the topic under study.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Participants signed a consent form for recording of the interview (refer to Annexure A). The steps below, informed by Richards (2014:103), were followed in the analysis process of the interview transcriptions:

### **Step 1: Reading the transcripts**

#### *1.1. Browse through all transcripts, as a whole.*

Once the transcripts were completed, they were printed and uploaded onto ATLAS.ti 9. Browsing at a glance was then done through the printouts.

#### *1.2. Make notes about first impressions.*

From the initial browsing of the printouts, notes were made directly onto the printouts as well as on ATLAS.ti 9. The notes presented the initial impressions of what was observed from the data by looking at the data through the lens of the literature and theoretical framework. The data were observed roughly without any refinement.

#### *1.3. Read transcripts again, one by one.*

#### *1.4. Read very carefully, line by line.*

After processing steps 1.1 and 1.2, steps 1.3 and 1.4 were done on ATLAS.ti 9. This signalled the beginning of refining the data within the lenses of the literature and theoretical framework.

### **Step 2: Labelling relevant pieces**

#### *2.1. Labelling of relevant words, phrases and sentences.*



Salient words commonly found within the transcripts were automatically extracted by ATLAS.ti 9. Furthermore, the salient words were linked to common phrases appearing in the transcripts.

*2.2. Relevance can be decided on: repetition, similarity to previous literature and alignment with the research theory.*

Using the lenses of the literature and the theoretical framework, refinement of the words and their phrases was done in relevance to the topic under study.

### **Step 3: Create categories by bringing several codes together.**

After step 2.2, similar phrases were then grouped together to form codes.

*3.1. Go through all the codes created in the previous step then place them in categories/themes.*

A further refinement of the codes was implemented by condensing into more similarities, thus forming themes.

### **Step 4: Label the categories.**

4.1. Label categories and decide which are the most relevant and how they are connected to each other.

The themes were appropriately labelled, by using terms and concepts from the literature and the theoretical framework.

*4.2. Describe the connections between them.*

Further analysis of the themes was done, then the researcher determined how they relate to the broader topic.

*4.3. The categories and the connections are the main result of your study.*

The findings are outlined in Chapter 5.

### **Step 5: Decide if there is a hierarchy among the categories.**

This step is not relevant to this study as there is no hierarchy within the themes.

*5.1. Decide if one category is more important than the other.*

*5.2. Draw a figure to summarise findings.*

### **Step 6: Write up findings**

The findings are written up in Chapter 5.

*6.1. Describe the categories and how they are connected.*

*6.2. Discuss and interpret the findings.*

The steps outlined above are indicative of manual or open coding. This form of coding involves the identification of concepts and categories by dividing the data (interview transcripts in this research) into smaller sections then labelling those sections with concepts that are relevant to the study (Lin, 2017:473). Open coding relies on the data directly informing the concepts that emerge, thereby bypassing the researcher's preconceptions. This is an added advantage of open coding as the process ensures legitimacy of the work (Mohajan, 2018:10). The disadvantage however, is that it is a tedious and time-consuming process (Cascio, Lee, Vaudrin & Freedman, 2019:123).

#### **4.5.1 Data analysis process**

Following the thematic analysis Steps 1-6 outlined above, coding was done manually on all the transcripts using Microsoft Word, which is a substitute for the traditional pen and paper. The analysis process started in conjunction with the interview process. After the offender participants' data were analysed, the interview transcriptions of the DCS officials were then analysed. The interview transcripts were uploaded into the ATLAS.ti 9 computer programme that analyses unstructured data. Following the initial manual coding, another round of coding was done with the assistance of ATLAS.ti 9. The initial manual coding conducted in conjunction with the interviewing process was then

compared to the ATLAS.ti 9 assisted coding. This process allowed for consistency in the key points during coding. This process of coding resulted in five core themes for the offender participants and six supplementary themes from the DCS official participants. A discursive discussion of the findings is presented in Chapter 5.

#### **4.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter focused on the research methods employed in the study. A qualitative approach was deemed suitable for this research based on its explorative nature, as well as the advantages of qualitative approaches in research. Following sound ontological and epistemological philosophies, the study was shaped by a constructivist worldview that complemented the qualitative approach and allowed for the research aims and objectives to be achieved. The suitability of phenomenology for this study, giving root to constructivism, was discussed as a research design in the qualitative approach. Phenomenology allowed for the essence and meanings of the lived experiences of participants to be encapsulated. Both the critical case sampling and snowball sampling were employed when sourcing the offender participants due to the environment where they are held. For the sampling of DCS officials' participant group, purposive sampling was employed. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted one on one for the collection of the data. This chapter also outlined the strategies followed for data analysis and the interpretation thereof, namely, inductive thematic analysis.

This chapter lastly demonstrated how the data analysis adheres to the outlined methodology and how it reflects back to the research questions. It showed the exact process followed to analyse the interview transcriptions to formulate codes and themes, as outlined in section 4.5. Following the open coding process, the data were reduced and refined until themes emerged. This chapter further includes the demographics of the research participants in a table format.

## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS: OFFENDER AND DCS OFFICIALS-BASED DATA

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study. The research questions are addressed with supporting data from interviews. This supporting data will take the form of verbatim quotations and this further ensures conformability and dependability. In instances, tables are used to present the demographic and other factual data.

The following research questions guide the presentation of this chapter:

- How do various drug types affect female criminality?
- What influence does gender have on the drug-crime relationship?
- Does drug use result in criminality and vice versa?
- Is the general strain model applicable in relation to the drug-crime relationship in the South African context?

As stated in the first chapter of this thesis, the primary aim of this research was to conduct a systematic *exploration* of the influencing effects of two variables, gender and drug type in the drug-crime nexus. The focus was on the female gender as it remained under explored at the commencement of this study. From this aim, specific research questions were then developed as presented above. From that process, findings were encapsulated.

### 5.2 FINDINGS

#### 5.2.1 Demographic data of study participants

The findings are based on two sets of participant groups that were interviewed for this qualitative study, namely, the female offenders and correctional officials. A total of 29

female offenders were interviewed as well as five DCS officials (two clinical psychologists and three social workers). Both the female offenders and the DCS officials were situated in Johannesburg and Kgoši Mampuru II correctional facilities. All participants of the study took part voluntarily. Table 5.1 summarises the demographical data of the female offenders who participated in this study.

**Table 5. 1: Demographics of study participants – Female offenders**

Demographic	Category	Correctional Centre	
		Johannesburg Correctional Centre - Female	Kgoši Mampuru II - Female
		Total: 21	Total: 8
<b>Current age groups</b>	18–25	6	1
	26–30	4	2
	31–35	6	3
	36–40	1	1
	41–45	0	0
	46–50	3	1
	51–55	1	0
<b>Race</b>	Black	11	4
	White	1	3
	Coloured	8	1
	Asian	1	0
<b>Employment status prior to incarceration</b>	Employed	7	4
	Unemployed	14	4
<b>Nationality</b>	South African	20	8
	Other	1	0
<b>Education</b>	Dropped out in primary school (grade 1–7)	3	0
	Dropped out in high school (grade 8–11)	13	5
	Matriculated	4	1
	Higher education	1	2

The youngest participant was 21 years old and the oldest was 52. Overall, 18 participants were unemployed before incarceration and, of those that were employed, the employment type was mostly informal. Only a total of six (6) offender participants were formally employed in various sectors. The informally employed relied on odd jobs which were often temporary therefore they lacked a stable income. In reference to education levels, 21 did not complete secondary schooling, with eight (8) dropping out in primary school, five (5) matriculated and three (3) pursued higher/tertiary education after matriculating.

Table 5.2 presents the crimes for which the offender participants were incarcerated.

**Table 5. 2: Crime categories convicted for**

Crime Category	Correctional Centre	
	Johannesburg Correctional Centre - Female	Kgoši Mampuru II - Female
Contact Crime	16	1
Other Serious Crime	4	7
Property Related Crime	1	0

The contact crimes in this study mostly included aggravated robbery and murder but the murders were without intent, according to the offender participants. They were mostly accidental because they were in states of intoxication due to alcohol. The offender participants reported that, for aggravated robbery, they were mostly accomplices, therefore they were found guilty by association. The *other serious* crimes category constituted theft and shoplifting that were mainly repeated offences hence the courts convicted the offenders to longer sentences that needed to be served in a correctional facility instead of short suspensions. This category was mainly self-reported by the offender participants. Theft and shoplifting were the means to acquire money to support their substance use habits. The one incident of property related crime was burglary, also committed to acquire money for substance use however the participant did not usually engage in burglary. The offender participants were not necessarily intoxicated during the

commission of these crimes and they were not committed habitually. The offences that were associated with substance use were usually nonviolent as self-reported by the offenders.

Table 5.3 presents the DCS officials who participated in the research.

**Table 5. 3: DCS official participants**

<b>Profession</b>	
<b>Clinical psychologists</b>	2
<b>Social workers</b>	3

The DCS official participants have 19 years of cumulative experience providing social and psychological services to the female offenders within the correctional centres. Due to their expertise, experience and contact with female offenders, they were key informants in this research.

Table 5.4 presents the substances used by participants in the study. Where applicable, the street jargon used to refer to certain substances within South Africa is written in parentheses next to the formal name.



**Table 5. 4: Prevalent substances**

<b>Drug Category</b>	<b>Specific substance</b>	<b>Count</b>
Depressants (downers) Total users: 28	Cannabis (marijuana, weed, dope, pot, grass, zol, skyf, hash, joint, boom, ganja, dagga)	8
	Alcohol (liquid courage, umqomboti, sauce, draft, tummy buster, vino)	11
	Codeine (lean, syrup, cough mixture, Cody, krokodil, purple drank)	1
	Methaqualone (mandrax, buttons, mx, gholfsticks, doodies, lizards, bottelkop, press outs, white pipe)	7
	Gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB) (liquid ecstasy, fantasy, liquid x, easy lay, G)	1
Stimulants (uppers) Total users: 26	Cocaine (inclusive of powder and crack cocaine) (snow, rock, klippe, freebase, coke, Charlie, C, crack, blow, line)	9
	Crystal methamphetamine (crystal meth, tik, meth, ice, glass)	12
	Methcathinone (cat, kat, khat, chat, gat, drone, m-kat, ghetto coke, poorman's coke, bushman's tea, Somali tea)	5
Opioids Total users: 11	Heroin (H, Harry, smack, junk brown sugar, Thai white, horse)	4
	<i>Nyaope</i> (Ntashé, Mgwinya, Wunga, Whoonga)	7
Hallucinogens Total users: 2	Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD, A, acid, microdots, candy, trips, blotter acid, white lightning)	1
	3-4 methylene-methamphetamine (MDMA) (ecstasy, E, XTC, molly, superman, love drug, domes, mellow)	1
Combination of prescription drugs (uppers and downers) Total users: 1	Psychiatric drugs	1

The prevalence of a drug was determined by its accessibility and affordability. The most prevalent drug category used by offenders in this study was depressants which were easily accessible in their environments. All of the offenders, except one, had used depressants at some point in their lives. They either started using depressant drugs at the onset or transitioned into using them. Others used a combination of depressant drugs with other drugs from a different category that was affordable for them. The only depressant drug that was neither easily accessible nor affordable was gamma hydroxy butyrate (GHB). The one participant who used GHB was relatively financially well-off and had contacts with people that had easy access to the substance.

The drug category least used was hallucinogens due to their high cost with ecstasy being the most costly. The most prevalent substance used was crystal methamphetamine and cannabis. The least prevalent used drug type was prescription drugs that were used by only one offender participant. Psychiatric drugs were not preferred by the offenders as they are neither easily accessible nor affordable.

Although alcohol has the behavioural effects of a stimulant, these effects are temporary. Therefore, alcohol is classified as a depressant (Costardi, Nampo, Silva, Ribeiro, Stella, Stella & Malheiros, 2015:382). The street names of alcohol are also in specific reference to the type such as wine, beer, cider, etc. Cocaine occurs in two forms, powder and crack cocaine. There is no pharmacological difference between the two; the only difference is in their appearance. Cocaine appears as a powder and crack appears as a rock or crystal (LaBar, 2014:318). Due to the difference in their appearance, the manner in which they are consumed is also different (Eiden, Vincent, Serrand, Serre, Richard, Picot, Frauger, Fouilhé, Daveluy, Peyrière & French Addictovigilance Network [FAN], 2021:456).

Table 5.5 gives account of how the offenders were initially introduced to substances and their use.

**Table 5. 5: Modes of introduction to substance use**

<b>Mode of introduction</b>	<b>Count</b>
Peers	17
Boyfriend/Partner	5
Sibling	2
Environment	1
Drugged with no knowledge thereof	2
Own volition	1
Psychiatric facility	1

Most of the offenders were introduced to substance use through friends or friend groups. Own volition refers to when a participant willingly used a substance out of curiosity.

Table 5.6 outlines the onset ages of substance use.

**Table 5. 6: Onset ages of use and substances**

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Common Onset substance</b>
10 – 15	5	Marijuana & cocaine
16 – 20	18	Alcohol & cocaine
21 – 25	6	Marijuana, cocaine & crystal meth

The average age of onset age for substance use for the offender participants was 17.7 years. The youngest onset age of substance use was 13, while the oldest was 24. The most commonly used onset substances across all age groups was marijuana and cocaine that is an expensive substance. The participants normally used more than one substance at the onset; the ones presented in the table are merely the most common.

Due to the ethical requirements for anonymity, when using verbatim responses, the offender participants from Johannesburg Correctional Centre – Female, are referred to as JC-##, where the ## represents the order number in the data set. Similarly, offender participants from Kgoši Mampuru II – Female, are referred to as KM-##. When quoting the female offender responses, the age and race is given in parentheses. Furthermore, any information that directly identifies or alludes to specific organisations or institutions will also be denoted alphabetically with X, Y or Z.

Most of the offender participants were introduced to substances by peers. The one participant that was influenced by the environment was affected by two co-occurring factors, peer pressure and an environment influenced by the drug subculture which normalised substance use. JC-12 (52, coloured) stated: *“I grew up on the Cape Flats. At the Cape, there is this type of lifestyle; you are either in or out. When you are out, you become the popeye, and nobody wants to be the popeye. So me and my friends did drugs”*. One of the two participants who were drugged unknowingly, JC-06 (35, white), stated that: *“... he put an ecstasy in my mouth ...”*. Participant JC-05 (28, black) stated:

*“I was taken by Nigerians to Cape Town, but they lied to me because when they took me in, they did not tell me what they were taking me there for. Actually, [they] took me for human trafficking, and that was for three years. They got me hooked onto drugs; and sold me from pimp to pimp ...”*

Initially, she was also offered substances that she did not know were illicit. For JC-13 (47, coloured), she started using drugs of her own volition after she found them hidden in her home:

*“I was 18 years and this one lady used to come to clean the house. I used to catch her so many times doing [drugs]. This one time, I found her lolly with the lighter there. I left it for a few months. Then one day me and my husband had a big argument, and usually what I would do is just light a cigarette after such. But that day something just said light this thing and I did. I told no one, I did it alone.”*

One participant was introduced to substance abuse through the psychiatric hospital

therefore she was already familiar with the use of psychiatric drugs. She stated that she grew up in a family that regularly used (never abused) psychiatric drugs for their psychiatric ailments. Due to her mental illnesses, she was misdiagnosed at the psychiatric hospital and this led to a prescription of incorrect medication. From there she became an addict. KM-05 (white, 32) said:

*“Everything got affected because I was depressed, and I just started spiralling. I ended up in X Psychiatric Hospital, and this was my first type of counselling because they diagnosed me wrong. They diagnosed me with severe depression, which it wasn’t. I was on medication for severe depression and all those things.*

*“The next year, I relapsed and then they put me in Y Clinic. In Y Clinic, I was diagnosed with two types of bipolar, manic and hypomanic, but this was also a misdiagnosis. Again, they put me on different types of pills and I got addicted to those. It was always a thing of medication after medication.”*

The next section shows the thematic presentation of the qualitative data, substantiated by verbatim quotations.

### **5.2.2 Thematic presentation of findings**

From the guiding questions of the study, restated in the introduction of this chapter, five themes emerged. These are presented in Table 5.7 along with their corresponding codes. The six supplementary themes that emerged from the DCS official participants are then presented in Table 5.8. For both participant groups, not all the themes have corresponding codes, because they were formed directly from the interview schedules.

**Table 5. 7: Offender participants' themes and corresponding codes**

<b>Offender Participants' Themes</b>	
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Corresponding codes</b>
1. Sense of belonging and modelled agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family background</li> <li>• Relationship with close family</li> <li>• Substance use in the family</li> <li>• Criminality in the family</li> </ul>
2. Reasons for substance use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trigger for substance use</li> <li>• Experienced trauma</li> </ul>
3. Association between substance use and criminal behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminality</li> <li>• Violence resultant from drugs</li> <li>• The use substances in relation to the crime</li> <li>• Influence of drugs on the crime</li> </ul>
4. Relation between drug type and type of offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illicit substances related to type of offence</li> <li>• Alcohol and prescription medication related to type of offence</li> </ul>
5. Reflections on a life of substance use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cessation of use</li> <li>• Consequences of use</li> <li>• The hypothetical: Being well-off financially</li> <li>• The hypothetical: Functional drug user</li> </ul>

**Table 5. 8: DCS official participants' themes and corresponding codes**

<b>DCS officials Participants' Themes</b>	
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Corresponding codes</b>
1. Difference between male and female substance users	
2. DCS officials' perspective: Drug use causes criminality	
3. DCS officials' perspective: Criminality causes drug use	
4. Why females commonly use drugs	
5. Cessation of substance use while incarcerated	
6. Drug type related to type of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol related incidents</li> <li>• <i>Nyaope</i> and crime</li> </ul>

Evidence of these emergent themes will be discussed in the next section. There will be two parts for this. Part I will present themes that emerged from the offender participants, whereas Part II will present the emergent DCS officials' themes.

### **5.2.2.1 Part I: Offender participants' themes and corresponding codes**

Below, the themes and the supporting data that informed the themes is presented.

#### **5.2.2.1.1 Theme One: Sense of belonging and modelled agents**

In tracing the genesis of the offender participants' drug habits, family dynamics were explored. This theme used codes that related to family bonds and how they could have influenced substance using behaviour. This focused on parents and guardians. Most of the offenders grew up with a sense of belonging in their families; they mostly grew up in good families who loved and supported them. Below are the common sentiments that most offenders shared concerning their relationships with parents and caregivers in childhood.

**JC-18** (23, black)

*My relationship with my parents was good, nice, fun. There were no problems. My parents always supported me with everything that I did. I'm also the last born out of four, so everything that I wanted I always got.*

**JC-19** (34, black)

*My relationship with my parents was alright. There were no problems whatsoever.*

**KM-04** (30, black)

*I grew up with both my parents and the relationship was perfect.*

Only four participants felt neglected by their close family members that included parents and guardians. Those participants sought belonging elsewhere.

**JC-03** (46, coloured)

*I am the only child. I was 12 years old when my father passed away. He passed away at the age of 65. Before then, my mother was gone for six years, so I was just growing up with my father. When my father passed away, my mother came back. I have a good relationship with my parents it's just that my mother was an alcoholic, and she drank too much. They thought I had to take care of myself from the age of 12 years old. My mother's family got involved; they tried to give me more education.*

*I am from Cape Town originally so, in Cape Town, if you do not have anybody to support you, you have to see what you can do for yourself. My family wanted to put me in a job, which I didn't want and that's when I ran away from my family. I never had a real family so I always just felt alone; I did not feel my own family cares for me.*

**JC-05** (28, black)

*I know my mother did not love me. I've even asked my aunt why and, to this day, I do not know why. I cannot blame my dad, because he did try. Even when the incident happened, yes, he was angry, but he was still there for me. But, to an extent, I kind of blame my mother because I keep thinking had she accepted me, I would not be here. I have given up and I have made peace that she does not love me. My mother loves other people's children, takes care of them and cooks for them.*

Along with the sense of belonging, substance use/abuse and criminality were explored within the family.

*(a) Substance use and criminality in the family*

Further exploring family dynamics, the theme looked at substance abuse and criminal behaviour of the parents and guardians/caregivers but not of siblings or distant family members. This was because the proximity to these family members was too distant to be modelled. This was the case for JC-11 (24, coloured), along with two others, JC-05 (28, black) and JC-08 (22, black). JC-11 further acknowledged behaviour displayed by the



sibling as being wrong and acted to correct it with her other sibling:

### JC-11

*My eldest brother, the one that passed away, yes, he was the only one doing drugs in the family. When he was on drugs, he would come home and steal stuff from the house and disrespect my parents all the time. Me and my big brother could not take it anymore one day and we just beat him really bad. We were tired of him because of disrespecting mommy and daddy. He's supposed to be the older one, setting an example for us.*

This theme discovered that, of the 29 offender participants, only 11 had parents and/or guardians (modelled agents) who were abusing substances, mostly alcohol, or were engaged in criminality. JC-04 (46, coloured) spoke of an alcoholic mother: “*My mother was an alcoholic*”, and JC-14 (23, black) spoke of both parents as being alcoholics: “*My mother and my father used to drink alcohol a lot. They would drink every day; there was no special occasion for them.*” There was only one report where cannabis was abused. JC-01 (30, Arab): “*They used to smoke dagga. It was my mum and my uncle and another cousin.*” However, JC-01 grew up in Morocco where the use of cannabis has been normalised throughout the country, as she reported. JC-12 (52, coloured) also made a comment about normalcy concerning her father’s alcohol abuse. She stated:

*“He would drink normally after work. But everything in the house, groceries and such, were always there. With the drinking, I used to think that's the way things are supposed to be.”*

Of the 11 offender participants, only two reported that there was criminality with the modelled agents. JC-20 (47, coloured) and KM05 (32, white) reported on how their fathers were engaged in criminality. JC-20 reported that she used to observe her father going in and out of correctional facilities repeatedly. When asked why this was, she stated that she assumed that it was because he committed thefts to survive:

*“Since I can remember, I was in Grade 2 when my father first went to prison. He used to go in and out of prison like that ... It was for theft. I think it is because he*

*didn't have a job, and my mother was the only one that was working, so he was stealing.”*

KM-05 revealed how she grew up within outward criminality:

*I was exposed to a lot, and I grew up very wealthy; there were a lot of illegal things. My dad was involved in diamond smuggling, and he had brothels, things like that.*

Both JC-20 and KM-05's fathers were however not engaged in any form of drug abuse”

### **KM-05**

*We have all always been on prescription medication, but no one abused it. I was the first person in the family who got addicted. We all have anxiety and insomnia, epilepsy, depression, these were passed down, but they had their medication as they should.*

KM-05 was, however, the only participant who grew up observing psychiatric drugs being used as a normalcy within the family. The family did not abuse the medications, but rather used them as prescribed by psychiatrists. The “they” in the above quote referred to the family members and that the medications were used correctly.

#### **5.2.2.1.2 Theme Two: Reasons for substance use**

Following participants' substance use into adolescence and adulthood, continued use of substances was investigated. What was sought was the reasons as to why participants continued to use substances. One reason given by participants as to why they continued substance use, was because of familial neglect as demonstrated in the preceding theme one. Few participants did not feel the sense of belonging or connection to their families. The consequence is that they went out to seek a sense of belonging from individuals or groups that directed them to paths of substance use. The use of substances was then used to fill the void they felt. JC-05 (28, black) reflected on something that a few other participants have similar sentiments about:

### **JC-05**

*At first, I used to blame my parents; they didn't give me attention and they didn't love me. I would see how the relationship was with my cousins' parents, and I would desire that but I never got it. I felt unworthy, rejected and unwanted. So, whenever visitors would come to the house, I would just disappear, because I could not stand the sight of them.*

*While looking at other families, I could see that they were going through far worse things than me. Some even did not get any love from their families, but they never did what I did. My aunts were even willing to pay for my school, and I never lacked anything. So, I only have myself to blame. It is not like my aunts did not try to give me love, they did, I only wanted it from my parents.*

Since the majority (17 of the 29) of participants initially started using substances in their adolescence, they had the advantage of hindsight in recalling reasons for their continued substance use. A few participants stated that boredom drove them to substance use. Initially, they were curious about substances so they were easily persuaded into trying them. There was no driving force behind their substance use, as JC-16 (26, coloured) stated: *"I honestly just used drugs because I was bored or something."* This is similar to another few offender participants who started experimenting with substances: JC-03 (46, coloured) stated: *"The reason was to explore. When you are young, you just want to explore and experiment. At the time, I just thought this is my thing."*

A lesser reason for substance use was for recreational reasons. A few participants simply enjoyed using substances as in these two cases: KM-01 (25, white): *"There was no reason, to be honest. It was just for the fun and exploring"* and JC-16: *"I will say it was nice but the aftereffects were not worth it."* Although this alludes to impulsive behaviour, these psychological vulnerabilities, along with inability to cope in a healthy way with stress and frustrations, were found to be reasons for substance use. Continued substance use was attributed to poor coping skills.

#### *(a) Poor coping skills*

Fifteen of the 29 female offender participants were trying to cope with relationship problems and family issues. They spoke reflectively on how they would cope with stress

inducing situations stemming from their family life or relationships:

**JC-01** (30, Arab)

*I start to grow up with her, I'm living okay. It is me, her and her husband in the house. Her husband is a businessman, he is working from 7:00 in the morning and he will come back later home. So physically she was bad ... I must make sure I wake up early in the morning cleaning and all that. When I grow up, I'm like, I can't do nothing, she is my mum. So, me getting beaten and all that, it is fine.*

*I start to go to school now. I will come back from school and it is like whoa! Trouble. My books, they will be cut in pieces, until that time she decides I am not going back to school anymore. Her husband say to her, 'No, you cannot do that', she have to [go to school]! She tell him that she is not your child she is my child.*

*Ok I'm being grown up, being calling me names. These are very ugly words and all that beating. Even her family and her neighbours were like: yoh! I try even to kill myself at a young age and I was not know that she is my real mother. If I did find out that she is not my mother, I'm not going to stay with her; I will make a plan for me to go.*

*When I was 16 years old, we go back to Morocco to visit her family. So one boy of my cousins, he wanted to marry me, I refuse. So he go and look for my real mother.*

**JC-13** (47, coloured)

*29<sup>th</sup> May we will be married for 30 years. What happened with me was that I was on drugs; I was on drugs for 22 years of my married life. I was 18 years and this one lady used to come to clean the house, I used to catch her so many times doing [drugs]. This one time I found her lolly with the lighter there. I left it for a few months. Then one day me and my husband had a big argument, and usually what I would do is just light a cigarette after such. But that day something just said light this thing, and I did. I told no one, I did it alone. After that I started getting my own. It was very bad, my life with the drugs.*

**KM-02** (34, black)

*I have always wanted to know who my father is. That's the one thing that bothers me in my spirit even up until now, the fact that I don't know my father. That is what made my life messed up, but now I don't really care because I can see that I am the one that ruined my life. It is a waste of time to keep thinking about it. So yes, I can say that is what made me go wayward. I used to ask my mother who my father is, but she would say I should ask my grandmother, and she would say I should ask my mother. It was just a back and forth like that. I did not know what to do.*

*I started by smoking dagga, thinking to myself that, after I smoke, I will stop thinking about this thing ... I got tired of asking my mother about my father so I just said to myself I'll just drug myself. So I started injecting heroin.*

Trauma, which includes rape, abuse, loss of close family members and gruesome deaths, also caused poorly implemented coping mechanisms. These traumas were mentioned frequently by the offender participants, as discussed below.

*(b) Experienced trauma and coping*

Eight female offender participants had experienced the trauma of rape attributed to substance use. To cope, the participants stated that they also turned to substance use.

**JC-07** (22, black)

*Where my grandmother worked, she used to stay there, and only come back at the end of the month. I was alone with the step-grandfather, and when I was 14, he started to rape me; then I got pregnant. When my grandmother came back she could see I had changed but she couldn't put her finger on it.*

*She would ask me if I am okay and I would say yes, I'm fine. The step-grandfather continued to rape me when my grandmother left. When I was four months pregnant, my grandmother asked me if I'm pregnant, but I denied it. Eventually she could see that I am pregnant and then she asked me who the father of the child is. Then I explained everything to her, she said I was lying and she kicked me out of the house. Then I went to my friend's place, and we were smoking, drinking alcohol*

*and taking drugs.*

**JC-09** (21, black)

*I was raped. That traumatised me. I think about it and, to date, it still affects me, and I still have not told my mother. I was around eight or nine.*

**JC-11** (24, coloured)

*At the age of 14, I was raped. Today, I never told my parents about it. I just said it happened but I never explained anything beyond that. I was actually dating that guy who raped me. He wanted to sleep with me but I didn't want to, and then he forced me to sleep with him.*

*It nearly happened again when I was out with my friends and these guys tried to rape me and my two other friends. Luckily enough, we took their gun and told them to leave us alone. They thought we were joking and we shot one of them in the leg. We were in a place very far away from home, and we were lost, we had no idea where we were.*

*The time I got raped ... that is when everything went wrong for me. I even left school; I just did not want to go anymore. When I got to grade 11, I got so rebellious that the teachers and principal said they could not handle me anymore. They told me to go look for another school.*

*I really had a very bad attitude, a stinking attitude ... It's only changing now in prison. I wasn't crying or worried when they gave me the transfer papers to look for another school, and that is when I started smoking with my friends again.*

**JC-18** (23, black)

*My cousin raped me when I was young. I never told anyone. I was nine years old. It keeps eating at me, whenever I think of it, I become very angry. I am scared to talk to my mother or my family, that's why I keep it to myself. ... he is still living his life. He is even married now and he probably forgot what he did to me. I can't forget though because it was the most painful thing that ever happened in my life.*

**KM-04** (30, black)

*This other day, I went to my friends and when I went back home, it was late. I saw this other older man walking ahead of me and I wanted to approach him so I can walk with him. I ended up thinking to myself that I'm almost home anyway so it doesn't matter, even though I was slightly afraid. As soon as that man turned the corner, there were these other guys sitting by a container and they had a gun. When I approached them they took out their gun, and I felt like I was going to lose my life. I also heard what they were saying ... They made me do what they wanted me to. One of the guys was about my age, and the other one was younger. They took me to this other yard, and they forced me to sleep with them ... They raped me.*

*When I got home, I was scared to tell them because before they would blame me and I would be scolded. I was thinking they would be asking me questions of where I was late at night and why was I walking around at that time. I just was not in the mood to be hearing such. So, when I got home, I just took a bath and went to bed. I was thinking there was not even any use to go to the police station because those people will not be found anyway. So, I just concluded by keeping this in my heart. This is the thing that made me to always want to be under the influence ... I was 17 going on to 18.*

Apart from KM-04, the other rape incidents occurred when the participants were still in childhood or early teenagerhood. The perpetrators were also people that were known to the victim.

Seven of the female offender participants had to learn to cope with physical and/or

emotional abuse within relationships or intimate partner relationships. They also resorted to coping with the intimate partner violence (IPV) through substance use. With intimate partner violence, the abusive partner would usually come back and apologise with gifts, and the cycle would continue.

**KM-08** (29, black)

*In the beginning of our relationship, it was actually fine, and then, after two years, he began to change. He started beating me. I also got pregnant with twins, and I got a miscarriage. I tried to kill myself again then I started with the nyaope.*

**JC-02** (39, coloured)

*I just found the guy and here was the money and it was all bloomy, not knowing that this is going to be my child's father one day and we will end up getting married one day.*

*But with all this came abuse; physical abuse, psychological abuse, emotional abuse. With this I started with the rocks again. I remember getting my first job at xxx, I was 19. When I got my first cheque, I felt so good, like it was all mine, I own this, I don't need to explain myself to anybody. I remember hooking up with one of my old friends, and that's when I fell back into drugs. But now, it became worse. I wasn't on crack cocaine anymore, now I was smoking crystal meth, I was doing mandrax, and partying became much more severe. The fighting became more with my husband to the point where I fell pregnant again. But the baby was conceived from rape, he raped me. With this, I was using drugs while I was pregnant with my daughter. It was more of I don't want this child, I want the child to die. I used, and I used, and I used ...*

*This man did not want me to speak to anybody; he didn't want me to have friends. He was very controlling. So, one day, he came back from work and I was sitting on a bench with my friend, he comes and he pulls me away, then he beats me. I remember I had all my medals and trophies from hockey in the house including my hockey sticks. Then he took the hockey stick and broke my arm. Then he goes and takes my daughter and puts me and my daughter in the bakkie and we were*



*driving around the whole day while I was in pain. In my mind this was not okay; I was not okay with this; I was not going to tolerate this. Following day that's when he decided to take me to hospital, because of the pain I could not sleep.*

The use of substances in these situations was that of continued use as the offender participants started using substances before they met their partners. Since socially acceptable or healthy means of coping were not learned by the participants, the substance use was something they reverted to by default. This was the same for offender participants who lost close family members. To cope with the loss, they resorted to substance use:

**JC-21** (26, black)

*I was 16, and she [mum] is the person who was supportive towards me. She never abandoned me. After mum's death, that's where my life started to lack. When I say 'lack' I mean the full realisation that I was alone, and I felt it even in my being that something had changed because I didn't have anyone to cry to. Even though I had a child, I was still young because I was 16. My granny and aunt were also supportive, and they became the main bread winners at home. After my mum's death, I went to home affairs and social workers to report because even though my granny and aunt were there, I was not accustomed to their way of living. I then went to report to the social workers that I was an orphan and I had two siblings and a child. I told them that I was not comfortable in my granny's house, and then requested that they open a social grant for my two siblings and my child, since my granny was old and could not attend to all our needs and I was the eldest and I could take good care of them. The social workers, though they hesitated, did open the grant for me ...*

*On that same year [2019] what happened was that I had a guilt since I didn't finish my matric, lost my mum and things were not going well at home for my siblings and even for my boyfriend. I knew I was a good intelligent girl, even though I lost my virginity at a young age. Yes, I did drink alcohol and I would get enraged when I talk about these things. I used to drink alcohol and used drugs.*

The participants who used substances to cope said that they were desperate to escape from their lived experiences, hence the constant use and abuse of substances:

**JC-02**

*It was more of an escape from reality. After a day's work, seeing to everything, making sure that their school uniform is clean; making sure that their lunch is done, I find myself sitting on the balcony. I'm sitting and I'm smoking this long joint by myself. It just takes me away from everything and everyone, like escaping from the world. He will be in the room drinking and he will be shouting, we don't know why he's shouting. So, it will just block my mind from everything so that's why I smoked.*

**JC-11**

*I just wanted to escape from the world, trying to forget everything that happened. I wish somebody can just clean my brain and then I forget everything that has ever happened in my life.*

**KM-04**

*... and there would be nothing on my mind. I quickly forget all the things that would be running around through my mind.*

**JC-01**

*For me I couldn't quit alcohol and smoking dagga because I just want to be drunk. I drank a lot. I was drinking every day; it's like water I was drinking it ... Just for me to be drunk the whole day I don't want to be aware of my life and what I go through.*

**JC-07**

*I was raped so that always haunted me. I was still a virgin so I just wanted to forget. So, when I smoked weed and drank alcohol, I felt better.*

**JC-19 (34, black)**

*... when I drink then I forget the pain that he puts me through.*

**JC-15** (33, black)

*But I like the fact that it would keep you hyper, and I would forget all my problems also.*

As evidenced above, substance use usually entailed coping and forgetting traumatic lived experiences and the triggers that would make the participants remember them:

*(a) Trigger for substance use*

Because the effects of used substances are temporary, when the intoxication wears off, traumatic events and emotional turmoil that were not dealt with resurface as triggers leading participants to reuse substances in order to forget. Seven of the female participants who experienced emotional and/or physical abuse from their partners, whenever they were abused again, would be triggered to use more substances:

**JC-02**

*When I met this guy, I had totally left it. I felt like I found what I wanted, the man praised me. I never had to ask anybody for anything at all; I had money in my own bank account, I had my all. When the abuse started again, it broke me again. My mother never used to do this to me, my dad never did this to me, my brother never even spoke down to me, so I'm not going to allow another man to do this to me.*

*I remember my friend whose boyfriend was selling rocks, but this time I was thinking this is going to bring me into deep water if I do this but, at the same time, I was thinking [that] I need this.*

Some participants expressed that feelings of rejection from their families (not due to substance use) caused them to continue using substances. One participant recalls how, after her uncle passed away, she felt rejected by her uncle's wife:

**JC-10** (34, black)

*Sadly, he passed on 2011 and I was left with my aunt. Then my aunt started*

*changing up on me; I do not know why. I guess if you are the makoti<sup>2</sup> of the family, you will not enjoy raising up this child of this man; you might start thinking that this kid might turn on you. I never really got the chance to ask her that because sadly she also passed away just after I came here.*

The eight participants that were raped, for them, the trigger became the memory of the event itself. More so, this memory was triggered by the perpetrator since it was mostly someone they knew. With rape however, the emotion of anger was also very prominent. Speaking of her cousin who raped her, JC-18 claimed:

*At home, I used to sit with this cousin, then my anger would go up. Then I would go out. I couldn't face him and I would constantly be asking why did he do this to me? So, I decided to drink ... Daily I would use about R600 on beer.*

The triggers for substance use are: feeling like you do not belong; boredom; reliving traumatic events; continued physical and/or emotional abuse; and stressors from everyday life. These triggers compelled almost half of the 29 female offender participants to transition into the use of other substances different from the original substance taken at the onset.

*(b) Transition to other substances and polysubstance use*

Almost all of the female offender participants had no choice as to the substance to use at the onset, as they used whatever was introduced to them. Later some transitioned into the use of other substances that they preferred over the onset substance. Reasons for these transitions included the need for bigger and better high; the cost of the substance by moving to a cheaper substance; and the availability of a substance based on location:

**JC-06** (35, white)

*The thing with ecstasy is that you can't take one pill after the other; it's not possible. You take your pill, you have your high and, when you come down, you can't take another one to get back up there again. Kat kept its high longer, and you can maintain it in the beginning. Ecstasy started fading away and you couldn't get nice*

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<sup>2</sup> Makoti means bride or daughter-in-law.

*ecstasy anymore.*

*With kat you spend hours constantly chasing the initial high. The more I used it, the worse tasting it became. I just couldn't leave it and that's the reason why I went to look for something stronger, the GHB (liquid ecstasy) and crystal meth. I wanted something stronger. I think my life was also in shambles, I just didn't want to face reality.*

#### **JC-21**

*Rock is an expensive drug, so I decided to quit it and started crystal meth. I felt better with every smoke. I never smoked it for long. I then went into nyaope because it was cheap. It was R25.*

#### **JC-03**

*I moved to Joburg at the age of 19, and I got my first child at the age of 20. That's the time when I transitioned from the mandrax to the rocks. I got introduced to rocks here in Joburg. The popular drug in Cape Town was mandrax and here in Joburg it was rocks. Rocks makes you hyperactive and you want to go out, you just want to enjoy life. The tik only came now, I went on trips to Cape Town and that's how I got introduced to the tik.*

There was also the phenomenon of polysubstance use presented by the offender participants. This is when more than one substance is taken at a time. There are three main reasons for polysubstance use: to regulate the highs and lows to allow for sleep; to increase appetite; and to come down from the high. Participant JC-14 summarises all these three reasons that other participants also shared:

#### **JC-14**

*What crystal meth does is that it gives you energy; you can clean this entire room by yourself. With mandrax, I took it to calm down, so I can sleep. The weed however I would take it when I wanted to have an appetite so I can eat.*

### **5.2.2.1.3 Theme Three: Association between substance use and criminal behaviour**

Theme three outlines the connection between substance use and criminality. Most of the participants did not grow up in homes where there was a criminal element displayed by their modelled agents. Out of the 29 offender participants, only two participants, JC-20 and KM-05, had fathers who engaged in criminal behaviour. Therefore, almost all of the female offender participants learned their criminal behaviour from peers or intimate partners who also introduced them to substance use (refer to Table 5.5) as they explained:

#### **JC-02**

*I remember I started hanging out with a group of people from Soweto and I started stealing cars, this how deep I fell in.*

#### **JC-12**

*When I got married to this drug lord husband of mine, he introduced me to cars. One day, he gave me a BMW, brand new for my birthday. I got into an accident one day where somebody hit my ass [rear bumper] and I hit the person in front of me. The car was almost a write off. I went for two weeks without a car; I had to drive his; I do not like driving his because I know my car. He then said to me: 'In this family, you must earn. I think I must show you how to earn a car'. He showed me how to earn by stealing cars. To get my car, I had to steal about three cars, then I had to go out and steal my own car.*

#### **KM-08**

*He introduced me to stealing. I just saw him stealing at home, and then I also started stealing at home.*

#### **JC-04**

*I would steal people's money to buy drugs. I was stealing from the people there in town who were going to do shopping. I was pickpocketing.*

When the above participant was asked who taught her to pickpocket, she responded by

saying it was her ex-boyfriend.

At the beginning, participant KM-05 did not intentionally commit the crime of fraud. She described how she made an administrative error while capturing data that resulted in a double payment from a company her employer was in business with. The quote below shows that she then took the excess payment money for herself. Seeing a weakness in the payment system, she decided to continue exploiting it.

#### **KM-05**

*The first time it was just pure luck. I was banking with xxx and I did a scheduled payment for things to go off. The scheduled payment showed as processed, so it was given. The money was paid in late that month, but the people had thought that they had their money and they were thankful for the payment. That is when I saw that maybe this is something I can do, it was out of curiosity. It is when you get away with it and you think to yourself, why not?*

KM-05 was then engaged in criminality as a means to support her substance use habit or to survive.

*(a) How substance use habit was supported*

**KM-05** continued:

*Then the second time it was a way of living. I grew up very wealthy, but when I had a choice of husband that I took, my father cut me off completely. We were not surviving, and I had my first child. So how that started again was that I sold my wedding ring which was from my grandmother. We met this Nigerian syndicate where this guy asked me if I'm interested, and I thought he was approaching me for some human trafficking thing, but it turned out it wasn't. It was just to play the middleman with the diamond smuggling that they had. I would just phone the different diamond corporations like xxx, order things then say that they were robbed and insurance would pay out. Essentially, it was just my voice. Then they would send out an Uber driver to go fetch the diamonds, then I would make those scheduled payments like I used to do, and they would sell the diamonds overseas and I would get my cut.*

KM-05 and JC-03 were the only participants who committed crimes to support their substance use habit and also to survive. KM-05 described her substance use as something that was counterproductive to her criminal endeavours. When asked if she used her prescription medication to be able to commit a crime, she stated: “*No, that would be counterproductive. I'm very unproductive under the influence, with everything.*”

### **JC-03**

*I would always do it sober. I would go to spin, come back and then relax. [When] I relax I don't want anyone around me I just want my drugs. No children around me or whatever. I used to stay in an L-shaped zozo, and I made it nice from the spinning. When I go spinning, I would ask my children what they want*

*... I would sell the clothes and make sure that the rent is paid and that there's groceries. And I will also make sure that I paid my merchant [drug dealer]; I didn't want to owe anyone. When everyone was sorted, I would sit with my drugs at the back and smoke. I could smoke until tomorrow.*

Spin in the above quote refers to stealing, then selling the stolen goods for quick cash. JC-03 also preferred to commit this crime while she was sober or not having taken any substances at all.

Another nine of the female offender participants who engaged in criminal activity, did so for the express purpose of supporting their substance use habit. This included stealing from home, other thefts, depending on their partners for money, using money/allowances received from parents or guardians, hustling, salary from formal employment or odd jobs and sharing substances with friends. They did not practice one form of crime but started with one then moved to another as they progressed in their criminal careers. In some cases, multiple means were used at the same time. Only four of the female offender participants started by stealing from home, then later escalated to theft from shops or robbery. Prostitution was only resorted to by two of the female offender participants for the purpose of attaining money.



**JC-02**

*In these six months it was rocks then I escalated to crystal meth. We were doing small thefts; my friend would go to her mother's [place] and steal small things.*

Since this participant's friend was stealing from home and sharing with her friends, JC-02 will be categorised as "sharing with friends". This participant employed two means of supporting her substance use habit.

**JC-06**

*I was taking ecstasy practically every weekend and I was dealing it in the clubs as well. ... Then I would find myself taking money from the petty cash at work so I can support my habit.*

**JC-07**

*I got money from my grandmother. I think she just gave it to me because she probably felt guilty about not believing me. She felt like she owed me, so when I ask for money, she will just give it to me because she didn't want to hurt me. She just wanted to see me happy.*

This participant referred to her step-grandfather who raped her and her grandmother feeling guilty for not believing her.

**JC-10 (34, black)**

*Financially, I was fine until 2016, that's when I started doing odd jobs fixing electronic devices for people.*

**JC-11**

*I was working, and my parents would also give me money sometimes when I ask. My sister would be the one that always gives me money when I ask.*

**JC-15**

*I was working, and my husband used to give me an allowance. But also I used to take things from the house and trade them off for drugs. I would never go to somebody's house and steal from them though. The things that I traded off for*

*drugs, my husband would normally be the one to go and get them back.*

**KM-06** (40, white)

*I always had money, because I was working, but it was never enough. You become greedy. The amount that you use just keeps on increasing ... As I was saying, the money is never enough. I was never a person that could break into people's houses or rob them, my justification was that I would rather walk into a shop where I did not know the owner, and there is enough, so they would not notice if I took something. That was my justification. You end up stealing then go sell it.*

This participant explained that, in a life of substance use, a person can never have enough money so an individual resorts to crime when he/she begins to spiral out of control.

Only two participants stated that they resorted to prostitution to support their substance use habits:

**JC-05**

*In Cape Town, I used my body. I would prostitute and then give the money to my pimp then he would give me drugs.*

**JC-14**

*When you're on drugs inevitably you sleep with boys for money, so that is what I was doing.*

Of the 29 participants, eight did not engage directly in criminality to support their drug habits. Some relied on family and friends, as well as work for money to get drugs.

**JC-07**

*I got money from my grandmother. I think she just gave it to me because she probably felt guilty about not believing me [when she reported being raped by her step-grandfather]. She felt like she owed me, so when I ask for money, she will just give it to me because she didn't want to hurt me. She just wanted to see me happy.*

**JC-11**

*I never sold my body or stole for it. The majority of my friends were drug dealers. So, for me to get it, I would help them pack it, and then do deliveries and such. In between, I would take some for myself, even though they didn't want me to ... I was working, and my parents would also give me money sometimes when I ask. My sister would be the one that always gives me money when I ask.*

Being a drug packer and deliverer is ambiguous as to whether she was directly committing a criminal act based on intention.

#### **JC-15**

*I was working, and my husband used to give me an allowance. But also I used to take things from the house and trade them off for drugs. I would never go to somebody's house and steal from them though. The things that I traded off for drugs, my husband would normally be the one to go and get them back.*

#### *(b) Violence resultant from drugs*

Most of the female offender participants did not display any violence while intoxicated. When asked if they ever became violent after consuming substances, especially stimulants, the majority responded with a “No!” Of the five that responded with a “yes” had underlying anger issues. When questioned about their anger issues, the response was typically:

#### **KM-05**

*Yes, I do, but internally I perceive myself as being calm. But, ever since being in here, I react to situations differently. I'm a lot more calmer. But the moment I am on my pills, I do not even have time to reason out with you, I become aggressive.*

One participant pointed out that substances simply show more of your personality when intoxicated:

#### **KM-06**

*If you're a violent person then you become more violent; if you are quiet, then you will be more quiet. A lot of people that I actually knew that were on heroin were able to rob people at gunpoint because they were naturally of a violent nature. With*

*me, I've never been a violent person. It would just make me more friendly and more giving. I could give away everything when I'm high.*

Alcohol often appeared in incidents where violence was displayed. Where participants only used alcohol and no other substances, they often committed murders. This was the case for five (5) of the participants (JC-08, JC-17, JC-18, JC-19 and JC-20). However, these participants asserted that the murders they committed were not premeditated and they were unfortunate mistakes.

#### **JC-08**

*We had a party just chilling outside with my friends and drinking wine. Suddenly my mother came and sat with us. After that, she took a glass of wine. After she had a second glass, she said she was fine, and she went home and said she will call me. I was 18 at the time.*

*When she called me I ran home, as I entered the house my mother was angry at me, and I didn't know why. When I asked her she said it's already late, it's around 4:00 AM. My father was sleeping at the time. But my mother suddenly raised her voice and started getting physical with me. I didn't even react. Suddenly there appeared a black pitch on me. When it lighted up again, I saw my mother lying down and me holding a knife. I stabbed her in the left arm. It went through her veins and she lost a lot of blood.*

*When I went out to look for help, I did not get it and the ambulance took long to come. When it came she was already dead.*

#### **JC-17**

*I was coming from a friend's funeral, then we went out for the after tears. After that, I went back to where I stay and we [she and friends] continued drinking. When the drinks finished, we went out, bought more and continued to drink. Then there was an argument between the two of us, we were both drunk. He [the boyfriend] told me to take a belt from the child's waist [so the child could change clothes after the funeral]. I told him to bring a knife, and [my boyfriend] came with it As I was taking*

*out the belt, he didn't want me to take the belt out anymore, then I stabbed him and he died. It was an accident.*

In the quote above, “after tears” refers to a South African celebration of paying last respects to the deceased after the official funeral. It serves as a form of sending condolences to the family (Mahlangu, 2016).

#### **JC-18**

*I was at a party, and we were drinking with my sister's friend. My sister's friend then wanted to go home because it was getting late. I told her that it's already late and she can't go home now so I suggested we wait for my sister and her boyfriend and they will take us home. We waited for my sister and then she finally came and then we left.*

*On the way home, we saw about 10 people beating someone up. I said to my sister I think I know the person, so she stopped and then I went outside of the car. At this point, I was drunk. When I got to the people and saw the guy, I did not know him. So, I asked people what was happening, and they told me that the guy was stealing from someone's room and that's why they were beating him up. I also joined the people in beating him up.*

Out of the mob that was beating up the victim, only the participant and two other co-accuseds were trialed and convicted. The reason for this is unknown to the participant.

#### **JC-19**

*He had just come back from cheating in the evening, and I had already been drinking. Before he slept, he was busy shouting at me and hitting me, he liked hitting me. He then took a knife and tried to stab me and then I grabbed the knife and then I stabbed him. It was self-defence, I did not intend on killing him.*

#### **JC-20**

*I was drunk, and my friend was drunk also ... So, I said to the friend of mine, let's just have a day, because it was affected day that day. Then we went back to town by taxi, and I did shopping for my children and we came back. We drank a few*

*beers with my husband. It was a Friday, we drank until late. Then I suggested to the friend of mine to go buy us a bottle because we were not getting drunk. I sent him with a R200, but I was not supposed to spend that R200. It was supposed to be used for during the month for bread. I sent him around 11:00 o'clock at night; the place was only few houses from us. The friend of mine stayed long until two o'clock in the morning, so when he came back, I was boiling. When he came back, he tells me: 'I used your money.' He did this so casually, here I was completely worried. Then he says to me not to worry because he got all the men that he wanted. I asked him if there was any change or anything left? Then he says no, and he gave it all to the men.*

*I got so mad and, at that time, I was coming out of my drunk state. We then argued, and I don't know what I was doing, but the knife was on the counter. I just picked up the knife and I stabbed him and told him to go sit down. I thought it was just a scratch. Then he went to sit down, and I went to the bedroom thinking that there was nothing wrong. As I get to my door, I realised that he was too quiet then I went back.*

*He was sitting there, and where I had stabbed him there was a red spot. He was unconscious and I was trying to wake him up. That's when I called the ambulance and the police. He went to hospital, and he died the following day. They tried to help him at the hospital, but he was bleeding inside.*

*It happened so quickly; I did not understand how it happened.*

The common theme in these incidents is that the murders were reactionary, not planned. These participants showed regret for their actions during the interview process.

The link between substance use and criminality is discussed below.

### *(c) The use of substances in relation to crime*

This section explores whether the use of substances is directly related to criminality. The alcohol related crimes of murder discussed above were not included since the murders

were committed without intention and if the participants had not been intoxicated, the crime would not have occurred. Participants were asked if they preferred being sober or intoxicated while committing the crime. Some participants preferred to be high or intoxicated rather than sober:

**JC-02**

*I was never really sober ... I was always on a high when I did something, but it was always to get drugs.*

**JC-13**

*I would take drugs to go and steal. How else are you going to get the guts to walk into a shop and walk out with three or four TVs? I would take one or two grams then go to the mall and fetch TVs. I would work with somebody from inside the store.*

**JC-14**

*If I am sober, I will not be able to steal. With a sober mind, I will be able to tell that what I'm doing is wrong. However, if I smoke, I can easily tell myself that what I've stolen, the people can easily replace and it won't be my problem.*

Ten offender participants gave similar reasons as JC-14 why they preferred to be intoxicated or high before committing the crime. They felt that if they were sober, they would have not been able to commit the crime. These quotes allude to the fact that, when intoxicated, there is a loss of inhibition and the crime can be committed with no sense of guilt.

**KM-02**

*I have to smoke first so I can be hyper, and rock is the one that gets me in that space. You can go into people's houses and feel nothing.*

JC-10 further credited substances with giving her the ability to think smarter and faster, as well as evade capture by law enforcement agents:

**JC-10**

*The thing is, the drugs give you some kind of artificial intelligence, so you end up being able to fix things that you never thought you could fix ... To be honest though, if I was high that day I mugged that girl, they would not have caught me. I would have actually found ways to run away. I was tired that day because I have not slept for days, and I was just looking for the next fix. Even when I was committing the crime, I was just walking; I didn't have the energy to run.*

JC-10 and others mentioned not having a choice of whether they committed the crime sober or intoxicated as it relates to their chemical, physical and psychological dependence on the drug. They maintained that withdrawal symptoms or cravings drove them to commit crimes.

**KM-08**

*If you're having withdrawals, yes. Sometimes I had smoked, sometimes I was sober. When you are withdrawing, you become desperate, so you do not care.*

**KM-07** (32, black)

*Sometimes I'm sober sometimes I am under the influence of substances. If I'm so bad, it means that I have no money to buy the drugs so I have to start from scratch by trying to get the money.*

**KM-04**

*I prefer to go while high. But if the money is not there, there is nothing I can do, and I would go out of desperation while sober.*

The quotes above show that there are two reasons for the preferences of intoxication rather than being sober before committing a crime: firstly, to bolster courage to commit the crime; and secondly to limit inhibition. There is an element of desperation that compels participants to commit crime in order to get the next fix. However, for all participants in this study, criminality was subsequent to substance use. Although substance use might have resulted in a pathway to criminality, criminality was not the end goal in itself, it was rather a consequence.



*(d) Influence of substances on crime for which participants were apprehended*

Most of the crimes that the offender participants were apprehended for involved the abuse of substances. They were more intoxicated than usual or experienced severe withdrawal symptoms. Eight of the female offender participants shared similar occurrences of their arrests that also includes the aforementioned alcohol related murders:

**JC-06**

*I have been high every day for the past three months; it was an ongoing thing. I was out of control. We were not sober days prior to the incident. This is also the time I was using crystal meth excessively, three weeks before the crime.*

**JC-15**

*On that date in 2017, I honestly don't know what happened. I remember there was a lot of mandrax and we were smoking. It was my first-time smoking throughout the whole day and night, didn't even sleep. Then I got into an argument with my husband's aunt. She grabbed my hand and then I just pushed her away ...*

*The argument went on and on, and it was only the two of us in the house. She tried to slap me, and I just left her by herself. I got back to where we were smoking, and I told the people to give me something strong because that lady was irritating me. Someone then offered me mandrax and said that it's strong. I remember I had a lot of anger at that time. I don't really remember much but I somehow had blood on my hand. I had pushed my husband's aunt. In my head, I thought that she would eventually wake up anyway, so I left. I went to Vanderbijlpark and I was just chilling there. That's when I got the call to come back home because the police were looking for me. When I got back, I kept thinking that I just pushed this person and it was just a small thing, it was just a scratch. I was taken to a holding cell and I still kept thinking that this is a small thing and it will pass. It's only when I was taken to Sun City then I started feeling it.*

Theme three explored the association between substance use and criminality, theme four explores the association of specific drug types against the type of offences they are related to.

#### **5.2.2.1.4 Theme Four: Relation between drug type and type of offence**

Thefts were the salient crimes related to most offences because they generate money for participants to support their substance use habits. Typical thefts and theft-related offences were shoplifting, burglary at residential premises, assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm (assault GBH), and robbery with aggravating circumstances. The criminal acts or offences did not relate specifically to any drug type as offender participants who committed these types of crimes used an assortment of substances. However, alcohol could be directly linked to murder in the above aforementioned five (5) participants (JC-08, JC-17, JC-18, JC-19 and JC-20).

There was only one relationship found between the use of prescription medication and the offence of fraud (see KM-05 in section 5.2.2.1.4). Participant JC-01 also abused prescription medication but supported her substance use habit from her salary. She only used one specific prescription drug, which was relatively affordable. KM-05 stated that she used many prescription medications and that they were expensive:

#### **KM-05**

*Prescription medication is very expensive. For my prescription that I take monthly and on top of that I have epilepsy induced from the use of pills. So your prescription ends up costing around R2 000 a month. And that's only one chemist, and I used to do about five, so it's R10 000 just for my pills.*

A few participants overdosed on prescription medication in attempts to commit suicide:

#### **JC-05**

*I have overdosed on my ARVs trying to commit suicide several times.*

#### **JC-15**

*I can't say I've abused them, I was more trying to kill myself. I used to overdose on ARVs. This was before getting arrested.*

#### **KM-08**

*When I was sick, my sister took me to the GP and he prescribed sleeping pills to me. I was 20. I never abused them, I only overdosed when I was trying to kill myself.*

#### **5.2.2.1.5 Theme Five: Reflections on a life of substance use**

The last theme focused on offender participants' reflections on a life of substance use and abuse in the context of their incarceration. Firstly, offender participants were asked whether they considered ceasing substance use before their incarceration. Some participants express the desire to cease, while others stated that they were too addicted to be able to stop substance use. Those who briefly ceased substance use accredited that to: motherhood; not wanting to disappoint those close to them; and being in relationships with husbands or boyfriends but the cessation was temporary:

#### **JC-02**

*I fell pregnant with my first daughter and I gave birth at the age of 18, and with that it took me off drugs a little bit because I had a good life, I had a responsibility of my own daughter. I had the house, I had the car, everything I wanted, but it was more of ... I needed love, I wanted to be loved.*

#### **JC-15**

*When I got my first one [child] I stopped smoking. But, like any other relationships, there were ups and downs, so I went back to the smoking. I would smoke every time there was something wrong in the relationship.*

#### **JC-16**

*... then, in 2012, I started crystal meth. It wasn't so bad. I didn't want my mother to find out, so I left it. I only tried it again after my mother's death.*

#### **JC-12**

*I actually stopped using drugs and became a very dedicated wife. My marriage then got fucked up with the husband that was cheating then I started using drugs again.*

These participants shared that once something more important and valued happened in their lives, they chose to cease substance use. However, most of the participants only ceased substance use after they were incarcerated. They expressed appreciation for being incarcerated because they felt that, if it was not for that, they would never have stopped:

**JC-10**

*Thank God I came to prison. Also, my girlfriend did not approve of this, so in trying to impress her, I decided to quit.*

**JC-03**

*I never really stopped using drugs until I got to prison.*

Equally of those that ceased from substance use, some continued after incarceration. They gave different reasons for this that included: availability of substances; associating with groups that are not pro-social; and not developing healthy coping mechanisms.

**JC-12**

*I've been in prison for 18 years now, including the three years suspended. In all that time, I have not left drugs, because drugs are all over prison.*

**JC-13**

*I had a lot of challenges with drugs in prison, but I don't chase for it. I believe that it is the people that I associate with, then I end up using drugs.*

**KM-04**

*Yes, but you do not smoke them the same way as when you are outside. In here, they are more expensive. People in here are frustrated by their own things, whatever that may be, so sometimes you just want to have a smoke and forget.*

One participant however commented that if a person really wanted to stop using substances, excuses will not detract that person from ceasing:

**KM-06**

*If you do not make that choice yourself, you will never stop. You can go to all the rehabs you can think of, get all the implants also but, if you do not make that choice and stick with it, it will not help. You need to wake up every day and stick to the choice that you are not going to do that anymore. You just need to take every day as it comes.*

Offender participants were also able to reflect on the consequences of their use and how it affected various aspects of their lives.

*(a) Consequences of use*

Participants observed that their substance use affected their relationships with their children, other family members, employment, and social lives. They became isolated from their families:

**JC-07**

*It has affected a lot. You think you know, but you don't know ... Things that you do in the house, and still clean the house and be doing the normal things, but there's a certain part of you that starts pulling away from the family. You want to isolate yourself. When people are sleeping, you are up because you can't sleep. Then, in the morning, when people are waking up, you want to sleep. It changes your routine. So, if you give more time to a family, you won't really fit in with your friends because you'll be sober when they're high. Eventually, you end up moving with your own crowd.*

Substance users' children also suffered from their mothers' substance use by being neglected. This maltreatment of children is also considered a crime, according to the Childrens Act No. 38 of 2005 (Department of Social Development, 2009:14). Therefore, this is another form of crime that women commit while intoxicated, however, it would depend on the individual mother and how they see their children while sober or intoxicated. Moreover, the offender participants' placed their employment in jeopardy because of their substance use.

**JC-06**

*I was walking out of jobs and taking money which was not mine, neglecting my kids. ... Eventually I was taking long days off work and could not cope anymore because of the drugs. It usually takes three days to recover from a heavy drug binge. I would get to work tired and I would find myself sleeping in the bathroom, I wouldn't be able to function in the office. Then I would find myself taking money from the petty cash at work so I can support my habit. I would take a lot of sick days from work ... My relationships were just falling into pieces. ... I just became a terrible mother, leaving my kids at home alone. I would go to the casino with my ex and leave my eight year old alone at home.*

Overall, social life was negatively impacted since users usually preferred to be alone:

#### **KM-06**

*You withdraw yourself ... I come from a very good and stable home. I did not always have what I wanted, but I had what I needed. You just don't have time for friendships and relationships. You don't think about anybody but yourself. You become so selfish and self-centred; all you think about is a way to get money for the next hit. You really destroy any form of relationship that you have ever had. So, I was always on my own; I would use on my own. There is syringes and spoons; it's a very dirty drug so I preferred to be alone. Even after I have used, I would still prefer to be alone.*

Substance users' social and family lives were negatively affected by their abuse of drugs. However, while incarcerated, they were able to reflect on their lives and create hypothetical scenarios related to their substance use.

#### *(b) The hypothetical: Being well-off financially*

Offender participants were then asked to consider the hypothetical scenario of being well-off financially. This corresponding code to theme five sought to explore the pathway to criminality. Participants were asked whether they would have resorted to criminality to support their substance use habit even if they were financially well-off. A majority of the offender participants agreed that they would:

**KM-04**

*Yes, because money does run out ... even if I had a good job, drugs and nice things do not go hand in hand. You have to pick one path, either take your drugs, or you are going to live a proper life. That proper life while you are taking drugs, you will start doing things that are destructive.*

They believed that they were not responsible for their actions when using substances and that eventually substance abuse would destroy them and lead them to make bad decisions including criminality. KM-04 continued:

*Some people are able to control their drug use, but a day will come where you lose that control. They will be disciplined and tell themselves that they do not take drugs before going to work and they only take them afterwards. Then one day you will say: 'let me just take one hit before work', then, just like that, the body could get used to you taking a hit in the morning before work. For the next day, you will want to take it again in the morning so you can work nicely at work. Then you will be used to that. Eventually you will start getting into debt just so you can get drugs.*

**KM-07**

*To be quite honest, even if I was working and I had my own money, it was still going to play another impact. Heroin is a jealous drug; it wants you to focus on it. Typical example, I had a cousin that worked at the military at HR. She started using drugs and, at the end of the day, she ended up quitting her job. So, even if I was working, it was going to be a problem. It wants nothing but you to concentrate on it and only it. The drug owns you and controls you.*

All the female offender participants were in agreement that substance use was destructive. In summation, the first theme showed participants had a great sense of belonging within their families nevertheless, they resorted to substance use. The second theme further demonstrated that the substance use was a consequence of traumas experienced and that continued substance use was sustained by triggers to the traumas. The third theme explored the association between substance use and criminality. For some participants, crimes were committed to acquire money for drugs. The fourth theme

explored the connection between drug type and the type of offence committed. Alcohol was found to be directly related to murder, while the relationship between other crimes and illicit substances could not be established. Lastly, in theme five, the offender participants reflected on their lives and how substance use directly affected them. They hypothesised on their circumstances if their situations were different. The supplementary findings from the interviews conducted with the DCS officials are presented below.

#### **5.2.2.2 Part II: DCS officials participants' themes and corresponding codes**

Part II presents the perceptions of the DCS officials that directly offer psychosocial services to the female offenders. These perceptions are based on the themes in Table 5.8. These six themes are supplementary to the five core themes of the offender participants. Following the principles of anonymity founded in ethics, both clinical psychologists and social workers are denoted by the code DCSO#, where the # represents a randomly assigned number in the data set. A distinction will not be drawn between clinical psychologists and social workers from the two correctional centres to preserve anonymity.

##### **5.2.2.2.1 Theme One: Difference between male and female substance users**

The DCS officials who participated in this study revealed that male offenders tend to use substances for recreational purposes while female offenders use substances to cope with internal and external difficulties. Furthermore, male offenders predominantly use alcohol compared to harder illicit substances used by females. The one similarity is that both males and females use substances to bolster courage before committing a crime.

#### **DCSO1**

*I would say, with men, substance use is always there, but with the ones that I have come across, it is not a daily thing. It is more of alcohol use for entertainment, and then there are those that would go on and use drugs for courage to commit certain crimes.*



## **DCS02**

*Other people, it's just issues of trauma, and they use substances to cope. They just want to numb the pain. At that time, they might have just wanted to numb the pain, but they can get hooked, and then it moves into being a disorder where the person cannot function without the substance. They would feel that they need to keep using the substance in order to function, but it will lead to consequences.*

It was also found that there is a difference, between females and males, in terms of the types of crime. Females focus on crimes to support their substance use habits. This is in support of the findings in Part I.

## **DCS03**

*If they are unemployed, they cannot support their habit. Then they will go through crimes and mostly it's shoplifting, house breaking ... Then they can sell whatever they can get their hands on so that they can buy drugs.*

DCS03 further alluded to how female offenders opt for less or non-violent crimes as compared to male offenders. Furthermore, the crimes are focused on acquiring money.

### **5.2.2.2 Theme Two: DCS officials' perspectives: Drug use causes criminality**

Theme two explored the perceptions of the DCS officials with regards to whether substance use causes criminality. There was consensus amongst all the participants that substance use does cause criminality, however it is not that simple, nor is it a linear causal relationship.

## **DCS02**

*That's a controversial question. Sometimes someone can drink a lot and then commit a crime and then, as an excuse, they will use their intoxication. In my experience and training, there is a relationship between substance use and criminal behaviour. When people are intoxicated, they become physiologically impaired, and functioning becomes impaired. This is depending on whatever substance that might have been used, because people react differently.*

*Neurotransmitters release more than what they should, then you might disregard reality or what is right. While sober minded, a person can think and rationalise and their awareness would be clear, as to whether to commit an illegal act or not. But, once a substance impairs the body, the person might think that they are invincible, and they can commit the crime without hesitation.*

Compared to the findings in Part I, there is a relationship between criminality and a sober mind versus an intoxicated mind. The offender participants mostly stated that they preferred to commit crimes while intoxicated. The perception by both the offenders and DCS official participants was that an altered or intoxicated state of mind limits inhibition to commit a crime.

DCSO3's perceptions add to the complexity of the drug-use-causes-crime debate by stating the disparities between the rich and the poor:

### **DCSO3**

*I might say 50%, it causes crime. But those who are working, who can afford drugs, who will say: 'I am using drugs to keep me strong and give me strength', they do not. But those who are underprivileged or coming from poor backgrounds, their reasoning for committing crime is that they need to support their habit. Hence, why I say it's 50%. Others are just using drugs but they're not addicted, for example, you are working and you are using drugs just to keep you entertained. So, people like that are not committing crimes, but those from poor backgrounds, who end up using drugs like nyaope, end up committing petty crimes like house breaking and theft.*

Once more, these statements support the previous offender findings that the relationship is complex.

#### **5.2.2.2.3 Theme Three: DCS officials' perspective: Criminality causes drug use**

Continuing from the second theme, the opposite explanation of the drug-crime relationship was explored. The crime-causes-drug-use argument was refuted, thus also

supporting the findings in Part I. Criminality was therefore not the end goal of substance abuse.

### **DCSO3**

*No. You have people here that have committed several crimes and they have never used or abused drugs. But, because of different circumstances, people commit crime, it is not always drug related crimes, it is different circumstances.*

### **DCSO2**

*I can say so, yes, but not on a majority scale. Someone who did not have a history of substance use is likely to start using once they are inside. Someone who is already at their mature age is highly unlikely to start substance use. If you started an early age and say that you don't like alcohol, then the chances of you starting in your adulthood are very minimal. Even if they do, they are not likely to fall into addiction because your awareness and maturity also kicks in. I cannot however disregard the fact that there would be those ones who commit crime, and the environment they find themselves in.*

DCSO2 further states that early introduction to substance use could lead to continued substance use in adulthood. This supports the findings in Part I where the average age of onset for female substance use is 17 years.

#### **5.2.2.2.4 Theme Four: Why females commonly use drugs**

The DCS officials provided the same reasons for female drug use as those reported in Part I of the findings:

### **DCSO1**

*Most of them start experimenting with drugs or alcohol while they were teenagers. Usually they come from dysfunctional families, and some of them, it's behaviour that they saw displayed in the home from the adults. So, it is a matter of mimicking what they saw and it is normalised because it is either someone at home who uses drugs or at school peers. Also, it could be that you are from an area where the use*

*of drugs and alcohol is normalised. So, the environment plays a major role and, if the family structure is dysfunctional, it makes it worse. For those people, there is also less guidance at home, meaning that there will be no one to notice when they pick up these habits and changes and how it impacts on them. Definitely community and family play a major role.*

Contrary to Part I findings, most of the offenders came from good homes. However, peers were the ones that influenced offender participants' substance use.

#### **5.2.2.2.5 Theme Five: Cessation of substance use while incarcerated**

One clinical psychologist stated that use of substances does not really stop; it merely transitions into the use of psychiatric drugs. This was not however evidenced in the findings from the female offender participants.

#### **DCSO1**

*In here, what I have noticed, because of lack of access to drugs and alcohol, they then resort to psychiatric drugs. They would bombard you and come to therapy under false pretences. They would quote the DSM to you saying that they have this and that symptom so that you can refer them to the psychiatrist, then they get the medication. They overuse these medications and sometimes they sell them to other inmates, and this is a huge concern. Some do not even know what the medication is called; they will refer to the colour of the pill. Most drug users are also very keen to see the psychiatrist citing all sorts of symptoms like insomnia, withdrawals, and wanting to change their lives. Those depression medications and sleeping tablets would be their fix while they are here.*

This finding warrants further research, but it was beyond the scope of this study.

#### **5.2.2.2.6 Theme Six: Drug type related to type of crime**

Regarding drug type and the type of crime, findings in Part I show that there is no

connection between the two aspects. However, murder and alcohol were shown to be related. The DCS officials concurred with the alcohol-murder/violence relationship being positive:

### **DCSO3**

*Most people who have committed a crime is because of alcohol ... for example, maybe they were in a club and they came out drunk and, at the end, maybe a person will die. But they are rare cases of that. Although it is rare, it is common, especially the young girls who have killed their boyfriends because they were drunk. The fight would start in the club and then someone will die because of alcohol ...*

*Sometimes it's not really a case of violence, but maybe an argument breaks out and then we end up fighting because we are both drunk. Even if you are not a violent person, you become violent at that time because you are intoxicated. So, it means that alcohol can cause someone to be violent. The behaviour can change, for example, an introvert, once they start being drunk, they become an extrovert. So yes, it can cause a person to be violent. But it does differ with certain people. When other people are drunk, they become calm and jolly.*

In addition to this, a comment was made about the possibility of victimisation when intoxicated by *nyaope*. Sexual offences are not an issue for *nyaope* users. DCSO3 continues:

*I also asked one of the girls: does she not feel afraid because she mostly smokes with boys. She told me that with nyaope, you do not get aroused, you do not have that urge to have sex, you just sit there and smoke and sleep. She even said that no nyaope user will be charged for rape, because all they do is smoke, sleep and eat their snacks. That is their routine.*

In summary, the themes supported the findings from the offender participant interviews. There was however one contradiction in terms of how women use drugs. The offender participants demonstrated that they were generally from good homes with supportive

family members. Contrastingly, the DCS officials believed substance use resulted from dysfunctional families where substance use has been normalised. However, offender participants reported that this was not the case and that substance use resulted from traumas and being introduced to it outside of the home.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter contained findings from the analysis and connects the analysis back to the research questions. Significantly, five and six core themes emerged from the offender and DCS official participants respectively. These themes are summarised in Tables 5.7 and 5.8 respectively. The themes elucidated on the nuanced nature of the drug-crime relationship within the context of female substance users. Also, to note is that the average age of onset for substance use is 17.7. This age is significant because it could potentially explain why the women were introduced to a life of substance use largely by peers and other third parties. The crimes committed by the women is surprising in the sense that most were contact crimes, this is irrespective of the type of drug(s) used. Lastly, general strain theory appears to hold as evidenced by the findings and the resultant themes thus far. These themes are further discussed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS IN TERMS OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this qualitative study was to conduct a systematic exploration of the effects of two variables, gender and drug type, in the drug-crime nexus to gain a comprehensive understanding of this relationship to aid the development of gender specific interventions for female substance (ab)users. The study achieved this by interviewing incarcerated female offenders as well as relevant DCS officials that deliver psychosocial services to offenders. The denotations *DCS official(s)* and *professional(s)* are used interchangeably throughout the chapter. This chapter presents a discussion of the findings as related to the literature as well as the theoretical framework. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide discussions on the findings presented in the previous chapter. Chapter 5 presented the findings in the form of themes that emerged. Five themes emerged from the offender participants and six themes from the DCS officials. The offender themes that emerged were: (1) sense of belonging and modelled agents; (2) reasons for substance use; (3) association between substance use and criminal behaviour; (4) relation between drug type and type of offence; and (5) reflections on a life of substance use. The themes that emerged from the professionals were: (1) difference between male and female substance users; (2) professionals' perspective: drug use causes criminality; (3) professionals' perspective: criminality causes drug use; (4) why females commonly use drugs; (5) cessation of substance use while incarcerated; and (6) drug type related to type of crime. The research questions will also create an umbrella guiding the structure of the discussion and how, through the themes, the research questions were answered.

### **6.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Overall, the findings confirmed that indeed the drug-crime relationship, based on the

inclusion of gender as a variable, is nuanced, and complex. This is evident in the themes that emerged from the data analysed. Each theme is described in detail and how it has answered the research questions. The research questions will be answered from the emergent themes from each cohort with the related theme(s) under the question. It will be divided into two parts (I & II).

## **6.2.1 Part I: Offender related themes to research questions**

Part I relates to the themes from the offender participants under the research question to be answered.

### ***6.2.1.1 How do various drug types affect female criminality?***

#### ***6.2.1.1.1 Relation between drug type and type of offence***

Literature has shown that substance abusers rely on money generating crimes to support their substance use habits (Krebs et al, 2017:111; Mokwena & Huma, 2014:358). The same was found in this study for female offender participants from the two correctional centres. Moreover, studies showed substance dependence dictated to what extent crimes would be engaged in (Ab & Brunelle, 2016:88; Connor et al, 2014:12; Connor et al, 2016:299). This study mainly comprised female offenders who were dependent on their respective substances, excluding alcohol. Therefore, the levels of criminality were frequent. This aligns with the study that females are more prone to substance abuse (Mir et al, 2015:29). The current study showed that females who participated were, however, also less prone to violent offences except for alcohol related incidences. However, violence has been shown to stem from the environment from which the crime was committed, as discussed in the previous theme.

Although there was one incident where a violent crime (armed robbery) was reported in this study, it was rather a consequence of other factors such as the social context where the female victim was walking alone at night. The victim further resisted to her belongings being taken from her, and that escalated the violence. However, the female offender (JC-16) was merely an accomplice to the crime, and her male peers directly committed the



crime. This further establishes that females prefer not to commit violent offences. Support for this assertion, can be found in Liu, Sun and Lin's (2020) research on the exploration of conditioning factors on the strain-crime association. The authors conclude that women usually play a more passive role in crime commission (Liu et al, 2020:571). Females usually lure the victims into a trap, then males commit the violent acts. JC-16 stated that she would have preferred not to be involved in the crime. Terranova and Vandiver (2014:125) purport that individuals are more likely to commit violent acts of crime if there are other accomplices because there is a perception of reduced risk or detection if there is more than one person involved in the crime (Terranova & Vandiver, 2014:125).

The most common offences committed by dependent substance users, according to the literature, is prostitution, property theft, burglary, fraud, drug trafficking and breaking and entering (Kessler et al, 2012:377). This study showed the salient offences for individual female substance users who participated in this study to be contact crimes and other serious crime categories, specifically, theft, housebreaking and shoplifting. A discussion of the salient crimes can be found under Table 5.2 in Chapter 5. These offences form only part of what the literature has reported. Drug trafficking, breaking and entering, prostitution and fraud were each reported by one individual. Drug trafficking was also reported in the literature as being almost inaccessible to females except as drug mules (Fleetwood, 2017:283). Although there was only one incident of fraud in this study, it does support this statement as the participant was apprehended for being a drug mule. Self-evidently, these crimes were committed because the substance users did not have the financial and social resources to support their drug habits.

The types of crimes committed by the participant female offenders in this study usually do not require high levels of expertise and access to other resources needed to commit more complex crimes. This supports McGloin and Nguyen's (2012:475) claims that expertise is gained over repetition of the same crime. Tillyer and Tillyer (2015:1080) report that women are more likely to be arrested when committing crimes which were normally committed by male offenders. Furthermore, these types of crimes carry minor risks of prosecution, thus most of the female offender participants were incarcerated for repeat

offending. The first few times offenders who participated in this research were arrested for these money generating crimes, the CJS did not sentence them, but rather held them for a number of days. They were then released without a trial. This is possibly another reason why these types of crime were preferred by the female offenders who participated in this research.

Ludwick et al (2015:9) claim that entry into the drug market, such as drug dealing, is made by substance users to support their substance use habits or exchange their services for substances. This study however did not find any evidence of such cases. The women had no access to the drug markets, unless a male companion brought them into those markets. This supports the finding in literature that females do not have easy access to drug markets (see section 2.4) and need to be associated with a male figure who does have access to drug markets (see section 2.4.1). Women in South Africa also still remain largely economically dependent on men (True, 2012:30). On the contrary, female offender participants who directly engaged in criminality in this study did so on their own recourse without the assistance of any males, except for one participant (KM-05, 32, white).

The literature has shown that, for male substance users and criminals, the criminality mostly precedes substance use (Jewkes, 2012:2–3; Tripodi et al, 2011:31). In this study however, the female offender participants' substance uses always preceded criminality. Criminality was, in most cases, merely a means to the goal of acquiring money to purchase substances. Furthermore, the female substance users who participated in this research did not engage in criminality “for the thrill” in contrast to research on substance using men who have been reported to engage in criminality “for the thrill” of it (Luongo et al, 2017:163). The research has shown that female substance users who were part of the study did not commit crimes except those directly related to their substance use.

Drugs and crime are not easily analysed as homogenous categories because the drug type has the potential to influence the type of crime committed or lack thereof (Cicero et al, 2014:823; Marsh et al, 2018:83; Mayock, Cronly & Clatts, 2015:780). Havakuk et al (2017:104) purport that drugs can influence individuals differently which, in turn, affects

the type of crimes committed by those individuals. Thomson (2020:801) adds that substances with a higher abuse potential for forming dependency and addiction are more likely to be linked with criminality. Inversely, substances with a lower abuse potential are less likely to be linked with violent crimes. As already stated, violence was a rarity in this study.

To the extent a substance will affect an individual also depends on a number of factors that are inclusive of potency of the substance, individual's substance tolerance, dosage of substance, social context for consumption and body type (Havakuk et al, 2017:107). The most common crimes committed by female substance users who participated in this study remain those that directly fund their substance use habit. Contrary to the previous paragraph, the potential for abuse in this research did not play a role in the crimes committed. Irrespective of the substance used, criminality was engaged in order to fund substance use. These included depressants, opioids or hallucinogens. Even with the one incident of prescription medication being the substance of choice, criminality was still used to fund the substance use. Other studies that focused on specific substances, such as heroin and crack cocaine (Comiskey et al, 2012), found that substances with a high abuse potential are closely linked to money generating crimes. The psychopharmacological effects of stimulant drugs have generally been linked to violent behaviour in literature (Spronk et al, 2013:1839). However, in this study, stimulants were not attributed to violent behaviour or crime.

This study shows that the women substance users who participated in this study were more focused on using drugs for coping, rather than committing crime. This may be the reason that the type of drug taken does not have an influence on the type of crime committed. Thus, female offenders who participated in this study will commit any non-violent crime to generate money to support their substance use. This means that the drug-crime relationship, with gender as a variable, shows a weaker link. The female offender participants revealed that criminality was not their choice but, if there were more lawful options to support their substance use habits, they would opt for them.

On the other hand, research continues to report that addiction also influences crime (Parsons, 2014:154). Thus, if addiction is high, criminality will also be high, and if dependence on a substance is low, criminality will also be low. Addiction is therefore directly proportional to criminality (Parsons, 2014:155). The female offender participants in this study showed an increasing frequency of substance use to the point where they were apprehended. They reported that they used substances with increasing frequency, and sometimes transitioned to other potent substances. This could be because most had not dealt with the traumas and victimisations that they had experienced in their lives. Therefore, when they were triggered, they kept using more substances to cope. Invariably, the more they used, the more it became necessary to commit money generating crimes.

In this study, apart from alcohol consumption, withdrawal symptoms from other drugs led to tendencies towards violence. The female offender participants spoke of how they would get irritable and aggressive when experiencing withdrawals. This is in support of the literature that states that the long-term use of certain substances could lead to violent behaviour when going through withdrawals (Havnes et al, 2012:308; Murphy et al, 2014:43; Sutherland et al, 2015:212). However, in this study, the female offender participants opted to remove themselves from the environment when they experienced withdrawals. They chose either to isolate themselves or to use substances to relieve the withdrawal symptoms. They said that they avoided displays of violence wherever possible. If they did not have substances to relieve the withdrawal symptoms, then they would have to commit a money generating crime out of desperation.

Therefore, the consequence of long-term substance use was the alteration in social behaviour as confirmed by Gryczynski et al (2012) and Jessell et al (2017). Furthermore, literature has showed that chronic substance use reduces impulse control (Cunningham & Anastasio, 2014:461; Fernández-Serrano et al, 2012:674; Machalova et al, 2012:220; Moreno-López et al, 2012:212). This study found that this could be true since most of the female offender participants reported that they would not have committed the crime for which they were apprehended if they were sober minded. They merely committed the

crime impulsively.

Lastly, ten female offender participants reported using more than one substance at a time (polysubstance use). The literature shows that individuals who engage in polysubstance use are more prone to be involved with the CJS (Winkelman et al, 2018:2). Furthermore, they have varying patterns of offending as compared to individuals who use a single substance (Racz et al, 2016:208). These users were also reported to be more likely than single substance users to engage in money generating crimes (Grella et al, 1999:43). These findings from the literature are not supported by this study because there was no noticeable difference between polysubstance users and single substance users. The only reason polysubstance users used more than one substance at a time was to regulate themselves between being high and the comedown from that high. For example, they would use an “upper” (stimulant) to reach a high, then take a “downer” (depressant) to come down from the high. This was done so they could either restore their appetite or sleep. Thus, it can be hypothesised that female polysubstance use is done to stabilise and control social behaviour. Nonetheless, research on polysubstance use still remains limited.

### **6.2.1.2 What influence does gender have on the drug-crime relationship?**

#### **6.2.1.2.1 Reflections on a life of substance use**

For the participant female substance users, using drugs had become a daily activity, even for those that, at the onset, was an occasional activity. According to Brochu, Cousineau, Gillet, Cournoyer, Pernanen and Motiuk (2001:22), it could be difficult to establish a correlation between substance use and criminality with people who use substances daily. Therefore, the question that should be asked is: *Would you have committed the crime you were apprehended for, if you were not intoxicated from consumption of the drug?* (Brochu et al, 2001:22). All the female offender participants in this study responded with a definitive “No” to this question. This further illustrated that, for female substance users who participated in this study, the goal was not criminality but rather substance use as a means to cope.

Another hypothetical question was posed to the women participating in this study, relating to ideal situations: *Would you eventually commit crime to obtain money if you were financially well-off?* The responses to this question were slightly divided between yes and no. Those that responded with a “yes” reflected further on their substance use over their lifetime and concluded that their addiction would have still taken priority until it destroyed their lives. They believed that criminality would be the only avenue available to them for funding their substance use. The female offender participants who saw themselves succumbing to a destructive lifestyle were those that used drugs with a higher potentiality for abuse or addiction, such as heroin and crack cocaine. Conversely, the female offender participants that responded with a “no” were those that used drugs with a lower potential for abuse or addiction. These drugs have severe withdrawal symptoms and that is what induces the addiction (Gonçalves et al, 2016:760), thereby increasing the propensity for more delinquent behaviour (Havnes et al, 2012:308; Murphy et al, 2014:43; Sutherland et al, 2015:212).

The offender participants also expressed the desire to cease their substance use, even before being incarcerated. They felt that if they were not incarcerated, they would never have been able to cease substance use. Some of the reasons given for the desire to stop were family commitments, reaching a breaking point, and self-improvement. These findings support those by Nyamathi, Srivastava, Salem, Wall, Kwon, Ekstrand, Hall, Turner and Faucette (2016:10). With regards to the family responsibility, children/motherhood compelled them to make changes to their lives. The needs of their children became a bigger priority than substance use. However, this was short lived as, when triggered, substance use was still a coping mechanism. Hence almost all of offender participants were grateful that they were incarcerated where there is limited access to substances, therefore they were forced to learn to live without substances.

There were also levels of regret expressed by women in this study when reflecting back on their lives of substance use. They wished they had made better decisions in life and had followed through the substance use breaking points that they had reached. The

breaking points refer to times when they realised that their substance using habits were destroying their lives and that they needed a change in lifestyle. Breaking points were different for each individual. They included getting arrested for the first time, their rejection by family members and their family responsibilities.

### **6.2.1.3 Does drug use result in criminality and vice versa?**

#### **6.2.1.3.1 Association between substance use and criminal behaviour**

As already established from the literature, there is a correlation between substance use and crime (Bennett, 1990; Farrington, 2017; Masombuka, 2013; Pomara et al, 2012; Wagenaar et al, 2017). However, the correlation has been largely anecdotally understood to mean that substance users consume substances, then commit crimes, including violent crimes (McKetin et al, 2014:804). This is based on a further anecdote that substance users experience psychosis, lose their rationality and therefore their self-control, and that their inhibitions are distorted enough for them to commit violent crime. Granted, there are some substances that can have those effects as evidenced in the literature, but not all substances will result in such psychopharmacological effects. Literature has stated that it is usually cocaine, phencyclidine (PCP), amphetamines, barbiturates and alcohol (Domino & Luby, 2012:915; Miller & Potter-Efron, 2016:1). Both alcohol and cocaine were prominent in this study.

This study has shown that offender substance users of cocaine did not become violent when intoxicated but female offenders who participated in this study stated that they did not display any violence while intoxicated, irrespective of the substance used. Inversely, even downers, such as heroin and cannabis, did not incite violence in the participant female offenders. According to the findings, the female offender participants were not originally of a violent nature. This could be attributed to biological differences and/or cultural and societal expectations. Personality traits could also be attributing factors that can be used to explain the absence of violence, but the exploration of the attributions was beyond the scope of this study. These findings however further point to the complexities and nuances that exist in the drug-crime relationship when gender is counted as a

variable. Where violence was explicitly displayed however, is where alcohol was the substance used as those cases resulted in the murder of the victim. Alcohol related crime findings in this study supported studies that stated alcohol use increases the proclivity to react to situations with violence (Barberet, 2014; Belknap, 2020; Cicero et al, 2020; Kopak et al, 2014).

With respect to violence and substance use, this study found consensus with other studies that found a weak link between resultant violence and substance use (Heischober & Miller, 1991; Goldsmid & Willis, 2016). These studies included participants in their samples, who displayed psychological problems that made it more difficult to determine the effects of substances. Like most studies in the literature (Dellazizzo et al, 2019; Dugré et al, 2017; Moulin et al, 2018), the connection between violence or crime and substance use was deterministically established. The establishment of the connection was on the basis that offenders were arrested after using drugs on the day they committed their crimes. These studies (Dellazizzo et al, 2019; Dugré et al, 2017; Moulin et al, 2018) largely ignored the crimes that participants were incarcerated for but rather focused on how substance use influenced participants' criminal behaviour.

There was a clear distinction between crimes committed to acquire money for substances and violent crimes in this study. While murder was predominantly alcohol related, crimes, such as shoplifting, theft and burglary, were more prevalent for participants who used other substances. This supports Comiskey et al's (2012:408) assertion that substance using females generally avoid violent offences.

The link between alcohol use and violent crimes has been extensively discussed in the literature however these studies mostly included male participants. Therefore, the female offender participants in this study, who used alcohol, committed the crime of murder after what was perceived to be provocation; there was no intent to commit murder. These participants expressed regret and guilt concerning the crime and believed that it was a mistake. Moreover, these alcohol users did not perceive themselves as addicts (addiction is defined in section 1.6). There is however a plethora of studies that have evidenced the



link between violence and alcohol use. Some studies claim that violent crimes were committed with a combination of alcohol use and other substances, and not other substances alone. However, that was not the case in this study as only alcohol was used on the day the murders were committed by the particular offender participants. This supports Goldstein, Brownstein, Ryan, and Bellucci's (1989) research that discovered that homicides are not the result of intoxicated and psychotic substance users but rather are a result of alcohol induced intoxication.

A study by Alcorn III et al (2013) looking at the effects of substances on aggression and impulsivity found that nearly 30% of male offender participants stated that most, or all of their crimes were committed under the influence of substances (Alcorn III et al, 2013:231). In this current study, the female offender participants also stated that they preferred to be intoxicated while committing criminal acts. Furthermore, Alcorn III et al's (2013) study found that the majority of the male participants blamed the substances for the crimes they committed. They claimed that the substances altered their minds and thus they were driven to commit the crime. This study with female offenders found that the female offender participants tended to accept responsibility for their actions without blaming other external and internal factors. A comparison cannot definitively be drawn as this study is qualitative in relation to Alcorn III et al's (2013) quantitative study.

The information provided above offers an understanding of how the participant offenders relate to substance use and their crimes. However, the information is still inadequate to establish a causal link between substance use and criminality in the drug-crime relationship. The information fails to prove unequivocally that the crime would not have taken place without the use of a certain illicit substance. The opposite of this, whether involvement in criminal activity eventually leads to substance use, can also not be proven. This is due to the self-perception of each offender in reference to the degree of involvement or influence of the substance on their criminality. The females in this study have, more than males in other research studies, attributed their criminal behaviour to self, and not substances. Males tend to want to absolve themselves of their criminal acts, whereas females accept their actions as not being influenced by any external causes (List

& Menzies, 2017:11). This is also true of their substance using habits. The male oriented studies seem to suggest that males are more likely to find excuses for their criminal behaviours.

Although the pharmacological effects of most common substances are known, how exactly they affect criminality and violence remains elusive. More factors that affect the drug-crime relationship, such as drug type, methods of substance consumption, dosage in relation to body type and gender, psychological and physical predispositions and the environment, still need to be explored and investigated. Although this data are still not known, research, including this one, has continued to show that the drug-crime relationship is far more complex than originally conceptualised. The research from literature on the effects of substances, including this research, cannot prove a direct link between violence, criminality and the psychopharmacological effects of drugs. This suggests that criminality could be a phenomenon that is beyond the pharmacological effects of substances. This suggestion then brings into question the entire drug use and criminality link.

An early study by MacCoun, Kilmer and Reuter (2003) emphasises the importance of the role of environment as a contributing factor to violence. The authors state that “it may be that no drug is sufficient to produce aggression in isolation from psychological and situational moderators” (2003:69). Drawing from literature, they believe that violence cannot take place without provocation or stressors while consuming substances. They propose that there needs to be an interaction between two aspects: the drug and the situation, and the drug and psychology. However, alcohol was still cited as the one substance that had the potential to increase the propensity for aggression. This study agrees with this finding.

The environmental factor was not extensively explored as there was only one participant who displayed traits of being directly influenced by the environment (JC-16, 26, coloured) but this study noted that there needed to be provocation for violence to result while intoxicated by alcohol or other substances. Because perceptions of provocation while

intoxicated are largely subjective (De Sousa Fernandes Perna, Theunissen, Kuypers, Toennes & Ramaekers, 2016:3335; Denson, Blundell, Schofield, Schira & Krämer, 2018:210), this study shows that females would prefer not to be violent or commit violent offences.

In the association between substance use and criminal behaviour, literature has highlighted that persistent use of heroin and cocaine is the major contributing factor to criminality (Brochu et al, 2017:110; Baltieri, 2014:118–121; Fazel et al, 2017a:1728–1733). This research however has shown a strong relationship between persistent substance use and crimes committed to acquire money for substances. One possible reason for this is that users in this study seem to have had a lot of unstructured time in their youth, and well into their adulthood. This claim is drawn from the fact that a significant number of the female offender participants did not complete their schooling. This unstructured time led to them spending their “free time” in the company of anti-prosocial peers that used drugs. Apart from coping, as already discussed in the previous section, substance use became an activity to pass time. Since this activity could not be legitimately funded, illegitimate means, such as theft and shoplifting, were used to fund the habit. This was done by fifteen of the offender participants. Comiskey et al (2012:408) also state that women resort to prostitution to fund their substance using habits. However, this study found little support for that statement. The female offender participants in this study showed disdain for the idea of prostitution to obtain money for substances except for a two of the female offender participants who stated that they prostituted themselves.

The qualitative nature of this research also exemplifies how qualitative research techniques reveal the complexities and nuances within the drug-crime relationship. It shows that not all substances led to criminal behaviour to support drug habits. Some relied on their partners for money, some saved money from allowances received from parents and guardians and others relied on their drug-using peer groups to share their drugs with them making this a communal effort. This form of communal effort to acquiring substances was a common theme in this study. This further supports the notion that not all drug users engage in criminal activity (Nordstrom & Dackis, 2011:664). Furthermore,

although only few female offender participants reported this, criminality was not only used to support the substance use habit, it was also a means of survival. Not all criminality is solely directly linked to substance use. Research in the drug-crime relationship field, in relation to females, therefore, needs to factor in other aspects of what the money generating crimes fund apart from substances use habits, particularly in the South African context where poverty is still gendered and still rife.

The assumption that crimes are committed exclusively for the funding of substance use habits is erroneous. This discussion has shown the complex and nuanced nature of the drug-crime relationship that shifts in nature over time and is not simplistic in its nonlinear directional causal links. The relationship remains fluid and provokes further research. Nevertheless, there are those persistent substance users who commit crimes for the purpose of purchasing more substances. The following theme discussion presents these instances of offences in relation to drug type.

#### ***6.2.1.3.2 Sense of belonging and modelled agents***

This theme alluded to the familial risk factors relating to the offender participant's substance use and criminality. Research has shown that the family bonds can be a predictor for substance use (De Micheli & Formigoni, 2002; Ledoux, Miller, Choquet & Plant, 2002; Van Ryzin & Dishion, 2014; Van Ryzin, Fosco & Dishion, 2012). These researchers conclude that positive family bonds result in a lower risk of adolescent substance use (Johnson, McBride, Hopkins & Pepper, 2014:216). However, in this study, this was the contrary as the majority of participants expressed that they experienced healthy family bonds. The offender participants spoke of how their parents or guardians were accepting and emotionally supportive of them when they were growing up. The findings showed that the offender participants felt a sense of belonging in their families.

Literature from Chapter 2 has further shown that weaker bonds are formed between child and parent if the parent is cold and rejecting (Mensah & Kuranchie, 2013:127–128; Sarwar, 2016:243). Weak bonds are then a predictor for substance use and criminality,

forming a directly proportional relationship. In other words, the weaker the bonds, the greater the risk of engaging in delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, such weak bonds lead to children displaying acts of delinquency (Alizadeh et al, 2011:196). Research has shown that substance use and offending behaviour are directly and indirectly impacted by weak bonds. Children's weak attachments, especially to mothers, can be a predictor for substance use and criminality (Kiesner et al, 2010:3–4; Johari et al, 2011:18) because weak bonds lead to the child not internalising both society's and parental norms and values. They will also fail to practice socially acceptable behaviours and responses to difficulties. Furthermore, weak bonds are also formed between other members of society, as well as authority figures. This results in the child becoming more prone to delinquent behaviour such as substance use and criminality (Alizadeh et al, 2011:197; Johari et al, 2011:18; Mensah & Kuranchie, 2013:127; Sarwar, 2016:243).

Social competence is further affected by weak family and parent bonds leading to poor coping skills and poor regulation of emotions, which are linked to substance use and other forms of delinquent behaviour (Kreis, Gillings, Svanberg & Schwannauer, 2016:44; Lindberg, Fugett, Adkins & Cook, 2017:284; Schindler & Bröning, 2015:14). Parental neglect has also been shown to be associated with offending behaviour (Brown & Shillington, 2017:218; Cavanaugh et al, 2015:1260–1261). However, in this study, only a few of the offender participants experienced weak family and parental bonds. Fewer still experienced neglect from their parents or guardians. This study is contrary to the assertions in literature about the influence of family bonds. It shows that most of the offender participants had healthy and strong family bonds, but nevertheless used substances and were involved in criminality.

Research states that there is a direct relationship between parental substance use and criminality with adolescent substance use and delinquent behaviour (Jadidi & Nakhaee, 2014:4; Velleman & Templeton, 2016:109) because children are likely to model their parents' behaviours. The findings in this study are contrary to those claims as the majority of offender participants had parents and guardians who did not engage in any illicit activities.

The information provided by the offender participants was done so retrospectively. Therefore, the information provided about parent-child relationships could have been affected by memory and other individual personality traits and perceptions of self and reality (Hill, Mogle, Bhargava, Bell & Wion, 2019:8; Turner & Reynolds, 2011:400). Munaf (2012:154) also argues that females tend to have more positive perceptions of the way they were parented as compared to males. Therefore, there is a possibility that some of the offender participants' perceptions of their parents and guardians were skewed, hence the disparities and irregularities in the findings. Their lived reality could have been negative, but then perceived as positive. This could be because, as literature suggests, the child's perception of their parents is the one that impacts on internal scripts and schemas (Zaman & Fivush, 2013:2052) that subsequently influence behaviour (Nutbrown, 2011:56).

Notwithstanding the differences in the researches above, this research has shown that neither weak nor strong family bonds determine substance use. This phenomenon implies that family bonds need to be explored in conjunction with peer bonds because all offender participants in this research were introduced to substance use by peers and other elements outside of the home environment (refer to Table 5.5). Hypothetically, the behaviour of modelled agents outside of the home, more so, peers, could outweigh that of parents and guardians. This warrants further research that was beyond the scope of this current study.

#### ***6.2.1.4 Is the general strain model applicable in relation to the drug-crime relationship in the South African context?***

##### ***6.2.1.4.1 Reasons for substance use***

One of the reasons for substance use by the offender participants resulted from the theme above (sense of belonging). Five female offender participants used drugs to fill the void left by feeling like they do not belong. A few participants gave reasons that included boredom, recreational purposes and experimenting. The study showed that most of the

substances were used by female offenders, who participated in this research, as an emotional coping mechanism. This finding supports the literature (Asberg & Renk, 2012:7; Bayliss, 2016:28–37; Baltieri, 2014:123; Heilemann & Santhiveeran, 2011:70) that states that female substance use is directly related to the coping mechanism for psychological distress. As the findings showed, substances were used to escape the psychological distresses of life's perceived difficulties. But substances do not provide a long term or permanent escape from reality because, when the psychopharmacological effects of the substance wear off, the reality is still there. The stressors and life difficulties will return, sometimes stronger than before (Sinatra & Black, 2018:5) leaving the substance user feeling powerless and thus substance use ensues leading to addiction. Substances disempower the individual from learning healthy and positive coping mechanisms when faced with life stressors. This behaviour learnt through repetition makes users believe that stressors can be dealt with by substances.

As discussed in the findings section (Chapter 5) there are certain triggers that led the female offenders in this study to abuse substances. They included: physical and emotional abuse from partners; feelings of rejection; and having been sexually assaulted. Reliving these events, either mentally or physically, triggered the female offenders, who took part in this study, to continue with substance use. This supports the connection between incarcerated women and physical and sexual victimisation (Gilfus, 1993:70, 80; Browne et al, 1999:316–318; Richie, 2012:105). One offender participant revealed that whenever she faced abuse in her relationship, she used substances. This created a cycle of trigger and substance use.

#### ***6.2.1.4.1.1 Female offender coping strategies***

The literature suggests that substance users are more likely to experience poor coping mechanisms for strain (Baltieri, 2014:123). These are behavioural or cognitive coping strategies (refer to section 3.2.2). Cognitive coping strategies use the mind to rationalise and subvert the strain. Behavioural coping strategies refer to active behaviour when managing strain. There are two types of Behavioural coping strategies: (1) behaviour that reduces or removes the source of the strain; and (2) behaviour that is aimed at seeking

alternative rewards, such as stealing things, to deal with the strain. This research has shown that the offender participants, who participated in this study, engaged in both types of behavioural coping strategies. An example of the first type is JC-06, a 35-year-old, white female who opted to sleep whenever she was feeling depressed. An example of the second type is JC-15, a 33-year-old black female who mentioned how, whenever there were problems within her relationship with her husband, she would smoke mandrax to cope with the stress. The first type of behavioural coping strategy is a predictor for substance use and the second type then becomes a predictor for criminality.

The two types of behavioural coping strategies work in tandem. The female offender participants would experience strain then, to alleviate the negative effects of strain, they would use substances. The use of substances however had a consequence of strains such as withdrawal from the used substance or the resurfacing of the stressors after the high. If the participant wanted substances to alleviate the negative affect, she engaged in criminality. Thus, the first and second types of behavioural coping strategies worked together to drive the drug-crime relationship within the context of female offenders who participated in this research.

Some offender participants resorted to cognitive coping strategies while others continued to use substances even while incarcerated. The continued use of illicit substances within the correctional facility is explained by the importation model which suggests that certain behaviours carried out in the correctional centre subculture are imported (DeLisi, Trulson, Marquart, Drury & Kosloski, 2011:1187). Even though drugs are available, the large majority of the female offender participants cannot afford the high prices of substances within the correctional facility drug market. Therefore, they are forced to cease substance use and rely on cognitive coping strategies.

Literature has shown that individuals tend to use both cognitive and behavioural coping strategies in combination (Lyness & Koehler, 2016:458; Wagner, Myers & McIninch, 1999:773). However, this research has shown that the substance using female participants mostly opted for behavioural coping strategies which lead them to commit



crimes. This is because acts of crime are also a behavioural coping mechanism as a reward action is taken to negate strain or stress. The findings of this study show that the crimes committed by the offender participants were mostly done on impulse or desperation, and were not planned. Annang (2021:51) explains that female criminality is more impulsive as compared to male criminality due to frustrations that some females experience (Russu, 2019:243). The impulse to commit a crime relieves a source of strain (acquiring money to support the next fix) but they seldom resorted to violence.

Therefore, behavioural coping mechanisms within the context of female offending and substance use can be used to differentiate between substance users who offend and those that do not. Even though substance use and criminality are forms of behavioural coping mechanisms, they were not used uniformly across the female offender participants. The reason for this, according to GST, is the constraints to coping mechanisms that are delinquent. Internal, societal and environmental constraints affect the availability of resources that an individual has at their disposal. Agnew (1992) outlines constraints, which include individual coping resources, conventional social support and ecological constraints for delinquent coping strategies (i.e., substance use and criminality) (refer to section 3.2.1.2).

When an individual has positive support from the societal and environmental resources, as well as positive internal resources, they are less likely to engage in delinquent behavioural coping mechanisms. This study shows that the female substance users who participated in this research are complex thus the constraint aspect of GST is beyond the scope of this study. It also shows that female offenders and substance users who took part in this study had poor coping skills and limited access to support structures, and thus were more likely to practice delinquent behavioural coping mechanisms that were difficult to stop. However, the findings on coping discussed above are not without limitations.

#### ***6.2.1.4.1.1.1 Limitations of coping data obtained from incarcerated female participants***

One of the limitations of interpreting the data obtained from incarcerated participants lies

within the methodological limitations, that is, collecting the data from incarcerated substance-using participants. Previous research indicates that coping strategies are affected by the length of the sentence as well as the period already spent in the correctional facility (Aborisade & Fayemi, 2016; Agbakwuru & Awujo, 2016; Mohino, Kirchner & Forns, 2004; Partyka, 2001). Based on this, the findings on coping skills could be skewed. An early study by Mohino et al (2004:46) discovered that, after three months of imprisonment, inmates begin to switch significantly to positive cognitive coping strategies. This tended to increase with the increase in length of time spent in incarceration. Female offender participants, who spent less than three months incarcerated, coped with negative cognitive coping mechanisms such as emotional outbursts.

A longitudinal study would need to be conducted to validate Mohino et al's (2004) claims. However, there is a significant observable difference when comparing offender participants who have been incarcerated for a lengthier time with those that were incarcerated for a shorter period. Participants in this study who had been incarcerated the longest tended to be calmer, more rational, and accepting of their fate. They said that they were coping well within the correctional facility. Participants who had been there for a shorter period were still pursuing substance use within the correctional facility. These assumptions and observations can only be proven with a study that aims to specifically focus on these differences. This was not the aim of this study.

Similar to Mohino et al (2004), Partyka (2001:9–10) postulates that, within the initial period of incarceration, coping strategies change from emotional outbursts to a more detached style of coping. Spending time within the correctional facility also impacted on the participant female offenders' perceptions of their uncontrollable strains in life. This is based on the milieu of correctional facilities that are not accommodating of autonomy, leading to feelings of powerlessness (Ahrens, 2015:4; Ajzenstadt, 2009:209). Incarceration can also foster negative moods, which can lead to increased substance use. Added to that is the potential for distress, thereby increasing the proclivity for socially unacceptable styles of coping (Rose, Trounson, Louise, Shepherd & Ogloff, 2020:799).

Based on this, the female offender participants could have adapted their cognitive coping strategies in order to respond to the strains caused by the environment (Leban, Cardwell, Copes & Brezina, 2016:963–964). This point adds to the criticism of the soundness of using coping measures for specific situations then assuming they can be generalised to other situations (Jauregui, Onaindia & Estévez, 2017; Reid & Listwan, 2018; Riaz & Agha, 2012).

Another methodological limitation to collecting data on coping in this study was the manner in which the data were collected. There was no established instrument that was used when collecting coping data as all the information was self-reported. This may question the accuracy of the collected data since it relies on the participants' retrospective reflections. Research has suggested that this form of coping data collection could lead to the use of cognitive coping strategies being largely underreported (Garnefski, Van Rood, De Roos & Kraaij, 2017:150; Ireland & York, 2012:75; Wakai, Sampl, Hilton & Ligon, 2014:357–359). Conversely, behavioural coping strategies could be over reported. In this study, albeit the participants were incarcerated for a crime they committed, their entire life history of implemented coping strategies was not investigated as this was not the core aim of this study.

Lastly, due to delinquent constraints (see section 3.2.1.2), coping strategies were implemented differently because they are subject to the levels of support as well as the internal resources that build on personality traits such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, etc. These factors play a role in determining the coping strategies adopted (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010:685; Liu, Li, Ling & Cai, 2016:36) but, in this study, they are secondary.

In conclusion, females as a variable to the drug-crime relationship, add further complexities to the relationship. Furthermore, the drug-crime relationship for female substance users seems to be weak because female substance users do not intentionally seek out criminality neither as a consequence of the psychopharmacological effects of the substance, nor the desire to engage in criminality. The next set of themes on

professional participants supplements the above discussion.

## **6.2.2 Part II: Offender related themes to research questions**

Part II relates to the themes from the DCS officials participants discussed under the research question to be answered. These themes are used to supplement those discussed above and to explain the drug-crime relationship.

### ***6.2.2.1 How do various drug types affect female criminality?***

#### ***6.2.2.1.1 Drug type related to type of crime***

The relationship between specific substances and types of crime could not be established in this study except between alcohol and murder. The participant DCS officials also agreed with this relationship. The participant DCS officials however, commented that *nyaope* users, both males and females, never commit sexual offences as *nyaope* completely makes a person lose their sexual appetite.

### ***6.2.2.2 What influence does gender have on the drug-crime relationship?***

#### ***6.2.2.2.1 DCS officials' perspective: Drug use causes criminality***

The drug-use-causes-crime model, based on the tenets proposed by Goldstein (1985:494–500) (refer to section 3.3.1.2), suggests that the use of psychotropic substances, including alcohol, leads to involvement in crime (Keefer & Loayza, 2010:31; Csete et al, 2016:4–6; Parry et al, 2004:180). The DCS officials who took part in this research did acknowledge the link between substance use and criminality however they also acknowledged that the link is not simplistic. The link is complex and nuanced and shows weak bonds when viewed from the context of female substance users who participated in this research. Therefore, more research in the context of female substance users is required.

#### **6.2.2.2.2 DCS officials' perspective: Criminality causes drug use**

The crime-causes-drug-use model (refer to section 3.3.1.1) states that individuals who associate with criminal sub-cultures are more likely to choose or be influenced into taking drugs, as compared to individuals not associated with criminal sub-cultures (White & Gorman, 2000:151). The participant DCS officials refuted this model, based on the fact that not everyone who engages in criminality will eventually use drugs. Since this model is based on lifestyle choices, such as the pursuit for hedonistic pleasures, it was difficult to apply it to the women who participated in this study as the female offender participants in this study were more focused on escaping reality, rather than living a transient life.

The model presented in the theoretical framework section (Chapter 3) that could apply to the explanation of the drug-crime relationship within the context of females, is the common cause model (refer to section 3.3.1.3). It stands in contrast to both the drug-use-causes-crime model and the crime-causes-drug-use model. It proposes that the relationship between crime and substance use is not causal. The model rather asserts that crime and drug use exist within a common social sphere, therefore they share similar explanatory factors (Watters et al, 1985:357).

#### **6.2.2.3 Does drug use result in criminality and vice versa?**

##### **6.2.2.3.1 Difference between male and female substance users**

Drawing from the literature, among the differences that were found were self-efficacy and coping skills (Yule et al, 2015:252). The women in this study were more willing to admit that they had a substance use problem as compared to men in the literature (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009:546). However, the women in this study also had lower self-control to cease substance use.

Studies found that women are more likely than men to seek help when dealing with stressful situations (Eisenberg, Hunt, Speer & Zivin, 2011:304; Higgins, Duxbury & Lyons, 2010:850; Thompson, Anisimowicz, Miedema, Hogg, Wodchis & Aubrey-Bassler, 2016:2). Furthermore, they use coping strategies that involve escaping from reality and

they are more willing to accept responsibility (Afolabi, 2015:317; Mowen & Visher, 2015:340). The latter part of these findings is supported by those of this study. This study however did not find evidence among the female offender participants of seeking out help or support from other sources. They were more prone to turn to drugs than seek out help. Furthermore, they expressed shame for using substances and continued to isolate themselves limiting their access to external assistance. A possible reason for the shame might be rooted in cultural or traditional expectations of women, particularly how tradition and culture expect women to behave. The use of substances by a woman would therefore foster internalised shame as a response to the failure to adhere to expectations.

The other difference between male and female substance use is their coping skills. Although both men and women use coping skills when dealing with problems, literature claims that women are more likely to use a wider array of coping mechanisms. The coping mechanism, however, is dependent on the specific situation (Heilemann & Santhiveeran, 2011:70). The women in this study adopted negative behavioural coping strategies, which included substance use. However, the coping strategies do not form a clear connection between substance use and criminality for women in this study.

#### ***6.2.2.4 Is the general strain model applicable in relation to the drug-crime relationship in the South African context?***

##### ***6.2.2.4.1 Why females commonly use drugs***

The participant DCS officials gave the same reasons as discussed in the themes that emerged from the female offender participants. The only difference was that the participant DCS officials believed that the female offenders came from broken homes which was the reason they started using substances. This is in contrast to what the female offender participants reported. The majority stated that they were from good families and that they had healthy bonds with their family members. The information provided by the female offender participants took precedence in this study.

#### **6.2.2.4.2 Cessation of substance use while incarcerated**

As already stated in the fifth theme from the female offenders, almost all of the offender participants expressed gratitude for being incarcerated because they could finally cease substance use. Only those who could afford substances while incarcerated continued substance use, but at a reduced rate. One DCS official however stated that substance use in the female correctional facility is endemic as female inmates transition to using psychiatric drugs, which they can access while incarcerated, rather than illicit substances. This claim, however, contradicts the majority of female offender participants who expressed gratitude about being incarcerated because it gave them an opportunity to cease substance use. The information shared by the female offender participants took precedence because the DCS official could have been speaking generally across all types of female offenders that were housed within the correctional facility. This study required a specific set of participants which were females who had a history of substance use before being incarcerated, as outlined in the methodology section (Chapter 4). Female offender participants could not merely be those that were apprehended for drug related crimes.

### **6.3 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the discussion has alluded to the complexities in the drug-crime relationship. Furthermore, factoring in the variable “female substance user”, the relationship appears to be weaker or even non-existent. The drug type variable however could not be effectively explored in this study due to confounding factors. More advanced research is required to explore the influence of drug type on criminality. However, the alcohol-violence relationship was supported by this study in that murder was closely linked to alcohol consumption. Substantial contributions have been made to the literature to understand the drug-crime relationship. One of the outstanding contributions is female trauma and how that affects substance use. The female offenders, who participated in this study, mostly used substances to cope therefore the criminal element could be removed if traumas were dealt with in healthy ways.

Lastly, to answer the research questions based on the findings and the discussions:

1. How do various drug types affect female criminality?

This question could not be adequately answered however the findings of the study could be compared to the literature. Literature on males showed that certain substances could be attributed to certain types of crimes. This study however, showed that there is no distinction in the type of crime irrespective of drug type. Women who participated in this study avoided violent offences and carried out property theft crimes. However, when alcohol was involved, it was more likely that violence also ensued.

2. What influence does gender have on the drug-crime relationship?

The females in this study seem to destabilise and challenge the already established relationship. It can potentially be rendered non-existent within the context of this study.

3. Does drug use result in criminality and vice versa?

Referring to the drug-use-causes-crime, and crime-causes-drug-use models, the answer to this is a conditional *no*. What is evident in the participant female offenders' substance use and crime is the common cause model which states that substance use and crime merely exist in the same sphere. Therefore, they do not necessarily need to relate.

4. Is the general strain model applicable in relation to the drug-crime relationship in the South African context?

The GST seems to be applicable to female substance using offenders who participated in this study. In fact, it contributes to the destabilisation of the drug-crime relationship in the context of female substance users who participated in this study. An aspect of the theory, coping, highlighted that female substance use in this study could be removed from the link with criminality.



## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter presented the discussion of the findings. It concluded that the drug-crime relationship is indeed complex and nuanced. Furthermore, the research questions were answered based on the findings. This chapter presents a summary of the major findings, recommendations for future research as well recommendations for prevention treatment and drug policy. Lastly, the limitations of the study as well as the final conclusion are presented.

### 6.2 Overview of study

The primary aim of this study was to *explore* the influence of two variables, gender and drug type, on the drug-crime relationship. To that effect, the following research objectives were constructed:

- To investigate whether drug use plays a role in female criminality and vice versa;
- To explore which factors may be influencing the drug-crime relationship of female offenders;
- To explore the effects of licit and illicit drug types (depressants, stimulants and hallucinogens) on the female drug-crime relationship;
- To explore how gender plays a role in the drug-crime relationship by focusing on incarcerated female offenders; and
- To assess the applicability of the general strain model in relation to the female drug-crime relationship.

Following the objectives, the study was structured into seven chapters:

**Chapter 1** introduced and contextualised the research within the broader criminological milieu. A specific problem statement and the aims and objectives were then developed. The key concepts pertaining to the study were defined. Furthermore, issues relating to

the reliability and trustworthiness of research data were also presented. Lastly, the ethical considerations were discussed in this chapter.

**Chapter 2** presented the review of literature that relates to the drug-crime nexus within the global context since South African knowledge is limited on the subject. The scientific literature provided the premise for this research. Furthermore, it informed the development of the research instruments by directing the questions to focus on during the semi-structured interview sessions with participants.

**Chapter 3** outlined the theoretical framework underpinning the research. Furthermore, it presented models that explain the drug-crime nexus. **Chapter 4** provided a discursive outline of the research methodology and the steps taken from start to finish. Whereas **Chapter 5** presented the qualitative findings of the research and the interpretation and discussion of those findings are found in **Chapter 6**.

This chapter, **Chapter 7**, summarises the main research findings and further provides recommendations and conclusions around the field of study, i.e., the drug-crime relationship.

## **7.2 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS AND STUDY**

The objectives outlined above and in section 1.4.1 are used to structure the major findings of this study and how these objectives were achieved. However, the third objective (To explore the effects of licit and illicit drug types on the female drug-crime relationship) has been excluded as this objective could not be realised in this study. Nevertheless, the pursuit of the objective resulted in the confirmation of the positive relationship between alcohol and violence.

### **7.2.1 To investigate whether drug use plays a role in female criminality and vice versa**

The findings yielded from this study added to the field of knowledge of the drug-crime

relationship particularly for studies that scrutinised the claims that the relationship is causal (Castells et al, 2018; Gold, 2012; Karila et al, 2012; Jones & Comer, 2013; Reingle et al, 2012). The findings show that traumatic life events experienced by women, who participated in this research, were likely to have led to offending behaviour, including substance use. The use of behavioural coping strategies also served as a precursor to offending behaviour. This is in accordance with Agnew (1992:69) who proposed in GST that the use of behavioural coping strategies serve as a prelude to offending behaviour.

### **7.2.2 To explore which factors may be influencing the drug-crime relationship of female offenders**

The attempt to bring clarity to all the factors that interplay in female substance use and criminality proved to be difficult in this study. To some extent, the domains identified, educational levels, place of upbringing, employment status, race and age, all directly or indirectly contribute to substance use and criminality. From literature, this was also the case (Delker et al, 2016:9; Farrington, 2017:111; Mokwena & Morojele, 2014:379; Petersen Williams et al, 2014:2; Schoeler et al, 2016:3), however, these domains also possibly interact with each other, thus making them more difficult to isolate and study, as conferred by Mokwena and Morojele (2014:379–381). As reported by the literature, coping styles are directly influenced by the parenting styles particularly maladaptive coping strategies are influenced by neglect in childhood. Furthermore, children tend to model their parents and close guardians (Kiesner et al, 2010:4). However, this study contradicts such research as most of the offender participants experienced positive and supportive parenting and their caregivers were also generally socially moral individuals whose behaviours could be acceptably emulated.

The relationships between the identified domains, factors and coping strategies as well as substance use and criminality, make the drug-crime relationship even more difficult to explain. The understanding thereof requires more comprehensive research of all the facets that interplay in the relationship. Even in longitudinal studies, the understanding of the all the facets and aspects of the drug-crime relationship cannot be adequately

measured and understood (Reingle et al, 2012; Scholes-Balog et al, 2016; Wilkinson et al, 2015) because drug use and criminality are complex behaviours that pertain to a plethora of variables and factors. The measurement of these could prove to be impossible to study. The investigations of the supposed causes, correlates and the development of the two behaviours (drug use and criminality) are ultimately improbable because no research can measure every single variable.

Altogether however, the findings of this study have shown that, in the case of the female offenders who were part of this study, drug use and offending behaviour, though separate, coexisted in a common social sphere. Offenders who participated in this research were influenced by similar, as well as different risk factors that they were predisposed to, while other individuals were not. Furthermore, behavioural coping strategies were found to be intervening or mediating factors that could have determined the research participants' engagement in substance use and criminality. In this case, substance use and criminality could then be considered maladaptive behavioural coping strategies used by the female offenders who participated in this study. Based on that, the argument against a causal relationship between substance use and criminal behaviour can be made.

Additionally, this research showed that the factors that impact on the drug-crime relationship are: the experience of negative life events by the offender participants, either in childhood or adulthood; reasons for substance use; delinquent peers; and behavioural coping strategies that served as a prelude to substance use and the consequential criminality. In the context of this research, criminality was also a consequence of substance use as opposed to criminality preceding substance use, as described in the literature for female substance users. This is in contrast with male substance using offenders according to Naffine's (2015) DUCO study. Naffine's (2015:89) study found that male substance users' criminal behaviours preceded substance use. This finding challenges the long held belief by the general public as well as policy makers, that drug use causes crime. According to this study, and some of the literature (Alam & Juurlink, 2016; Alhusen et al, 2013; Da Agra, 2017; Kraanen et al, 2014, Kessler et al, 2012; Schwartz et al, 2017), this is not an established and irrefutable fact. This study has

suggested that there are other factors, which are difficult to measure, that contribute to the drug-crime relationship. This may be the reason for a lack of empirical evidence that supports a causal relationship between substance use and criminality. The consequence of this lack however, has an impact on drug policies and the treatment of substance users.

### **7.2.3 To explore how gender plays a role in the drug-crime relationship by focusing on incarcerated female offenders.**

As previously noted, female substance use and criminal behaviour is well situated in the common cause model that explains the drug-crime relationship. The use of maladaptive behavioural coping strategies also explains why some individuals, irrespective of experiencing negative life events, do not engage in criminality or substance use. Substance use was initiated, on average, in the late teenagerhood of the female offenders who participated in this study. Criminality however was initiated later in the lives of the said participants. This is in contrast to Chaiken and Chaiken's (1990:235) study which purported that substance use and criminality co-occur in the same period. Female substance use in the broader drug-crime relationship seems to be unique. Regarding the average onset age (17 years, in this study) of substance use, it can be argued that, at that age, there is limited access to socially acceptable coping strategies. Hence the resort to using maladaptive coping strategies, such as substance use, at that age (Holt et al, 2016:14).

The factors above ultimately show that it is trauma and the manner in which it is coped with that potentially leads women to substance use. Criminal behaviour is then a consequence of that combination. Furthermore, as stated by some of the participant female offenders, they would not have been engaged in criminality if they were financially well off. Conversely, this demonstrates that criminality and substance use have a common cause. Thus, the common cause model to explain the drug-crime relationship is supported by this study. The common cause model proposes that the drug-crime relationship is not causal. The relationship is rather explained as criminal behaviour and substance use existing in the same social sphere (Watters et al, 1985:357). Both substance use and criminal behaviour could be viewed as maladaptive behavioural

coping strategies however further research is required to make this an established fact. The majority of the female offender participants in this study also reported a problematic substance use, i.e., addiction or abuse.

The findings of this study were mostly in agreement with the limited research on female substance users involved in criminality. Nevertheless, this study also made significant contributions to the field of study, especially within the South African context where research on substance using female offenders is minimal. The existing research consistently showed that trauma – such as sexual victimisation and death of loved ones, both evident in this study – and the behavioural coping strategies are predictors for both substance use and criminal behaviour (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Browne et al, 1999; DeHart et al, 2014; Fagan, 2001; Gilfus, 1993; Richie, 2012; Salisbury & Van Voorhis 2009). This research however has contradicted these researches that made claims that familial issues that arose out of childhood were contributing factors to delinquent behaviour. However, this study found that most of the female offenders, who took part in the research, did not experience any familial issues, in their opinions. Most were from good families that supported them. Reflexively, this could allude to experienced traumas as the impetus to continued female substance use.

#### **7.2.4 To assess the applicability of the general strain model in relation to the female drug-crime relationship**

The general strain model was applicable in this study on female substance users. The findings showed that the research offender participants applied maladaptive behavioural coping strategies in the form of substance use and criminal behaviour. This is in support of Salisbury and Van Voorhis' (2009) research which showed that women use substances for the purpose of self-medicating. Salisbury and Van Voorhis (2009:546) also reported that abused female offenders engage in self-medicating behaviour to manage depression and posttraumatic stress disorder related symptoms. The use of substances, as a form of a maladaptive behavioural coping mechanism, then becomes a predictor for continued substance use. Whereas substance use at the onset was likely moderate, over time, the use turns into dependence if the issues related to the experienced trauma are not

resolved (Peters et al, 2017:35). This could explain why there are non-offending substance users, but further research is required to prove this assumption.

Coping strategies could also be used to explain the phenomenon of non-offending substance users. This is based on research suggesting that maladaptive coping strategies are generally applied if the individual is constrained in terms of coping strategies they can apply. The limitations or unavailability of more socially acceptable coping strategies and their application could be a factor (Heilemann & Santhiveeran, 2011:70). These limitations may be affected by situational factors such as socioeconomic status and support from the community (De Vogel et al, 2016:151). The limitations to resources and support from the individual's environment could explain why some women engage in delinquent behaviour. A comparison between offending female substance users as well as non-offending female substance users could provide valuable information for this. Furthermore, a comparison, could result in an explanation as to why some individuals experience negative life events, but do not resort to delinquent behaviour to cope. Initially, these comparisons were going to be conducted in this study, but there was lack of access to participants due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The particular participants were supposed to be sampled from NICRO, Khulisa, SANCA and Community Corrections as previously mentioned under section 4.3.3.1.2.

Since coping pertains to ongoing life situations (Baltieri, 2014:123), it can also be used to explain why substance use persists over the life-course of the female individuals. It is difficult to cease from applying maladaptive coping strategies once they have been learnt, as discussed in the previous chapter. Re-offending behaviour of female substance users, as reported by one of the correctional officials who took part in this study, could also be explained by the use of maladaptive coping strategies. This however would require more research to establish.

The use of behavioural coping strategies, as alluded to in the findings, can predict substance use in female offenders. This is in accordance with research that asserts that maladaptive behavioural coping strategies are an independent risk factor able to predict

substance use (Bao et al, 2007; Brezina, 2017; Broidy, 2001; Piquero & Sealock, 2004; Sigfusdottir et al, 2012). Further analysis and research on maladaptive coping strategies could also explain the differences between female substance users who engage in criminality, and those that do not. Other factors, such as employment, education, and delinquent behaviour displayed in the developmental years, need to be further explored. Further recommendations are presented below.

### **7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section will briefly outline the recommendations for further studies based on the gaps that were found in this study as well as others from the literature. Furthermore, recommendations for both drug prevention treatment and drug policies will be presented based on the implications that the drug-crime relationship bears on state laws.

#### **7.3.1 Recommendations for prevention treatment and drug policy**

The researcher hopes that the findings of this study can be utilised to inform a more evidence-based perspective of the drug-crime relationship. The challenging of the drug-use-causes-crime perspective needs to be more informed by evidence and not be taken as an irrefutable fact. More specifically, the NDMP and drug policy makers may benefit from the knowledge created within this study. The real-world purpose of this study was to influence drug policy makers and intervention programmes so that decisions and policies are evidence-based and not anecdotal.

Current policies are based on the drug-use-causes-crime ideology, stemming from the West's draconian policies founded in the *War on Drugs* campaign (Rosino & Hughey, 2018:850–852; Shelly & Hollowell, 2018:1–2). The latest NDMP (2019–2024), as a government entity, still seeks to eradicate substance use in South Africa, and to combat crime supposedly resulting from substance use (Department of Social Development, 2019:18, 20). However, this study has demonstrated that the link between substance use and criminality is dubious, at best. This research makes the claim that there are risk



factors pertaining to female offenders that contribute to both offending behaviour and substance use, i.e., referring to the common cause model. This implies that both behaviours may be a result of other factors, rather than their suggested reciprocal nature. This could further be the reason why there are non-offending substance users (Skjærvø, Clausen, Skurtveit, Abel & Bukten, 2018:535–536). The existence of non-offending substance users further inculcates the notion that substance use does not necessarily cause crime. Equally, this implies that crime does not necessarily cause substance use. The drug-use-causes-crime notion is based on a small subculture of substance using offenders, which generally have formed a dependence or addiction to substance use (Skjærvø et al, 2018:527).

The small subculture was also evident in this research when pertaining to sampling. Attaining the specific participants which fit the criteria for participation proved to be slightly difficult at the onset because there was a small subset (see section 4.3.3.1). Consequentially, drug policies have ignored the intricacies of the drug-crime relationship, more so the differences that exist between the substance using subcultures. For example, female substance users and their pathways to criminality differ from male substance use and criminality. The wider social issues impacting on the drug-crime relationship are also ignored by policy makers who rely on anecdotes and inadequate research that supports the oversimplified ideology that drugs cause crime.

The NDMP makes claims that they seek an evidenced-based solution to substance use (Department of Social Development, 2019:14, 17, 22), but the latest NDMP (2019–2024) shows this might be untrue. For more evidence-based solutions purported by the NDMP, there needs to be an acknowledgement that the drug-crime relationship is complex and nuanced. Until it is recognised that both crime and substance use result from other factors, drug policies and treatment will continue to fail as Broughton (2017) suggested. It shall remain improbable that the aims of drug policies and treatment programmes will be achieved until these other factors influencing substance use and criminality are effectively managed or resolved. This assertion is formed on the basis that drug policies and treatment programmes continue to be entrenched in the drug-use-causes-crime notion (Peltzer, Ramlagan, Johnson & Phaswana-Mafuya, 2010:11; Scheibe, Shelly,

Versfeld, Howell & Marks, 2017:201).

The NDMP asserts that drug treatment and rehabilitation is a practical solution to crime reduction (Department of Social Development, 2019:49). The premise is that once substance using offenders have been rehabilitated, they will cease from criminality. This premise is also held by the current South African Minister of Police, who believes that the alcohol ban, during the Covid-19 pandemic, was an effective solution to crime in the country (Zulu, 2020). It is true that some crime numbers will reduce, as evident in the 2020 crime statistics (Kriegler, 2021) however, there was the possibility of the conflation of the restriction of movement and the alcohol ban during restrictions of freedom of movement due to the Covid-19 pandemic which would make it difficult to assess which one had a direct impact on crime reduction. Nevertheless, these ideologies of wholly rehabilitated substance users and bans on alcohol are still based on the drug-use-causes-crime ideology. Some of the female offender participants in this study went through the rehabilitation process before being incarcerated. However, they still relapsed because the underpinning factors of substance use were not effectively resolved. The drug-use-causes-crime notion continues to foster ignorance of other factors influencing the drug-crime relationship.

Not only is drug treatment based on the drug-use-causes-crime notion, but also rehabilitation centres and programmes based on the premise of an irrefutable relationship between substance use and criminality. For example, the rehabilitation centre “*We Do Recover*” aims to deal with crime by reducing substance use (We Do Recover, 2022). This supposition is based on an oversimplified understanding of the drug-crime relationship where other influencing factors are not acknowledged. It is then no surprise that the success rate of rehabilitation centres in South Africa is reported to be less than 3% (Online Rehab, 2022).

The low success rate is due to the foundation that rehabilitation centres are based on which is the lack of evidence-based perceptions of the drug-crime relationship. For as long as the notion of drug use causes crime is upheld, success rates are likely to remain

low. Findings from this research and other literature have illustrated that drugs do not necessarily cause crime (DeLisi & Vaughn, 2015:291; Mercan, 2020:166; Walters, 2011:122; Wright et al, 2014:153). As such, other risk factors to both criminality and substance use need to be acknowledged by drug rehabilitation centres. The same can be said for correctional services' drug rehabilitation programmes. Until this is realised, female drug using offenders will continue to reoffend.

The findings of this study can improve the effectiveness of both drug treatment and drug policies. This is based on the major finding of this study which pointed to the possibility that female substance use is a maladaptive behavioural coping strategy that is employed by females attempting to cope with trauma or negative life events. If this is the case, criminality was then a consequence of that as females in this study supported their substance use habits. Hence, the crimes they engaged in were mostly non-violent, money generating crimes and substance use by the female offenders was a coping mechanism. Therefore, coping should be a skill that is distinctly and largely incorporated into drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes. This is especially true for female offenders since this study was based on their experiences.

Although drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes for offenders comprise an element of coping skills training however, they do not exclusively place focus on changing offenders' coping strategies (Sy & Hechanova, 2020:94; Williams, 2013:10). Research has already shown that there is a significant decline in offending behaviour and substance use when prosocial coping strategies are learnt. Thus, it is surprising that drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes for offenders do not apply rigorous coping strategy practices for offenders (Gorgulu, 2019; Rocheleau, 2014; Sealock & Manasse, 2012). This study implies that, when an offender has learnt and implemented prosocial coping strategies, they are likely to reduce or cease substance use and criminality. However, further research is required to prove and establish this implication.

### **7.3.2 Recommendations for future research**

The aim of this study was to *explore* the influencing factors, gender and drug type, on the

drug-crime relationship. To that effect, a comparison was made between substance using male and female offenders. Furthermore, a comparison was made between female substance users who offend, and those that do not offend. A further comparison should be made between female substance users who use substances on a recreational basis and those that have problematic substance use. Problematic substance users could be those that have formed a dependence or addiction to their substance. The context however needs to remain within female substance users as this is an area that is still under-researched.

Yet another point of comparison could be that between individuals who self-reported criminal behaviours (and have not been incarcerated) and those that have been convicted then incarcerated. This should be particularly premised on coping strategies because findings in this study agree with Agnew's (1992:69) claim that the implementation of behavioural coping strategies is a precursor to delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, Agnew (1992:71–72) presents constraints that determine whether an individual will cope in a maladaptive manner or not. These constraints are discussed in section 3.2.1.2, and they warrant further research for their applicability. One of the constraints, conventional social support, suggests that those with more social support are less likely to engage in maladaptive coping strategies such as criminality and substance use. An analysis of these comparison groups will further elucidate the drug-crime relationship and illustrate the relationship's complexities. The analysis will also demonstrate the complexities associated with the study of substance using offenders.

This study has already demonstrated that substance using offenders are multifaceted, thereby making them difficult to study. This is mainly in the aspect of understanding and unravelling the risk factors contingent to the drug-crime relationship. It would have therefore been of great benefit to this study to have a control group of participants that were non-offending and non-substance users. The offending substance using group, both the casual users and problematic users, would then be analysed against the control group. However, to attain the problematic substance using non-offenders would prove to be difficult mainly because problematic substance users are those that eventually offend.

Those that do not offend remain hidden within the fringes of society. These subgroups need to be studied for their differences and compared against the control group. The analysis will yield clearer results due to the pure samples, thereby further elucidating the drug-crime relationship.

This study used female offenders as participants. A repetition of the exact same study should be conducted using male offenders. As the literature has shown, there are differences between male and female substance users (Baltieri, 2014; Campaniello, 2019; Fazel et al, 2017a; Naffine, 2015; O'Brien, 2011). A further unpacking of the data would allow for the deducing of the specific negative life events, the specific role family played in the individuals' lives (whether negative or positive), and other coping mechanisms and strategies. Although unpacking the data even further would show the nuances contained in the drug-crime relationship, the scope of study would have extended. The extension would then render the research unfeasible within the given time and financial constraints.

It would be of interest to also further investigate why female offenders, who participated in this study, mostly lacked control of their substance use. This requires a focus on individual psychological factors. It could be hypothesised however, that the unresolved traumas exacerbated substance use. An investigation of this hypothesis, as well as contributing psychological factors to behavioural coping strategies would further allow understanding of the drug-crime relationship.

A further female centred study into the use of prescription medication for the purpose of coping with being incarcerated would be beneficial. The study could ascertain the link between abrupt withdrawal, substance use and suicide within correctional facilities. The interest into the study of "legal highs" was prompted by one of the DCS officials who took part in this study. They reported that substance users tend to transition into using psychiatric medication after being incarcerated. Furthermore, of interest would be studying how substance using female offenders cope with incarceration. Moreover, how do they cope without substances since access to substances is difficult while in a

correctional facility.

Lastly, a quantitative investigation into this phenomenon would also add to the limited body of knowledge around female coping strategies to strain in relation to substance use. To supplement the findings of this study, recidivism of female substance using offenders should be explored. From that research, the link between poor coping skills and recidivism could be ascertained. This is based on the repeat offending that some of the offender participants disclosed. One of the DCS officials also stated that female substance users generally do not stay in the correctional facility for long. They continuously go in and out on the same offences. It can be hypothesised that entrenched coping mechanisms, such as substance use and criminality, are far more difficult to stop once they have been inculcated. The subculture of continued substance use within correctional facilities would further fill the academic gap in knowledge of the drug-crime relationship.

## **7.4 STUDY LIMITATIONS**

### **7.4.1 Methodological strengths and limitations of the study**

This section briefly identifies the methodological strengths as well as the limitations present in this study.

#### ***7.4.1.1 Methodological strengths***

As much as there will be limitations with any research endeavour (Munthe-Kaas, Glenton, Booth, Noyes & Lewin, 2019:2), the strengths ought not to be ignored. Three strengths will be highlighted here. Firstly, to unravel the drug-crime relationship, the samples were not taken from clinical samples. The research focused on substance using female offenders who were incarcerated. Research in this field tended to make use of drug treatment (clinical) samples when attempting to understand the drug-crime relationship (Halpin et al, 2014; Kousik et al, 2012; Larkey et al, 2002; Marshall & O'Dell, 2012; Miller

et al, 1991; NICHHD, 2000; Stroebe, 2013; Thanos et al, 2016). The use of such samples tends to skew the findings since these types of participants usually are those with problematic substance use. Furthermore, problematic substance users constitute the majority of the offending substance using subculture (Seear & Fraser, 2014:827).

The second strength is that the sample size was quite substantial (29 female offenders and five DCS officials) for this qualitative research and allowed for an in-depth and rich collection of data from the participants. The approach that the sample also contained a varied age group, race and ethnicities is a valued strength. Not neglecting that the sample constituted purely of women.

Lastly, the study contributes by adding to the deficient knowledge base of the criminological milieu drug-crime relationship particularly for the South African context. Almost all of the literature in this field is from Western countries and is usually dated. The finding that there is a possibility of a common factor that could cause both criminality and substance use is also a benefit. The third factor, coping, is specifically found in this research to be the common cause. Therefore, the findings from this study add to the knowledge base that could help to further examine the drug-crime relationship.

#### ***7.4.1.2 Methodological and research related limitations***

With the strengths presented, the limitations also need to be considered. The methodological limitations will be presented, followed by the research related limitations. These limitations stem from the interpretation of findings.

##### ***a) Methodological limitations***

Neither of the two participant cohorts, female offenders and DCS officials, was randomly selected. Non-probability sampling methods were implemented; therefore, the findings are not generalisable to other female offender and/or substance using samples. As evident in this research, female offenders and substance users differ. The population is varied, thus attempts to place them in specific categories would have proven to be difficult. If they were categorised, this would consequentially dilute the complexities of the

interplaying factors of the drug-crime relationship. To that effect, the female offender participants were not placed into groups. The DCS officials' cohort was, however, placed into two groups, the social workers and psychologists. The social workers provided a social perspective of the substance using female offenders, while the psychologists provided an individualised psychological perspective of the substance using female offenders.

In the formation of the female offender cohort, attempts were made to make the sample as varied as possible. Primarily focusing on age and race, the youngest age (21), to the oldest age (52) were sought. The race category was formed to represent all the races, specifically those mostly represented in South Africa (coloured, black and white). The diversity was important to ascertain a range of experiences of the female substance using offenders. Although access to the female offender population can be problematic, diversity was achieved. The samples however could have been more diverse and coordinated if the researcher was able to access all the female correctional centres in the country. This limitation means that the findings of this study cannot be generalised to all the female correctional centres in South Africa, as only two centres in the Gauteng Province were sampled. It is, therefore, recommended that future research consider incorporating all the available female correctional centres. The use of other organisations, such as the DCS community corrections and NICRO that deal directly with female offenders should also be considered for future research.

The two samples were poorly matched to be able to draw differences from each other. The DCS officials' cohort simply complemented the data collected from the female offender cohort. The complementary data were also not substantial in that it was based on perceptions. A suitable group for comparison would have been female substance using non-offenders. But with further thought, even such a group would not be perfectly matched with the offending group. There would still most likely be differences in other variables. These variables could include, for example, personality traits, socioeconomic backgrounds, mental illnesses, levels of education, etc. The incongruity in variables could contaminate the findings and skew the results. Furthermore, some variables could potentially influence factors of the drug-crime relationship.



According to literature, a more suitable comparable group would be employed substance using non-offenders (Prendergast, Podus, Chang & Urada, 2002:58). However, such a sample would not be representative of substance users in the population. This is because research has already shown that substance using offenders are those who are generally unemployed and have a problematic drug use (Azagba, Shan, Qeadan & Wolfson, 2021; Compton, Gfroerer, Conway & Finger, 2014; Henkel, 2011). The suggested comparable group by Prendergast et al (2002) could assist with the extrapolation of information when compared to the substance using female offenders. However, the findings could be skewed due to other factors, specifically substance use and coping strategies. This would further question the credibility of the extrapolations made.

Third factors (personality traits, socioeconomic background, mental illness, levels of education and environment) were identified in the literature as possible influencers of the drug-crime relationship (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Cosker et al, 2018; Khine & Mokwena, 2016; Schoeler et al, 2016). These possible third factors were not measured in this study since they were the results of male focused research studies. In addition, the findings in this research alluded to both criminality and substance use potentially having a common cause in these possible factors. Therefore, drawing accurate comparisons between the literature and the findings of this study would be difficult. However, this limitation is not uncommon to most research of substance use and criminality due to the fact that it is improbable to measure every possible variable and their extenuating factors pertaining to the drug-crime relationship. Human behaviour remains multifaceted, and measuring every single condition and factors influencing behaviour, is an almost impossible task.

The self-reporting of data is another limitation. Self-reported data rely on the participants to recall information retrospectively. The trustworthiness of information, such as childhood, substance use habits, and criminal behaviour, then comes into question. The trustworthiness is questioned based on the accuracy of the information or data provided seeing that they could be affected by time, and participants' biases. The memories could be altered or not accurately recalled furthermore the situation (being incarcerated) the

female offender participants find themselves in could create biased data. Incarceration could potentially make the participants avoid sharing certain information, especially crimes that they committed, but were not convicted for. Furthermore, the crimes that are self-reported could be biased based on the understanding of the current position that offender participants find themselves in. A position where they regret their substance use and criminality, which eventually made them cross paths with the law.

The data provided by the offender participants could be cross-referenced against their official records. However, the data they were interviewed for in this research were not contained in those files since it was information not based on the crime they were convicted for. Furthermore, substance use is a phenomenon that remains underreported by substance using individuals (Peters, Kremling & Hunt, 2015:625). However, irrespective of underreporting of substance use, some research has also stated that self-reported substance use is accurately reflected (Wolff & Shi, 2015:23). The condition for this accuracy, however, seems to depend on the type of population under study. The offender populations are reported to be the least accurate (Peters et al, 2015:625). However, those that have been convicted and incarcerated are reported to self-report substance use more accurately than those detained or arrested, as well as law-abiding members of society (Roberts & Wells, 2010:1036).

If there appears to be miscellaneous reports on the accuracy of self-reports on substance use, this needs to be counted as a limitation for this study. The miscellaneous reports do not assist in ascertaining whether the self-reported data in this study were accurate. To try and overcome this shortfall, consistency of information was scrutinised in the data collected from each interview. Prior to that, the consistency was tested by repeating certain questions phrased differently during the interview process. However, this is still not a failsafe approach to determining accuracy. However, research does suggest that traditional face-to-face interviews garner more accurate data as compared to online or telephonic platform interviews (Zhang, Kuchinke, Woud, Velten & Margraf, 2017:174). Traditional face-to-face interviewing was the mode of data collection in this study.

Another threat to trustworthiness is the context of a male researching in a completely

female environment. The female correctional centres had no male officials on duty there except at the main entrances. The researcher took cognisance of the lack of male presence in the correctional facility. The lack was then counted as a limitation, especially the interviewing aspect of the female inmates. Some of the women suffered victimisation by male perpetrators (e.g., rape) and experienced traumas of a sensitive nature. Due to the sensitivity of the topics covered, for some women it was difficult to share the experiences with a male researcher. Negotiating emotions and feelings between a male researcher and a female participant is a difficult task, particularly when attempting to collect sensitive data (Thomas, 2017:8). To this effect, some sensitive issues could not be further investigated at the behest of the participants. However, to try and curb this limitation, the researcher practiced interview skills prior to conducting the interviews. To additionally offset this limitation, the research supervisor, who is female, went with the researcher on the first day of interviews and conducted two of the interviews while the researcher watched and took notes.

Another limitation to this study was the use of the DCS official participants. Although this group directly services inmates, they do not only focus on substance using female offenders. Therefore, they rely on perceptions so the reliability of the data could be questionable. Biases could also emerge from these particular participants.

This study was cross-sectional in nature; therefore, causality was not possible to establish between the risk factors discussed, substance use and criminal behaviour. To determine causality, a cohort study, which is a type of longitudinal study where groups of people are studied over time, would be the more appropriate research design (Miroshnychenko, Zeraatkar, Phillips, Bakri, Thabane, Bhandari & Chaudhary, 2022:1). However, a cohort study would not be feasible for this study due to costs and time, both of which are excessively high for cohort studies.

*b) Research process limitations*

Reflexivity was applied by the researcher during the entire research process. This was done to minimise biases that have the potential to influence the findings as well as their interpretation. Reflexivity means that any potential biases were noted and promptly

removed. This was achieved in three ways: firstly, a research diary was kept throughout the entire research process; secondly, contact with participants was minimised as much as possible; lastly, the research supervisor regularly reviewed the work produced.

Data collection was yet another area that was a limitation to the research. Although there were two groups to collect data from, interviews were the only form of data collection method implemented. This data collection method potentially affects the findings of this research. Some of the sensitive information collected through interviews may be limited. For instance, the interviewee may not have been forthcoming with her responses and the interviewer may have unwittingly solicited a response, putting the participant under pressure that led to a false response. Some responses could have been influenced by the presence of the interviewer however, interviews also have a number of beneficial advantages.

One major advantage in this study was that the participants, irrespective of their literacy and language, could take part. The questions posed could instantly be clarified on the spot if there was any confusion. Furthermore, probing could be conducted on questions which needed deeper responses. This then yielded a richer quality of data from the offenders as well as the DCS officials. The data collected from the DCS officials could then also be used to supplement the already collected data from the female offenders. This is because questions posed to the DCS officials were able to be rephrased or reconstructed from the responses that the offenders provided.

## **7.5 FINAL CONCLUSIONS**

Literature on the drug-crime relationship is vast and multifaceted, however it remains largely incomplete. There have been various theoretical models attempting to establish a cause and effect link between criminal behaviour and substance use. These models however fall short because they are not formed on the basis of clear empirical data. Furthermore, where research strategies have advanced, the models may not be completely corroborated by recent research. With the existing theories attempting to explain the drug-crime relationship, there are issues of conceptualisation where terms are

not clearly defined. The research used to formulate the theories also has limits of generalisability across all genders and cultures.

The primary aim of this study was to *explore* the influencing effects of two variables, gender and drug type, on the drug-crime nexus. To achieve this aim, female offenders, who had a history of substance use, were enlisted in the research as the main research participants. An examination of these participants was conducted by focusing on their history of substance use in relation to their criminality. This was done to elucidate the drug-crime relationship, particularly the notion or ideology that *drug use causes crime*. The findings of this study were that negative life events were directly related to coping strategies. To cope with the negative life events, the women resorted to maladaptive behavioural coping strategies in the form of substance use. The proclivity for behavioural coping strategies was a prelude to delinquent behaviour.

The findings of this study give the impression that negative life events underpin substance use, and not involvement in crime. For female offenders, who participated in this study, crime was a result of a lack of finances for the support of their drug habits. Hypothetically however, most would not willingly engage in criminality if they were financially well-off. The crimes they committed were predominately for the purpose of acquiring money to support their drug habits and their substance use habits were driven by factors such as negative life events (trauma and victimisation). But because of poor coping skills, they resorted to maladaptive behavioural coping strategies. Arguably, if the research participants had learnt prosocial coping mechanisms, they would not have used substances to cope. Conversely, from the findings, it can also be suggested that both criminality and substance use have a common cause or influence.

Substance use and criminality constitute maladaptive behavioural coping strategies which female offenders who participated in this study implemented. These coping strategies were learnt and inculcated into the mind-sets of the participants and were deemed to be effective. Thus, they were used to cope with daily life's stresses and strains rather than substance use causing crime. For most of the women under study, substance use had become a problematic basic activity in their lives that resulted in criminality and

a lack of resources (mainly finances). Criminality then sustained the substance use. Consequently, substance use was maintained and continued to cope with life's daily stresses and strains. Until the negative life events had been resolved, it is arguably likely that substance use by the participants would have persisted. This is presumably the case for individuals who lack access to less harmful coping strategies and resources.

This study has added to the gap in knowledge and understanding of the drug-crime relationship, with gender as a variable, particularly the lack of knowledge within the South African context. The findings of this study also contribute to literature that purports that both substance use and criminality could have a causal third factor. This is in contrast to the suggestions that substance use and criminality are linked through a causal relationship. Both behaviours could possibly be the result of poor coping skills; this is a phenomenon that most drug-crime related research studies, drug treatment and drug policies have overlooked.

To conclude, it is imperative that drug policy and treatment, as well as rehabilitation programmes comprehend the complexities pertaining to the drug-crime relationship. If these complexities are not acknowledged, there exists the risk of minimal success in the efforts to understand female individuals with substance use problems. From the findings of this study, it appears that there is no linear causal relationship between female substance use and crime, but rather both behaviours are potentially a result of other factors. Until agencies dealing with substance use get an understanding that the *drug causes crime* notion has not been proven, it will remain unlikely that drug use and crime will reduce in society.

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## **Annexure A: Consent form**

### ***Informed Consent Letter***

***The University of South Africa***

***College of Law***

***Department of Criminology and Security Sciences***

**Researcher:** Dikoetje Frederick Monyepao

**Title of Study:** The drug-crime relationship: An exploration of the influence of substance abuse on crime committed by South African female offenders.

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Dikoetje Frederick Monyepao and I am doing research in the Department of Criminology and Security Science towards a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Criminal Justice, at the University of South Africa. You are invited to participate in a study as titled above.

#### **a) What is the purpose of this study?**

I am conducting this research to fill the gap in knowledge on the relationship between drugs and crime especially in the connection with females. Current research has dominantly focussed on the male perspective; therefore, it is the endeavour of this research to highlight the female perspective. The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To investigate whether drug use plays a role in criminality and vice versa.
- To explore which factors may be influencing the drug-crime relationship of female offenders.
- To explore the effects of licit and illicit drug types (depressants, stimulants and hallucinogens) on the drug-crime relationship.
- To explore how gender plays a role in the drug-crime relationship by focusing on incarcerated female offenders.
- To explore the contribution of shebeens on the drug-crime relationship in relation to women in townships.
- To assess the applicability of the general strain model in relation to the drug-crime relationship.

**b) Why am I being invited to participate?**

You are an individual who can provide relevant information that can be analysed to form knowledge on the specific area of research. The method that was used to track you as a potential participant was purposive sampling. This method is where research participants are purposively chosen to participate in the study because of their knowledge in a particular phenomenon.

**c) What is the nature of my participation in this study?**

You will be required to participate in a direct (face to face) interview that will be recorded with your permission. The interview will be conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule, thus creating an informal, flexible atmosphere to do an in-depth exploration of the research themes and other information relating to the research topic. The interview will focus on your knowledge and experiences as either an offender or your direct and/or indirect experience with drug use and relation to crime. The estimated duration of the interview is between one hour to one hour 30 minutes. The guidelines for the interview can be made available to you upon your request.

**d) Can I withdraw from this study even after having agreed to participate?**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. In the event that you wish to withdraw participation, the data from your interview will be destroyed. The researcher will be the only individual who has access to the raw data from the interviews, thereby ensuring that the data will be treated as confidential and your anonymity will be ensured.

**e) What are the potential benefits of taking part in this study?**

Your participation in this study will contribute to the conclusion of this study with the hope of adding valuable contribution to the scientific research community. Furthermore, the research could potentially aid in formulating more female centred interventions for drug abusers. The knowledge generated from the research will also be informative to the larger knowledge base of drug use and remove misconceptions about drug users.

**f) Will the information that I convey to the researcher and my identity be kept confidential?**

You have the right to anonymity and confidentiality if you participate in this study. However, you are also permitted to waive your right to anonymity by indicating that you wish to be identified in the study. Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one, apart from the researcher, will

know about your direct involvement in this research if you wish to remain anonymous. Your identity will not be mentioned in the study. You will be referred to with the use of a pseudonym.

**g) Are there any negative consequences for me if I participate in the research project?**

Although this may be a sensitive study, there are no physically harmful risks identified in participating in the study. Moreover, due to the sensitivity of the study, the researcher will take all measures to the best of his ability to insure your anonymity and the confidentiality of the information.

**h) How will the researcher(s) protect the security of data?**

The researcher will ensure anonymity and confidentiality by locking the physical notes taken in cabinet in their office. The digital data will also be securely locked into a virtual safe. Both the forms of data will be destroyed and permanently destroyed after a period of five years after completion of the study.

**i) Will I receive payment or any incentives for participating in this study?**

There will be no incentives or payments made for your participation in the study. In addition, you, the participant will not need to incur any financial costs by participating in the study.

**k) How will I be informed of the findings/results of the research?**

Findings from the study will be available online once the examination process of the dissertation has been completed. Furthermore, the results could be found in a journal article. You are welcome to contact me, Dikoetje Frederick Monyepao at [monyedf@unisa.ac.za](mailto:monyedf@unisa.ac.za) for further information in this regard.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr Mahlogonolo Thobane at [kwadims@unisa.ac.za](mailto:kwadims@unisa.ac.za) or the Chair of the UNISA College of Law Research Ethics Committee Prof Trevor Budhram at [budhrt@unisa.ac.za](mailto:budhrt@unisa.ac.za).

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's name), confirm that the researcher is asking for my consent to take part in this research study. The researcher has explained to me the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience I can expect if I participate in the study. I have been informed (in writing and orally) and understand the

purpose of the study and what will be expected of me.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

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

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

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

Participants signature .....Date.....

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

Researchers Signature .....Date.....

**Annexure B: Female offender interview schedule: Female offenders**

**RESEARCH PROJECT:** The Drug-Crime relationship: An exploration of the mediating effects of gender and drug type on crime.

Respondent Tag: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 1**

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Gender:  M  F  Other:

3. Ethnicity:  African  White  Coloured  Indian  Other:

4. Previous Employment before incarceration  Employed  Unemployed

4.1. Type of employment: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Education:  No matric  Matric  Further education  Postgraduate level

**SECTION 2**

**1. Family background**

1. Describe your family background.
  - a. **Drug use in the family**
  - b. **Criminality in the family**
  - c. **Stressors and strains in life**
    - i. **Coping strategies**

**2. History of drug use (inclusive of alcohol)**

1. How old were you when you started using drugs?
2. How did you start using drugs?
3. Who introduced you to drugs?

4. What is the first drug you started taking?
  - 4.1 Why did you prefer this drug(s)?  
How did you feel after taking the drug(s)?
5. Did you continue using the first drug you were introduced to or did you transition to other drugs?
  - 5.1 If you transitioned, what was the time span between initial use and use of the other drug.
  - 5.2 If yes which drug(s) did you change to?
    - 5.2 Why did you change to this drug(s)?
6. Do you use/abuse more than one type of drug at a time?
  - 6.1 If so, which drugs did you use?
  - 6.2 If so why are do/did you abuse more than one drug at a time?
7. Have you abused prescription drugs?
  - 7.1 If so, what were some of the reasons?
8. In what social setting did you use drugs?
  - 8.1 Why did you opt for these social or environment settings?
9. What are/were your reasons for (ab)using drugs?
10. Has drug use affected your employment?
  - 10.1 If so, how specifically?
  - 10.2 What were the outcomes?
11. Has drug use affected your family or social life?
  - 11.1 If so, how specifically?
  - 11.2 What were the outcomes?

### **3. History of criminality**

1. Have you ever taken drugs for the express purpose of committing a crime? Explain the incident and the type of drug.



- 1.1 If so, how old were you when you first took drugs in order to commit a crime?
2. Have you engaged in illegal activities in order to obtain drugs? Explain what happened and the type of illegal activities you engaged in.
  - 2.1 If so, how old were you when you first engaged in illegal activities in order to obtain drugs?
3. Have you ever committed a crime as a direct result of the drugs? Explain what happened and the type of the crime.
  - 3.1 If so, how old were you when you first committed crime as a direct result of drugs?
4. Have you ever attacked someone with express intention of seriously hurting them while under the influence of drugs? Explain what happened.
  - 4.1 Would you actively get involved in a criminal activity after taking a drug?
5. Have you ever been arrested for a drug related offense? Explain what happened.
  - 5.1 How old were you when you were arrested for your first drug related offence?
6. Do you have anything extra to add on how drug (ab)use has affected your life?

## **EXTRAS**

1. According to you, what do you think landed you in here/life of crime/drug use?
2. If you were financially secure, would you commit crime?
3. How is your relationship with your family now?

**Annexure C: Professionals interview schedule: Professionals**  
**RESEARCH PROJECT: The Drug-Crime relationship: An exploration of the mediating effects of gender and drug type on crime.**

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Professional capacity: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Questions are more conversational as they are led more by the professional and their experiences of dealing with female drug users.**

**Specialty:**

**Experience:**

**Topics:**

- What in your experience of working with female drug users is different from male drug users?
  - Why do females commonly use drugs?
- What are the common things/themes that come up when you ask or observe female drug users about their history of drug use?
- In your experience, is there a link/relationship between female drug users and crime? If so, how so?
- In your opinion, does drug use cause crime? Please elaborate on your response
- In your opinion, does criminality cause drug use? Please elaborate on your response.
- Do you think there are underlying reasons as to why females use drugs and get involved in crime?
- Generally, what are the common reasons that you find for females getting involved in drug use?

## Annexure D: Ethical clearance certificate



### UNISA 2020 ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2020:07:15

ERC Reference No. : ST68

Name : DF Monyepao

Dear Dikoetje Frederick Monyepao

**Decision: Ethics Approval from  
2020:07:15 to 2023:07:15**

**Researcher:** Dikoetje Frederick Monyepao

**Supervisor:** Dr Mahlogonolo Thobane

*The drug-crime relationship: An exploration of the influence of substance abuse on crime committed by South African female offenders.*

**Qualification:** Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa 2020 Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for 3 years.

*The Low risk application was reviewed by the CLAW Ethics Review Committee on 15 July 2020 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

- 1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.**
- 2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.**



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## Annexure E: Approval to conduct research at DCS centres



**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

Dear Mr D F Monyepao

### **RE: THE DRUG-CRIME RELATIONSHIP: AN EXPLORATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON CRIME COMMITTED BY SOUTH AFRICAN FEMALE OFFENDERS**

I wish to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services has been approved

You are expected to meet the following conditions for **full approval** to be granted:

- **This ethical approval is valid from 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023**
- **The relevant Regional and Area Commissioner where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.**
- **You are requested to contact the Area Commissioner before the commencement of your research.**
- **It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.**
- **Your identity document/passport and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting regional offices/Correctional Centres.**
- **You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005) and Correctional Services Act (No.111 of 1998) 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.**
- **Comply with COVID - 19 safety and hygiene procedures during data collection processes**
- **Ensure that all participants have been duly screened for Covid19 according to DCS screening protocols**
- **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 REC Administration for assistance at telephone number (012) 307 2894/95.

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

**Yours faithfully**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'ND MBULI', written in a cursive style.

ND MBULI  
Chair: DCS REC  
**DATE: 29/03/2021**

## Annexure F: Turnitin digital receipt



### Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author: Dikoetje Monyepao  
Assignment title: Revision 2  
Submission title: Complete Thesis  
File name: Complete\_thesis\_for\_turnitin.docx  
File size: 284.91K  
Page count: 202  
Word count: 65,869  
Character count: 357,657  
Submission date: 16-May-2022 04:15PM (UTC+0200)  
Submission ID: 1837576100

#### INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH APPROACH

##### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Deputy Chairperson of the Central Drug Authority (CDA), Dr. David Bayever, mentions:

*"The drug problem in South Africa remains very serious with drug usage being twice the world norm in most cases ... and we are only dealing with what we know about ... this is only the tip of the iceberg"* (CDA, 2013:np).

The South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU) report (Dana, 2019) showed a slight decrease in drug use and dependency in the Free State and the North West Provinces (31% and 25% reduction respectively) between the 2017 and 2019 period (Dana, 2019:49). However, there was a significant increase in the KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape regions, each showing over 200% increases (Bhana, 2019:40).

The impacts of drugs in South Africa (SA) include, among others, the following:

Drug abuse is costing SA R20-billion a year and could pose a bigger threat to the country's future than the Aids pandemic.

One Rand in four (14 ratio) in circulation in SA is linked to the substance abuse problem (CDA, 2013:np). Recent statistics were not available at the time of this research, but it can be inferred from the World Drug Report (2019:np) that the 1:4 ratio has also increased.

Drug related arrests increased from a daily average of 471.5 in 2015/16 to 801.9 in 2016/17 (Africa Check, 2017a:np).

Over 400 drug related crimes are reported daily (Souverein, Wart, Visser & Burton, 2016:1860).

Bhardwaj (2018:np) does however make the statement that calculating for drug abuse

**Annexure G: Editing certificate**

Barbara Shaw

Editing/proofreading services

18 Balvicar Road, Blairgowrie, 2194

Tel: 011 888 4788 Cell: 072 1233 881

Email: barbarashaw16@gmail.com

Full member of The Professional Editors' Guild

**To whom it may concern**

This letter serves to inform you that I have done language editing and reference checking on the thesis

**THE DRUG-CRIME RELATIONSHIP: AN EXPLORATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON CRIME COMMITTED BY SOUTH AFRICAN FEMALE  
OFFENDERS**

by

**DIKOETJE FREDERICK MONYEPAO**



Barbara Shaw

12/05/2022