

**A DYNAMIC EXPLORATION OF THE OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF VIOLENT CRIMES
SERVING LONG-TERM SENTENCES IN THE WINDHOEK CORRECTIONAL FACILITY,
MAXIMUM SECURITY UNIT**

by

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DECLARATION

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A Dynamic Exploration of the Offenders Convicted of Violent Crimes Serving Long-Term Sentences in The Windhoek Correctional Facility, Maximum Security Unit.

I declare that the above thesis 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.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality-checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



Ute Sinkala

__27 February 2024__

Date

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my Family. First and foremost, to my husband, Romeo Sinkala. You are my best choice, soul mate, best friend, colleague, and life partner. My late father, Gotthardt !Noabeb, who remains a reflection of God's love in my life. My mother, Paula !Noabeb, who is strength. My three children, Taonga, WHOandi, and MaemKo, thank you for your patience with your mother. Without your unwavering support, this would not come to pass.

I want to also dedicate this to my late brother, Riaan Bonsietjie de Wet. It was your demise that birthed the desire to understand in me.

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I am truly grateful for my family, particularly my husband, parents, and children. I am saddened that Dad does not live to celebrate this accomplishment with me, but I know he was always proud of me.

ABSTRACT

Violent crime is a significant concern in Namibia, affecting various aspects of society. Addressing this issue remains a priority for all stakeholders. Understanding the identity and motives of perpetrators remains crucial. This in-depth qualitative study investigated these issues by exploring the perpetrators' perceptions of their experiences and relationships and how these shaped their behaviour, personalities, and identities. The perspectives of their significant others and their Case Management Officer were also explored, and their case files were reviewed.

A small sample of ten offenders serving long-term sentences at the Windhoek Correctional Facility was selected through purposive sampling. The bioecological model was utilised as a theoretical framework for this study. The aim was to clearly describe offenders' identities to enhance understanding of individuals who commit violent crimes in Namibia. Ethical clearance from the University of South Africa and permission from the Ministry of Safety and Security were obtained. Informed consent was obtained from the participants before embarking on the study. Ethical standards were prioritised to safeguard the confidentiality of participants, and strict adherence to conduct rules was maintained throughout visits to the correctional facility.

A semi-structured interview guide, adapted from the South African Sex Offender Questionnaire (SAPDSOQ), exploring the participants' past and present experiences, relationships, attitudes, values, and perceptions, was utilised during the semi-structured questionnaires. Thematic analysis was conducted using ATLAS.ti: 8, a specialised software for qualitative data analysis. Six themes were extracted, covering personality, character, relationships, lifestyle, health, socioeconomic and criminal profile. The final six identity types identified are Emotionally Dysregulated, Misogynistic, Criminal, Victim Identity, Substance-abusing, and Low Socioeconomic Identity. The findings indicate the significance of the participants' history, the impact of poverty, fatherlessness, and the lack of insight regarding mental health and alcohol abuse. The need for community and early intervention in addressing criminality was highlighted.

Clinical psychology is underrepresented in Namibia, particularly in the criminal justice sector, and minimal research has been conducted. Thus, this study adds to the body of knowledge. The insights generated benefit the Safety and Security, Health and Social Services, and Justice ministries. It also helps professionals like social workers and psychologists working with offenders.

Key Terms:

Violent crime; aggression; violence; offenders; thematic analysis; maximum security unit; personality; identity; criminogenic cognitions; contributing factors; protective factors.

CURRICULUM VITAE OF UTE SINKALA

In 2005, I earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at the University of Namibia (UNAM). Following that, in 2006, I became a registered psychological counsellor with the Health Professions Council of Namibia (HPCNA) and gained experience working as a counsellor. Subsequently, I established a private practice where I provided basic counselling services to private clients from 2008 to 2010. Additionally, I provided counselling services to motor vehicle accident survivors and their families at the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (MVA Fund) of Namibia.

In 2010, I obtained a master's degree in clinical psychology from UNAM and completed an internship at the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MHSS), Mental Health Unit, Windhoek, Namibia, in 2012. Following this internship, I remained at the Mental Health unit as a psychologist until 2013. During this time, I conducted psychotherapy sessions for both in-patients and out-patients and provided assessments and reports for the forensic population. Additionally, as part of a multidisciplinary team, I provided assessment and treatment for the State President's Decision Patients.

In 2013, I established a private practice as a clinical psychologist, where I continue to work. My specialisation within this practice is trauma therapy, and I also conduct forensic evaluations and provide court reports. From 2019 until 2022, I was vice president of the Psychological Association of Namibia (PAN).

In 2016, I began working as a moderator at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and pursued further studies by applying for the Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology degree at UNISA the same year. My research focus lies in the forensic population, particularly offenders who commit violent crimes. In 2019, I joined NUST as a lecturer within the Criminal Justice Department, where I am part of the Correctional Management team. In addition to teaching Research Methodology, I serve as the co-coordinator of the honours program and act as the departmental representative for the Ethical Clearance Committee.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AL	adolescence-limited
ANS	autonomic nervous system
APA	American Psychiatric Association
ASB	antisocial behaviour
ASPD	antisocial personality disorder
CD	conduct disorder
CMO	Case Management Officer
CNS	central nervous system
DWYPD	Department of Women Youth and Persons with Disabilities
FLON	First Lady of Namibia
GBH	grievous bodily harm
GBV	gender-based violence
GDP	gross domestic product
IPV	intimate partner violence
ITC	International Test Commission
LAC	Legal Assistance Centre
LCP	life-course-persistent
MCMII	Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NAMPOL	Namibian Police
NCS	Namibian Correctional Service
NEEEF	National Equitable Economic Empowerment Framework
OMS	Offender Management System
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Index
ORMCS	Offender Risk Management Correctional Strategy
PFC	prefrontal cortex
P-P-C-T	Process-Person-Context-Time
TA	thematic analysis
TBI	traumatic brain injury
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

Having experienced the personal loss of a family member due to murder at a young age was pivotal in my decision to pursue clinical psychology as a career. This decision was based on daily reports in print and electronic media of violent offences and brutal murders committed nationwide, indicating that violent crime increased drastically between 2014 and 2015 (New Era, 2016a, 2016b; Salkeus, 2015; The Namibian, 2015). My interest in understanding offenders, particularly perpetrators of violent crime, grew as violent crime escalated in Namibia. Yet another one of my family members was murdered in 2015. The abovementioned experiences and observations increased my resolve to pursue a Doctoral degree in clinical psychology and focus on understanding the offender population. Since I embarked on my studies, media reports have continued to indicate an increase in the number of crimes involving gender-based violence (GBV) and repeat offenders who commit crimes that escalate in the level of violence. This was substantiated, for instance, by the local newspaper articles reporting the staggering increase in the crime rate in the Ohangwena region during the 2019/2020 period (Nakashole, 2020; Nembwaya, 2020).

Overview of the Chapter

In this introductory chapter, I present the background and the problem statement. I also address the main aim and objectives of the study, the research questions, and the significance of the study. I provide essential definitions, followed by the scope of the study, and conclude the chapter by describing the outline of the chapters.

Background of Research Problem

Crime in Namibia

At a media briefing concerning the national crime rates in December 2015, the Windhoek City Police spokesperson, Assistant Superintendent Cillie Auala, announced a stark increase in violent crimes in Windhoek in 2015 compared to 2014 (Salkeus, 2015). Particularly, murder had increased by a staggering 24%. Auala postulated that the rise in crime rates was mainly due to the presence of shebeens and other liquor outlets in high-crime areas. At that time, I was contemplating the proposal for this PhD thesis. Although alcohol abuse and the presence of shebeens might be one contributing factor, I did not think it explains violent crimes committed while the perpetrators are not under the influence of alcohol. In my view, alcohol abuse also did

not account for more frequent repeat offending, the rise in the number and brutality of GBV, and crimes of passion amongst intimate partners. Alcohol abuse and shebeens also did not explain the multiple incidences of “crimes that shook Namibia in 2021”, as reported in the Namibian newspaper by Nakashole (2020). These crimes include a man who was stabbed simply because he asked someone for a beer, a man killed for staring at another man urinating, a woman stabbed in a church by an ex-boyfriend, and a woman whose throat was slit by her partner. Based on police reports and public opinion, between 2015 and 2019, the problem of increasing crime, particularly violent crimes, continued to escalate.

In 2020, the police spokesperson, Deputy Commissioner Edwin Kanguatjivi, reported on the concerning crime rates of 2018/2019 (Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA), 2019). In December 2021, the Namibian Police chief, Sebastian Ndeitunga, reported that, in the period 2020/21, there had been a rapid increase in gender-based violence (GBV), rape, murder and assault with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm (assault GBH) (Kaapanda, 2021). This escalation in crime continued, as evidenced by the police chief inspector General Joseph Shikongo, who informed the Namibian newspaper in November 2022 that in the financial year 2021/2022, there had been a 7% increase in recorded criminal cases compared to the previous financial year. Shikongo explained the prevalence of crime in Namibia, “particularly violent crimes such as robbery, gender-based violence (GBV) coupled with rape, murder, and attempted murder, and assault GBH” (Shaahama, 2022). Jason (2022) further reiterated this in the New Era.

In 2016, Matheus Pendapala Taapopi, a Bachelor of Public Management student at the University of Namibia, wrote an article in the local newspaper concerning the relationship between crime and poverty (Taapopi, 2016). Taapopi assumed there was a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the relationship between crime and poverty. He claimed that the historical constructs of Namibia and the socioeconomic status quo contribute to crime. Looking at an analysis of the Namibian Police's weekly crime bulletins of 2015/2016, Taapopi reported that approximately 99% of the population incarcerated in the Namibian correctional facilities are Black people. Considering the demographics of the Namibian population, the statistics Taapopi reported are plausible because close to 85% of the Namibian population consists of Black indigenous people, less than 7% of the population is mixed race, and less than 7% is White (World Population Review (WPR), 2023).

According to Taapopi (2016), most Black offenders are younger than 35 and are involved in crimes ranging from armed robberies, assaults, theft, burglaries, GBV, rape, and murder. He

postulated that three-fold challenges of unemployment, poverty, and inequality characterise these crimes. He claimed that most offenders are uneducated, unemployed, without formal training, and living in poverty-stricken neighbourhoods. These circumstances, due to structural displacement, result in desperation, dehumanisation, and hopelessness, which drives them to resort to crime.

This argument represented the opinion of one young student. However, other researchers have echoed similar sentiments regarding the relationship between violence, particularly male physical violence and structural violence (Becker, 2023; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; United Nations (UN), 2021). Issues such as anti-abortion, anti-same-sex marriages, police brutality, GBV, rape culture, and violence against LGBTQ + people are embedded in systems and beliefs that perpetuate violence against these groups (Becker, 2023). Edwards-Jauch (2016) expressed that the causes and contributing factors of violence, particularly GBV, should be investigated at an ethnographic and historical level. Investigations should consider how ethnicity, gender, race, sexuality, and class intersect and impact each other, levels of violence, and crime. Physical and psychological violence, which includes, but is not limited to, assault, rape, verbal abuse, child marriages, and human trafficking, takes place within the larger context of structural violence (Becker, 2023; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Gierse-Arsten, 2020).

Structural violence refers to harm inflicted on a group of people through social institutions and structures that impede their rights and certain privileges, consequently inhibiting them from meeting their basic needs (Sinha et al., 2017). According to Melber (2014), structural violence has been discussed and examined as far back as the 1960s in various socio-political settings and identified as functioning behind the façade of formal state institutions. “Structural violence in this sense is an invisible hand, embedded in ubiquitous social structures, apparently normal since manifested by stable institutions and based upon regular experience” (Melber, 2014, p. 17). Melber (2014) also explained that structural violence and inequality became widely accepted and normalised because of their long-standing nature and acceptance as the status quo. “They are perceived as the way things are and always have been” (p.17). According to the United Nations (UN) (2008), customary beliefs and practices impacted traditional gender roles for a long time in Namibia. Gender was used to delineate roles and maintain order in households and family structures. Customarily, it was accepted that men were the heads of the home, made the decisions and had the right and responsibility to discipline their wives. The responsibilities as the head of the house were to be carried out with love for the wife. However, the norm was contrary

because “being beaten by one’s husband was traditionally understood to be a sign of love in some Namibian cultures” (UN, 2008, p. 159).

Edwards-Jauch (2016) stressed that research on GBV in Namibia is largely descriptive, minimising the historical context and ignoring the relationship between male physical violence and structural violence. She highlighted the imprint left by Namibia’s history of colonialism and the accompanying violence on Namibian society. “The colonial history and traditional forms of African patriarchy converge to justify women’s subordination, gender inequality and different dimensions of violence against women” (Edwards-Jauch, 2016, p. 53). The UN (2008) further explained that the Western patriarchy strengthened inequality and traditional gender roles held culturally in Namibia. The UN (2008) also highlighted the concerning statistics that in 2001, ten years post-independence, multiple factors that place Namibian women at risk of experiencing violence within their homes were present. These factors included patriarchy, alcohol abuse, women’s lower economic status and social patterns of using violence to resolve conflict. This disparity in the genders was perpetuated through enforcing male-dominated communities through “colonial ‘native’ policy, migrant labour” and through Christianity and its mission in Namibia (UN, 2008, p. 160). The more rigid dichotomy created by these systems disempowered women and “entailed definite accompanying values of female submissiveness” (UN, 2008, p. 160).

Recently, the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Namibia National Human Development reported that despite significant developments in improving human rights and equality amongst men and women in Namibia, women remain disadvantaged in income, health, and protection. Gender-based inequalities persist in multiple spheres, including GBV, economy, education, local representation, and access to land rights. Alcohol abuse increases the risk of violence, particularly against women and children (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2019). Concurring with Taapopi (2016), these associations are likely related to stress caused by poverty, unemployment, social isolation, and no links to strong social networks. Thus, these structural problems are long-standing.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2022) and the UNDP (2019), violence against women is also prevalent in the context of legal and social changes. These changes affect the relative position and decision-making power of men and women within society, particularly marginalised women. The elevation of women's legal and social status results in a perceived threat against male dominance. It creates the need for male retaliation to assert

their position and maintain their traditional social role and power above women. The threat to male social status, exacerbated by factors such as poverty, unemployment, and alcohol abuse, contributes to violence against women (UNDP, 2019; UNODP, 2022). These structural factors of violence were reiterated in the 2021/2022 UNDP report, which found that intimate partner violence (IPV) increases with economic dependence. Women and girls also bore greater household and caregiving responsibilities, while violence against them increased with the onset of COVID-19 (UNDP, 2022).

To fully grasp the picture of crime in Namibia, the history and the structural violence perpetuated against the indigenous Namibian people must be understood. This is possible through looking at the impact of colonialism and the traditional patriarchal customs, as these have a bearing on criminal behaviour. This history is an integral part of the people in Namibia as it shaped and continues to impact the country and its people's development.

History of Namibia

Namibia, which gained independence in 1990, was formerly known as South-West Africa during its extended period of foreign occupation, initially by Germany and subsequently by its neighbour, South Africa (SA). These years of oppression under foreign occupation and rule impacted the Namibian people's culture, their means of subsistence, spirituality, lifestyle, geographical location, and education. I will thus provide a brief but clear picture of this history and its impact on various aspects of the Namibian people's lives. The terms natives, Africans, Europeans, Whites, Blacks, and Coloureds reflect the times and are not intended as derogatory or politically incorrect with current times.

Impact of colonisation on culture. According to Katjavivi (1988), before the 1860s, the indigenous Namibian people (Ovambo, Herero, Damara, Nama, San, and Caprivian) occupied land in various parts of the country, according to their tribal heritage. The tribes were independent, separate societies, each with its own culture, special skills, and preferred lifestyle. However, they all relied primarily on the land through cultivation, livestock farming, and hunting (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988).

Despite differences among the individual societies, the setup of tribal communities and families followed a similar structure based on kinship (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988). The residence was patrilocal, but movable property, particularly cattle, was matrilineal. Traditionally, there was a heavy reliance on the family as the primary production unit for subsistence and labour was divided along gender lines. Women were chiefly responsible for

childcare and domestic tasks, while men shouldered heavy labour, agriculture, and livestock care (Brasche, 2003; Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988). Clarence-Smith and Moorsom (1975) state that traditional Ovambo culture practised polygamy. Men remained unmarried for longer, while women married young. In 2003, Brasche explained that historically, in a patriarchal society such as Namibia, humility, subservience, quietness, and dutiful compliance were highly regarded and expected from girls. This expectation existed in domestic situations and sexual relations, resulting in unequal power dynamics, male dominance and women being disadvantaged. As I mentioned earlier, in modern Namibian society, these expectations and resultant disadvantages prevail in multiple dimensions, including land rights, economy, and violence (Brasche, 2003; UN, 2022; UNDP, 2019).

Historically, Namibian traditional society's subsistence depended on communal land and wealth produced from the land was for the community (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988). No sole political authority existed. Each clan had a King with supreme administrative and judicial power guided by a body of commoners and district headmen. The land belonged to the King. However, strict usufruct rights were upheld and ensured everyone benefitted from the land and there were no major class divides (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975).

There was no organised system of markets. Thus, any surplus produce beyond what was required for subsistence was traded by barter among the societies (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017). Around 1845 to 1885, local trade rested on staple commodities such as iron, copper, salt, and ivory. The arrival of European explorers trading with alcohol and clothes changed local trade. Initially, trading was small and between Europeans and Ovambo kings. When the Europeans introduced firearms, the local trade changed drastically in favour of the Europeans. The demand for arms grew amongst the kings, and the Europeans used this power in their favour. Between 1905 and 1907, they placed stringent restrictions on trade. Relationships became antagonistic, and the first signs of class division emerged. In the North, the kings imposed harsh taxes and increased raiding expeditions wreaked havoc on the vulnerable members of society (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017). An increased supply of arms coincided with the increased supply of alcohol from the Portuguese (Siiskonen, 1994).

Katjavivi (1988) pointed out that the sale of guns to kings also disrupted the native societies in the central and southern regions. Conflicts between the Namas and Hereros

intensified and led to the Herero uprising against the Germans in 1904. This uprising led to a catastrophic genocide in which more than half the population of Hereros and Namas were killed. In the aftermath of this genocide, Germany imposed strict policies, including the expropriation of land and prohibiting traditional organising on the indigenous people (Katjavivi, 1988). These restrictive policies, together with harsh taxes, resulted in further impoverishment and displacement of indigenous societies (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Nampala, 2020; Werner, 1993). A combination of prevailing drought, German-enforced displacement of local communities on dry, arid land and harsh taxes by kings in the north and by Germans in the central regions drove native men to accept contract labour.

German rule: Land expropriation and migrant labour. By 1911, most mines and the best land in central and southern Namibia were owned by White farmers (Katjavivi, 1988). However, because thousands of natives had been killed in the genocide in 1904, there was a shortage of natives to work on the white settlers-owned farms that were rapidly increasing. This workforce shortage exacerbated and fuelled the development of the migrant labour system and the enforcement of police zones to control the movement of Blacks (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988). Police Zones, where White settlers were allocated land, encompassed approximately 60% of the territory (O'Callaghan, 1977; Zollman, 2011). The northern periphery of the country, parts of the Kalahari, and the Namib desert were the only areas not part of the Police Zones. Only a small population of natives, including the Hereros and the Namas, who survived the genocide, and the Damaras still lived in Police Zones. The Ovambos, who lived in the North, outside the Police Zones, were the largest group of natives. Therefore, they were targeted through the migrant labour system to provide labourers under highly controlled conditions. Subsequently, Blacks, were only permitted temporary rights to work as migrant labourers in Police Zones and required to carry a pass document to prove legitimacy (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; O'Callaghan, 1977; Siiskonen, 1994; Zollman, 2011).

The migrant system was inhumane, comparable to penitentiary facilities (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Cooper, 1999; Katjavivi, 1988; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Nampala, 2020). Recruits were subjected to humiliating medical examinations. Labourers had deplorable living quarters while they performed the most gruelling time and labour-intensive work. They were treated like slaves, deprived of all liberties, prohibited from receiving visitors, forced to wear identification tags, and subjected to any punishment the employer deemed appropriate for whatever offence the employer suspected (Cooper, 1999). The system was exploitative, oppressive, and ruthless, with high mortality rates because the working environments were

hazardous and protective gear was not provided. Thus, exposure to various accidents and contracting industrial diseases caused countless premature deaths, many of which are unrecorded (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017).

Historical picture of alcohol use. According to Likuwa and Shiweda (2017), before the arrival of Europeans, in traditional communities, only elders occasionally enjoyed a traditional brew. Europeans introduced alcohol into the trade market, causing high increase in alcohol abuse in the Kavango (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Siiskonen, 1994). Moreover, due to the extreme limitations and their conditions as contract labourers, the native men inevitably spent their meagre earnings on alcohol (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017). Siiskonen (1994) reported an alarming increase in alcohol abuse among natives in the north during the 1970s when South African army troops were stationed there. There was an increase in cash flow while regulations on alcohol sales were lax, and an exponential growth in illicit alcohol outlets called “cuca-shops” occurred. “Even farmers, teachers and civil servants established "cuca-shops" to earn additional income” (p.81).

The history of the church in Namibia. By 1909, the German and Finnish Lutheran churches established mission stations among the indigenous communities (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988; Namhila & Hillebrecht, 2023). In 1915, the first Ovambo king converted to Christianity, followed by most community members, significantly impacting the social and cultural aspects of traditional communities. Christianity paganised and demonised many cultural practices, resulting in the subversion of older institutions such as polygamy, kingship, the practice of witch doctors, and traditional medicine (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Muurman, 2017; Namhila & Hillebrecht, 2023).

According to Muurman (2017), the church implemented measures to control the behaviour of its parishioners such as excommunicating a man who customarily married plural wives. The fear of punishment resulted in parishioners hiding cultural practices. Despite most Namibians identifying as Christian, polygamy is still widely practised in modern Namibia but rarely discussed (Brasche, 2003; Muurman, 2017). The effects of colonialism were inescapable, affecting not only the way outside countries perceive Africans but also how Africans perceive each other and their own identity (Brasche, 2003). The Germans used the church to sign protection treaties with the kings, which ensured a constant stream of migrant labourers (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Muurman, 2017). Thus, kings and missionaries became crucial in providing migrant workers for the colonial economy.

The church was central in the establishment of the apartheid system. The Institute of Christian National Education for the powerful Afrikaner Cultural Organizations (FAK) gave a Christian and Calvinist theological justification for apartheid, including separate, different, and unequal education (O'Callaghan, 1977). The premise of apartheid was founded on the biblical teaching that God had willed separate nations and peoples with distinct talents, gifts, callings, and tasks that should be honoured. Black Christians increasingly became unhappy with the church's involvement in sustaining the colonial economy and separated from the founding German churches. Between 1947 and 1957, several independent churches, such as the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC), were established (Kjeseth, 1989). The church was also an important pillar in the liberation struggle, and an integral part of the education of Black Namibians (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Eriksen & Moorsom, 1985; Katjavivi, 1988; Kjeseth, 1989).

In the section below, I expound on the historical aspects of land ownership in Namibia, the changes that took place and the impact on the local communities.

South African Apartheid regime: Land expropriation and migrant labour. During the First World War, South African forces invaded Namibia and gradually took control by 1917 (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988). From the onset, the South African regime continued the systematic oppression of the natives initiated by the Germans. They maintained a functioning pool of migrant labour for the colonial economy, continued the land expropriation, and passed further legislation to justify and spread institutionalised segregation based on ethnic classifications (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Melber, 2019; Moore et al., 2021; State University, n.d.; Werner, 1993).

The South African regime created "reserves", later called "homelands", for natives, who comprised 90% of the entire population. The reserves were on marginal, arid land, incapable of supporting the communities. This ensured that natives remained impoverished and desperate enough to do contract labour (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Cooper, 1999; Katjavivi, 1988; Lenggenhager et al., 2021; Nghitevelekwa, 2022; Werner, 1993). The largest, most fertile portions of farmland were allocated to the small population of White settlers through long-term leases or short-term grazing licences and additional financial support to develop the land (Lenggenhager et al., 2021; Werner, 1993). Furthermore, migrant labour laws, cash taxes, and vagrancy laws were strengthened, pass laws were reinforced, and curfews implemented (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Cooper, 1999; Katjavivi, 1989; Moore et al., 2021; Nampala, 2020; State University, n.d.-a;

Werner, 1993). The South African magistrates agreed with their German counterparts that corporal punishment was more effective than fines for Blacks within the vagrancy system (Moore et al., 2021). Thus, the frequent use of corporal punishment continued, intensifying violence against natives.

According to Katjavivi (1988), under the South African Apartheid regime, the native workforce was limited to the few men who worked on White farms as messengers, “shop boys”, and later as clerks or teachers. Women were allowed to work as domestic workers for Whites, later as teachers and nurses. The contract workers, mainly from the North, were employed at the mines and railways, and men from the centre and south of Namibia were employed on farms (Katjavivi, 1988). According to Likwala and Shiweda (2017), the conditions for farmworkers were as appalling as that of contract workers. The “pondoks” (corrugated iron, makeshift houses) that the workers lived in were usually situated in the backyard of the main farmhouse. The workers typically slept on the floor, were humiliated, and severely punished. Baker (2022) explained that throughout the apartheid regime, both racism and sexism were present on reserves. Black workers earned a tenth of what White workers earned for the same work, and women occupied only specific positions and earned much less than men (Baker, 2022).

In 1959, a large-scale forceful relocation of natives from their homes to foreign locations occurred (Katjavivi, 1988; Melber, 2016; Melber, 2020). Blacks who lived in the old location, close to the Windhoek city centre, were forced to move to the city's fringes to Katutura and Coloureds were moved to Khomasdal. The housing provided in Katutura was small and deplorably inadequate (Katjavivi, 1988; Melber, 2016, 2020). In 1962, the South African state established the Commission of Enquiry into South-West African Affairs, known as the Odendaal Commission, to strengthen the vision of a racially segregated society (Lenggenhager et al., 2021). A report was published in 1964 with recommendations regarding the reserves for natives. Whites, comprising 11.5% of the population, were allocated 44% of the land. Only 39.6% was set aside as reserves for the natives who comprised 90% of the population, and the remaining 16% was demarcated as state land (Werner, 1993). As I mentioned earlier, the reserves were strategically located in desert or semi-desert land, unable to sustain the population (Lenggenhager et al., 2021).

According to the African Economic Outlook (AEO) report, at independence, commercial land, encompassing 74% of the potentially arable land, was owned by White farmers, who comprised less than 0.2% of the total population (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2007). The White settler community and the tiny Black elite, which

emerged under the interim governments leading up to independence, comprised only 5% of the population yet generated 71% of the gross domestic product (GDP) (OECD, 2007). Soon after independence, the bottom 55% of the population, typically subsistence farmers and migrant labourers, generated just 3% of the GDP (Tapscott, 1993).

The new Namibian government facilitated access to agricultural land for formerly disadvantaged citizens. However, multiple problems, including skill shortages and lack of access to operating credit and information, inhibited the success of new farm owners (OECD, 2007). The problems persisted because the attempts to change inequality could not be implemented at the same pace and with the same favourable terms as the terms the apartheid regime had given to the White settlers. Furthermore, the White landowners retained the wealth obtained unfairly through apartheid policies that favoured them. According to Tapscott (1993), a policy of national reconciliation was adopted to overcome racial, ethnic and class differentiation. However, practically, reconciliation meant reinforcing the status quo “by protecting the pre-independence gains of the minority and by legitimising patterns of social differentiation that had existed in the colonial era” (p. 29). More recently, a similar sentiment was expressed by Langgenhager et al. (2021):

Because the landownership regime in Namibia has been established under unequal, racist, colonial and apartheid conditions, its society still struggles with extreme inequality in land and wealth distribution. On commercial land, many of the original White owners of the farms have long taken out the money from their land through selling or leasing of the land for more profitable businesses such as tourism, conservation or housing. Others made use of their privileges, strong financial positions, and power networks to invest heavily on their farms, turning them into lucrative businesses. (p.17)

The assertions mentioned above are evidenced by the statistics showing that independent Namibia remains a country with one of the largest gaps between rich and poor today. According to the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) (2018), this picture did not change significantly long after independence because 86% of commercial land remained privately owned, 70% by Whites and only 16% by non-Whites. Land expropriation was a pivotal part of both colonialism and apartheid, and its long-term impact on Black Namibians is evident. Another crucial aspect of the German and apartheid regimes was education. In the section below, I expound on the historical aspects of land ownership in Namibia, the changes that took place and the impact on the local communities.

History of education in Namibia. In pre-colonial Namibia, education was not a specialist activity. Knowledge and skills were transmitted using stories, songs, ritual ceremonies, and observation (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015). In 1909, the German authorities introduced formal education for White children (O'Callaghan, 1977). The church realised that providing basic rudimentary education and enabling natives to read and write would help establish Christian communities and rid natives of pagan culture (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977). The German authorities and the church did not wish to educate the natives to a level that they could develop ideas of democracy and equality; the intention was to create a submissive population that would supply labourers for the White community. Thus, the natives' education was limited to the German language, the Bible, and basic arithmetic, and boys were taught carpentry and bricklaying, while girls were taught skills required for domestic work (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988; Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977; Reshad, 2021).

In 1921, SA mandated eight years of education for Whites in Namibia and later, a four-year education was introduced for non-Whites. (O'Callaghan, 1977). However, the Germans' fear of the imminent threat of educating the natives persisted and was verbalised by a member of the Nationalist Party in the House of Assembly in 1945. "This whole policy is also a danger to our Western civilisation" (O'Callaghan, 1977, p. 99). The Eiselen Commission, an advisory board for Bantu education, recommended: "Less stress might be laid on the technical skill and training of the teaching personnel in the Bantu school at this stage and more on personality and devotion" (O'Callaghan, 1977, p. 101).

South Africa's Bantu Education Act in Namibia was replaced with the Christian National Education system of the Bantu Education Act in 1958 (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977). The church was released from educating the natives because the South African state did not trust the church to transmit the apartheid ideology correctly (Kjeseth, 1989; Marlow-Ferguson, 2002). Christian National Education claimed to ensure that all nations guarded their identity by educating children in their mother tongue and promoting national and cultural identities. However, they used the Christian and Calvinist theological perspective to justify a separate and different education because "God had willed separate nations and peoples, giving each nation and people its special calling and tasks and gifts" (p. 99). With this as its foundation, Bantu education aimed at indoctrinating Africans to accept social inferiority, political subordination, and economic servitude (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977; Reshad, 2021; State University, n.d.-b). This education system, shaped by deliberate limits and

indoctrination, formed part of the fundamental systemic racism and structural violence that was sustained. Hence, countless problems caused by this system continue to impact and plague schools and Namibia.

In 1980, the National Education Act No. 30 was implemented (Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015). The investment in overall education was based on ethnic classification, and minimal training was spent on training and equipping Black teachers. The expenditure per Black pupil was R232, R300 per Coloured pupil, and R1210 per White pupil. Furthermore, education for White children was tax-funded, while non-Whites paid for their children's education (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977). Although the education was supposed to be in the mother tongue, it was in Afrikaans because the state did not invest aptly in developing classroom material in the Namibian languages (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002). In addition, poverty, large classes, and poorly qualified teachers led to high dropout rates among Black students. To further the agenda of indoctrination and oppression of the natives, textbooks ignored African history. A Eurocentric, fundamentalist Calvinist Christian view was taught, presenting "Whites as the carriers of civilisation and Blacks as warlike, ungrateful, and culturally inferior" (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002, p. 931).

Due to the many factors mentioned above, one in three Black pupils who attended primary school did not complete their first year. Of the few who reached their final year of primary education, less than 30% completed high school. After 1971, mass expulsions of pupils became a regular occurrence. School strikes and boycotts were often accompanied by militant violence against teachers and pupils. Therefore, many Namibians fled to neighbouring countries. By the mid-1980s, more than 70,000 school-age Namibians were in exile (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002).

Based on the historical evidence, during the apartheid era in Namibia, the education system was instrumental in maintaining social stratification based on ethnicity (O'Callaghan, 1977; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015). School subjects like computer studies and mathematics were only available for White students. Accounting and typing were available to Coloured students, and needlework, home economics, and artisan skills were offered to Blacks. Educational and occupational roles typically correspond to one's economic and social status. Thus, by dictating the level and type of education and the jobs Blacks could hold, the apartheid regime ensured that Blacks remained members of the lowest class (Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015; Reshad, 2021). This helped maintain the desired social order of the apartheid regime,

and remnants of this systemic oppression remain engrained in the Namibian society (Reshad, 2021; World Bank, 2023). As I mentioned earlier, most Black students could not afford education. However, the few pupils who completed secondary school could not enter tertiary education in Namibia and South Africa, even when they could afford it. Reflecting the impacts of the apartheid education legislation (O'Callaghan, 1977; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015), the few Black people who received education between 1970 and 1990 became teachers, nurses, and vocational workers.

The drafting of a new education bill commenced immediately after independence, but it was only tabled in 2000, and the Education Act 16 was only promulgated in December 2001 (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2010). Implementing changes to the education system was challenging and lengthy, plagued with underqualified teachers, poor discipline, inadequate textbooks, and classroom equipment. (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; UNESCO, 2010). The Cambridge Local International GCSE only replaced the South African Cape syllabus in 1994 (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002).

When Germany governed Namibia, German was the official language. During apartheid, Afrikaans was the official language and the language of instruction. Immediately after independence, English, spoken by only 7% of the population, became the national language and medium of school instruction beyond the 7th grade. Once again, natives were disadvantaged and faced with yet another foreign language as a medium of instruction. German remains a vital business language, and Afrikaans remains a common language in Namibia. "While racial segregation was prohibited, the establishment of private schools, including Afrikaans or German medium schools that appealed mainly to Whites, were tolerated by the new government" (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002, p. 932). Thus, Whites could afford to establish and transfer their children immediately to better-equipped private schools, while Blacks could not (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002). These factors reinforced and maintained segregation and inequality. These are significant, long-lasting impacts of colonisation.

After independence, the Namibian government started to remedy the population's low level of education and unskilled workforce by instating equal access and the right to education for all (Namibian Constitution, 2014). A large amount of its annual budget is allocated to the education sector, which has undergone significant changes, resulting in increased literacy rates (Bobek et al., 2019; Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture (MBESC), 2002; National Planning Commission (NPC), 2020; Reshad, 2021). The percentage of the uneducated population

decreases with increasing wealth, and this trend seems true in Namibia (NPC, 2019). However, the various governmental efforts have only been partly prosperous (Bobek et al., 2019; Reshad, 2021). This sustained financial investment has not translated to quality education outcomes (UNICEF, 2020). Current expenditure overruns often impede the effective utilisation of the budget for implementing quality education and improving infrastructure. Added challenges include poor planning and controls, budget release and procurement delays, and inequalities across regions and income levels. The school funding formula must be reviewed and made more learner-centred and equitable (UNICEF, 2020). Additionally, Namibia's high rate of inequality is among the leading challenges that impact the sustained development of its education system (Reshad, 2021).

The inequality that affects the education sector is one dimension among many impacted by the overall levels of inequality that remain in Namibia. In the subsequent section, I discuss an overview of the impact of inequality in Namibia.

Income and wealth inequality in Namibia. Since independence, political stability and sound economic management reduced poverty and contributed to elevating Namibia to an upper-middle-income country (World Bank, 2023). Namibians living below the poverty line reduced from 28.7% in 2009-2010 to 17.4% in 2015-2016. Nonetheless, socioeconomic inequalities remain incredibly high, and the COVID-19 pandemic significantly worsened circumstances. The levels of unemployment remain staggering, and the overall poverty rates are higher than they were pre-pandemic (World Bank, 2023). According to Moyo (2013), personal income inequalities result from fundamental disparities in wealth, which are contributed by factors such as the ownership of land, housing stock, and financial assets. Inequality is not only measured by income but across various other dimensions influenced by gender, age, origin, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, class, religion, wealth, and opportunity (International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2023; United Nations (UN), 2023).

Based on the World Inequality Database (WID) (2021) statistics, the highest earning 10% of the Namibian population share 64.2% of overall income. The top 1% share 21.6%, and the bottom 50% share 6.6% of the income. Furthermore, the inequality related to net personal wealth is staggering. The net personal wealth of the top 10% is 80.4%, of which 47.4% belongs to the top 1% only and the wealth of the bottom 50% is - 1.1% (WID, 2021). Despite significant efforts to reduce poverty, Namibia's inequality ranking remains one of the highest in the world (NPC, 2019, 2020; World Bank, 2023). The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which reflects the incidence and intensity of poverty, also reports that Namibia is one of the countries

with the highest income and wealth inequality globally (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), 2018). Female-headed households, less educated, larger families, children, older people, and labourers in subsistence farming are particularly prone to poverty (UNICEF, 2021).

According to OPHI (2018), the Namibian economy relies vastly on natural resources in agriculture and extractive services such as mining. Extractive services are limited by their reliance on investments and employ a limited workforce. Thus, most employed are in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, which are low-productivity sectors and vulnerable to natural disasters. In 2018, the Namibian unemployment rate was 33.4%, the highest among the youth, in rural areas, and in female-headed households (OPHI, 2018). The labour-intensive manufacturing industry recovered slowly after the COVID pandemic, resulting in employment levels stagnating at levels that remain lower than the pre-pandemic levels. Post the COVID pandemic, the agricultural sector in Namibia experienced several challenges that hampered growth including droughts, flooding and the war in Ukraine also hiked fertiliser prices (World Bank, 2023).

According to UNICEF (2021), poverty across different language groups spoken in Namibia indicates that people whose primary language is German or English reported the lowest headcount ratios of multidimensional poverty, each only 3%, and Afrikaans was close with only 7%. The highest percentages reported among the Black languages were Khoisan (93.4%), Rukavango (67.8%) and Zambezi (54.2%). Oshivambo, Nama/Damara and Otjiherero recorded 40% each. Based on the statistics, it is significant that the MPI is lowest amongst German, English, and Afrikaans households. The patterns have remained the same from before independence (UNICEF, 2021).

Reducing skewed income inequality is exceptionally challenging, yet essential for achieving social stability, which depends on visibly reducing these disparities (Dabla-Norris et al., 2015; IMF, 2015; Keeley, 2015). Pickett and Wilkinson (2014) report that population health is likely better in societies with more equally distributed income and wealth. Social problems, including mental illness, violence, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, poor educational performance, homicides, and higher rates of incarceration, are more common in societies with higher income and wealth disparities (Howell & Elliott, 2018; IMF, 2015; Keely, 2015; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2014). The Namibian history is filled with systems that fuelled and maintained inequality, thus placing its population at risk of a myriad of social problems.

According to Katjavivi (1988), the German colonial rule impacted natives significantly. The expropriation of land and displacement of natives was a concerted effort to destroy traditional

social structures and make the natives subservient colonial slaves on White-owned land and mines. Melber (2005) reflected on apartheid in Namibia and its lasting impact on Namibians:

While this special brand of White minority rule was later called 'separate development', the euphemistic term actually describes in a rather appropriate way colonisation – the violent removal of people from their land. Today, gross inequalities in access to, and possession of land are a reflection of this earlier colonial expansion. (p. 135)

Colonisation and apartheid may not be the sole factors to blame for crime in Namibia. However, based on the literary and historical evidence, it most likely contributes. As I mentioned, high inequality in Namibia was caused by structural violence in the form of colonialism and apartheid, which exploited, impoverished, traumatised, subjugated, and subordinated Black people in Namibia for generations, contributing to social ills, including crime and high incarceration rates.

Independence brought a range of reforms to promote fairness, accountability, and human rights. It is not only land redistribution, education system, and poverty eradication that has seen efforts. The criminal justice system has also undergone significant changes since independence. Notable efforts were invested in improving the correctional services, the police services, and the courts. In the following section, I briefly paint a background of these sectors within the criminal justice system. I also explore some of the challenges and positive changes in each area and the changes to the constitution.

The Criminal Justice System in Namibia

Namibian constitution

The Namibian constitution came into effect immediately upon independence as the supreme law under which all other Namibian laws fall. Namibia's legal system is a hybrid system that combines African customary and post-independence state laws with elements of Roman-Dutch common law, English common law, and South African law (Zongwe, 2020; Zongwe & Dausab, 2017). [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) The Legal Assistance Centre explains in its fact sheet that Namibia has four law sources (Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), 2018). These sources of law are statutes, common law, customary law, and international law.

Statutes. Statutes are laws passed by Parliament since independence or laws passed by other legislative bodies before Namibian independence. Additional terms for statutes are

“legislation” and “Acts of Parliament”. Parliament can make changes, called “amendments, to statutes”.

Common laws. Common laws are developed over time through decisions in individual court cases, usually after reviewing several cases (LAC, 2018). Common laws are age-old systems that are highly valued (Hinz, 2012). Parliament can also change these laws by passing statutes (LAC, 2018; Namibian Constitution, 2014).

Customary laws. Customary laws have been developed over the years in different traditional communities, commonly accepted by people but not formally written. These laws change gradually over time as people change their ways of doing things. Common law disputes are addressed by traditional courts, chiefs, headmen, or other traditional leaders (LAC, 2018). Hinz (2012) explained that customary laws are based on different concepts of justice determined by the culture and community. Each law has its own procedural rules that govern its execution. The constitution outlines which offences may be managed under customary law and defines traditional leaders' roles, duties, and powers (Hinz, 2012; Nakuta & Chipepera, 2010). Any customary law that contravenes legislation passed by the parliament is inconsistent with the provisions in the constitution and thus invalid. Parliament reserves the right to change customary laws by passing statutes (LAC, 2018; Namibian Constitution, 2014).

International law. International law is differentiated from state law and customary law only because international law governs various nation-states, not individual citizens (Hinz, 2012). International law refers to the rules which apply in relationships between nations. International agreements between nations are called “treaties” or “conventions” (LAC, 2018).

Courts. All Namibian courts have inherent jurisdiction over all legal matters in Namibia and apply and interpret the law. The High Court and the Supreme Court are mandated to decide whether a law is consistent with the Constitution (LAC, 2018). Since independence, the Namibian Constitution has undergone several changes to promote human rights and accountability (Namibian Constitution, 2014). “It includes a Bill of Rights, which is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and protects all the basic civil and political rights” (N. Horn & Bösl, 2009, p. 13). One significant change brought about in the Namibian constitution after independence was abolishing the death penalty (Namibian Constitution, 2014).

The Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977, still in effect in Namibia, is a South African law made applicable to Namibia before the Namibian independence (LAC, n.d.). In 2004, the

Namibian Parliament passed the Criminal Procedure Act 25 of 2004 to replace the 1977 Act, but it was repealed in 2018 without ever being brought into force. Instead, several amendments were made to the 1977 Act (LAC, n.d.). Reforms to old Acts such as these must be prioritised as this is still part of the link to an oppressive apartheid regime that Namibia fought against. Article twelve of the Namibian Constitution (2014) emphasises that every person has the right to a fair trial. Therefore, the accused must be given adequate time and facilities to prepare and defend themselves when charged with a crime. The high court posits that the state must provide a legal representative to the person who cannot afford private representation because not having legal representation prohibits fair trial (LAC, n.d.; Namibian Constitution, 2014).

Access to justice helps the effective implementation of the Constitution (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor (DRL), 2020). However, several challenges impede the effective implementation of the Namibian constitution. Access to justice for all individuals, particularly those in rural areas, has yet to be made possible. The government invested in infrastructure, technology, and human resources to address these challenges, however shortages of human resources and infrastructure persist (DRL, 2020).

Article eleven of the constitution addresses Arrest and Detention (LAC, n.d.; Namibian Constitution, 2014). This law requires that every person arrested be brought to a magistrate or a judge within 48 hours of the arrest or as soon as possible or reasonably possible. The government is investing in infrastructure, technology, and human resources to combat challenges (DRL, 2020). However, the courts still struggle with lengthy pretrial detention and some offenders awaiting trial are detained with sentenced offenders (Nakuta & Cloete, 2010). The main challenges faced by the Namibian courts are a backlog of cases and a shortage of resources resulting in disrupted operation of the courts and delays in justice delivery. Ultimately, this impedes the courts from delivering justice effectively (LAC, 2019).

Namibian Police (NAMPOL). Shortly after independence, on 3 December 1990, the Police Act 19 of 1990 was enacted (Office of the Prime Minister [OPM], 1990). Since independence, amidst numerous challenges, NAMPOL significantly promoted professionalism, accountability, and effectiveness. In 2006, the Ombudsman reported on the inhumane conditions in overcrowded police cells for detainees (Walters, 2006). Although improvements were made at correctional and police cells, the conditions in some police cells remained concerning in 2015 (DRL, 2018). Correctional facility cells were not overcrowded, but most police cells remained overcrowded, and the conditions did not comply with international human rights standards (DRL,

2018; LAC, 2019). These same concerns were reported in 2019 by the Ombudsman, constituting a violation of human rights, which is a contravention of the Namibian Constitution (Namibian Constitution, 2014; Ombudsman Namibia, 2019).

To improve NAMPOL, the government increased investment in the police force and improved training, equipment, and resources. Independent oversight mechanisms were established to investigate complaints of police misconduct, promoting accountability and transparency (DRL, 2018). Efforts also improved community policing, which helped build trust between police officers and the communities. However, NAMPOL faces high levels of corruption and inadequate resources and is viewed as corrupt and ineffective by community members. Thus, NAMPOL needs more community trust and efforts must be invested towards this goal (DRL, 2020). In its effort to root out corruption and increase trust, misconduct within NAMPOL is investigated internally, and the findings are reported to the Office of the Prosecutor-General. The Prosecutor-General determines whether charges will be laid (DRL, 2020).

Namibian Correctional Service (NCS): During the apartheid era in Namibia, the prison system was characterised by harsh punishment, torture, and other forms of abuse (Nakuta & Cloete, 2010). Offenders were often sentenced to long prison terms, with little emphasis on rehabilitation or reintegration into society. After independence, the government made significant efforts to reform, moving from a prison system to rehabilitative services. The key change was adopting the Correctional Service Act 9 of 2012 (Nakuta & Cloete, 2010). This law established a framework for managing and administrating correctional facilities in Namibia (Republic of Namibia, 2012).

Section Three of the Correctional Service Act (2012) mandates the NCS to provide safe, secure, and humane custody of offenders, and to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into the community. To execute this mandate, the NCS offers rehabilitation programmes that empower offenders (Nafuka & Kake, 2015; Namibian Correctional Services (NCS), 2016). Education, vocational training, work programmes, counselling and psychological support services, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes were introduced. Alternative sentencing options like community-based corrections programmes, including community service, probation, and parole, were also initiated (LAC, 2014; Nafuka & Kake, 2015; NCS, 2016).

Poor nutrition, sanitation and inadequate facilities compromise the human rights of inmates. Therefore, since the ombudsman highlighted the concerning conditions in the NCS and NAMPOL cells in 2006, Namibia invested in improving the conditions in its facilities by focusing on

providing adequate food, sanitation, and medical care (DRL, 2018; LAC, 2019). The LAC (2019) states that Namibia has increased its investment in correctional services, improving the quality of care and support for inmates. Mental health facilities within correctional facilities have been established, providing inmates access to mental health care and support. However, NCS still struggles to provide adequate mental health services for all inmates with mental health issues due to a shortage of resources (LAC, 2019).

NCS also made significant strides in reforming the approach to sentencing offenders, focusing on rehabilitation, reintegration, and restorative justice (DRL, 2020). While there is still work to be done to ensure that the system is fair and effective for all individuals, the changes implemented since independence represent a significant improvement over the pre-independence era (Nakuta & Cloete, n.d.; Namibian Constitution, 2014). More resources, better training, and more collaboration between all stakeholders are required to promote accountability, transparency, and effectiveness. Major challenges faced by NCS, linked to the challenges of NAMPOL and the courts are lengthy pretrial detention and subsequent overcrowding in cells housing detainees awaiting trial. It results in awaiting trial inmates being detained with sentenced offenders (Nakuta & Cloete, 2010). Among the potential solutions to address these challenges is that outdated acts, like the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977, must be replaced with Namibian laws, not only amended.

Offender populations in Namibia

The world offender population trends reflect that female offenders generally comprise between 2% and 10% of the offender population (Coyle, 2018; Walmsley, 2015; World Prison Brief (WPB), 2023). Based on the violent crime statistics of the Namibian police 2015-2020, consistent with the reports of the offender population proportions worldwide (Coyle, 2018; Walmsley, 2015; WPB, 2023), women are only a fraction of the offender population in Namibia (NAMPOL, 2020). Looking at the NCS statistics, reflected in the Offender Management System (OMS) report (NCS, 2017), the general offender populations' age groups are in proportion to Taapopi's (2016) report and tie in with the arguments by Edwards-Jauch (2016).

The subsequent tables indicate the dispersion of offenders charged and convicted of crimes in Namibia based on age and ethnicity. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 present the age range of offenders when they arrive at the facility and the age range of offenders convicted of murder. Table 1.3 shows the dispersion of the offender population based on ethnicity.

Table 1.1

The average age of the offender at the time of arrival (Active population)

Age group	Counter	Percentage %
Younger than 17	6	0.23
17-19	140	5.34
20-21	201	7.66
22-25	558	21.27
26-30	630	24.01
31-40	726	27.67
41-50	289	11.01
51-60	64	2.44
61-70	9	0.34
71 or older	1	0.04

Note. The OMS age group report indicates that most crimes are committed by offenders within the age bracket 22-50.

Table 1.2

Offence type report (Age group), ACTIVE population. Offence: Murder

Age Group	Counter
Younger than 17	0
17-19	4
20-21	8
22-25	20
26-30	41
31-40	61
41-50	40
51-60	10
61-70	2
71 or older	0

Note. Most offenders convicted of murder fall within the age bracket, 22-50.

Table 1.3*Ethnicity report*

Ethnicity	Counter
Afrikaner	26
Baster	35
Caprivi	85
Coloured	79
Damara	663
German	1
Kavango	184
Motswana	14
Nama	282
Offender not willing to provide	1
Other	174
Ovaherero	205
Ovahimba	14
Ovambo	821
San	39

Note. Most offenders belong to the Ovambo ethnic group.

Based on the most recent census information from the World Population Review (WPR), August 2021, the largest ethnic group in Namibia is the Ovambo (49.8%), followed by the Kavango (9.3%), Damara (7.5%), Herero (7.5%), White (6.4%), Nama (4.8%), Caprivian (3.7%), San (2.9%), Coloureds (4.1%), and Basters (2.5%) (World Population Review (WPR), 2023). Groups that fall under the White classification include Portuguese, British, German and Afrikaner groups. Minority groups, including descendants of Angolan refugees and the Chinese, make up the final 1.5% (WPR, 2023). The OMS (2017) ethnicity table shows that the largest percentage of offenders belong to the Ovambo ethnic group, and the smallest group is White German. These percentages are feasible when considering the general Namibian population and proportions per ethnic group.

Based on the OMS report (NCS, 2017), the incarcerated female population is a mere fraction of the entire population. This aligns with the global patterns indicating that female offender populations generally constitute between 2 and 9% of the total incarcerated population and men account for 93% (UNODC, 2022; WPB, 2023). More than 95% of incarcerated offenders in Namibia are male, and men commit most violent crimes, as reflected in the OMS report of NCS (NCS, 2017). Most committed assault GBH. The second largest proportion was incarcerated for rape, closely followed by murder (NCS, 2017). These statistics also highlight violence within Namibian society as a significant problem which requires critical attention.

GBV as part of violent crime

When examining violence and crime, it is essential to consider public opinion and the justice system's (the courts, police, and corrections) attempts to curb crime. Looking at local newspaper reports on crime in Namibia, murder, violence, and GBV remain a persistent concern. Crime reporters like Werner Menges captured these violent crimes and the crime rates over the years. For example, in articles such as "A whirlwind year in the courts of law" (Menges, 2017). This is further evidenced by reports such as "Over 150 GBV cases in 5 months in Oshana" (Nembwaya, 2021), "Gender-based Violence: Why victims don't leave" (Nantana, 2023), and "Gender-based violence: What are we missing?" (Sitali, 2020). Hence, understanding GBV and the framing of GBV was essential in this study.

In 1993, the UN accepted the "Declaration on The Elimination of Violence Against Women". The first official definition of GBV, based on that general assembly was that "violence against women" means "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (UN, 1993, p. 3). By emphasising that the violence was motivated by gender, this definition implicitly recognised that gender discrimination stems from existing gender inequality. It recognises that the primary targets of GBV are women and adolescent girls. However, not only are women and girls at high risk of GBV, but they also suffer intensified consequences compared to what men endure (UN, 2020, 2021; UNFPA, 2016).

This earlier definition of GBV implicitly captured women and girls as the victims and excluded the experiences of men and gender-nonconforming people. Since then, the definition has evolved and recognises GBV as multifaceted, encompassing more than incidences of domestic and sexual violence. Therefore, men who experience GBV and gender-nonconforming people must be included when GBV is defined. As such, the UN acknowledges that forced marriage of young girls, human trafficking, female genital mutilation, female infanticide, male rape, violence directed at LGBTQI individuals, verbal abuse, laws, and regulations that limit the rights and access to services of women and girls, are all forms of GBV (United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), 2020). Thus, GBV includes violence against men and gender-nonconforming persons, as long as the violence stems from the person's gender identity or presentation (Kerr, 2022).

In the Namibian context, the National Gender Policy (NGP) 2010-2020 (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), 2010) and the National Gender Plan of Action

(Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), 2013) refer to GBV as “all forms of violence that happen to women, girls, men and boys because of the unequal power relations between them.” (p. 29). The NGP further notes that “causes of gender-based violence include customs, traditions and beliefs, illiteracy and limited education, unequal power relations, and the low status of women” (p. 29). This is reiterated in the National Gender Plan of Action (MGECW, 2013).

The UN recognises that violence against women and girls is among the most pervasive and distressing human rights violations globally. Staggeringly, statistics indicate that one in every three women has experienced physical or sexual violence (UN, 2021). In November 2018, Alweendo, Andreas and Rafla-Yuan published a briefing paper in the Democracy report titled, *Landscaping Gender-Based Violence in Namibia*. They acknowledged that GBV remains a growing crisis in Namibia, and almost all GBV cases in Namibia target women and are perpetrated by men. Despite Namibia’s efforts to provide various resources, including legal protections, counselling services, and awareness-raising, incidences of GBV continue to escalate (Alweendo et al., 2018).

Structural violence as a contributing factor to crime

According to Alweendo et al. (2018), violence is a masculine norm in Namibia, i.e. something considered natural for men. Therefore, this norm is a significant root cause of GBV in Namibia. Masculinity encompasses socially constructed norms, values, practices, ideologies, and power relations that are ascribed by society to maleness (Edwards-Jauch, 2016; UNFPA, 2022). Over time, these societal constructs influence and determine behaviour and expectations, shaping gender identities and relationships (Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Sinha et al., 2017). Sinha et al. (2017) stated the following:

Violence inter alia is gendered, embodied, and institutionalised. Women are subjected to “structural violence” which results from sexism, rape, domestic violence, psychological violence, and other acts of violence resulting from the social structure. (p. 135)

The UNODC’s (2022) study on gender-related killings of women and girls reports that conditions of gender-based discrimination influence the violence experienced by women, often reflected in observable patterns. These structural factors which perpetuate violence through influencing such discrimination are encountered at the macro level of social, economic, and political systems. Before independence, the patriarchal system, based on paternalist, traditional family values and gender roles, was upheld, and men were regarded as the heads of the household in Namibia (Ambunda & De Klerk, 2008; Brasche, 2003). Traditional gender norms,

which dictate socially acceptable male and female roles, reinforce gender inequality, creating power imbalance by rewarding masculine behaviour and devaluing feminine behaviour (Alweendo et al., 2018; Sinha et al., 2017). Although capitalism and colonialism in southern Africa impacted society, they did not dissolve all pre-existing social norms and customary practices as they prevail in Namibia (Ambunda & De Klerk, 2008; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Namibian Constitution, 2014). Although the Namibian Constitution instated equal rights, many customary practices perpetuate inequality (Alweendo et al., 2018; Ambunda & de Klerk, 2008; Brasche, 2003).

Traditional patriarchal societies perpetuated the clear division of duties along gender lines in all areas, including household tasks, and this gender dynamic was carried through to sexual relations, thereby supporting and maintaining structural violence and contributing to the systemic marginalisation of women (Brasche, 2003; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Nyoni & Wariva, 2017). GBV is not about men and women; it is about power relations between the two societally created gender constructs (Abdel-Rahman et al., 2023; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Nyoni & Wariva, 2017). Male aggression and violence are validated and accepted as natural responses instead of learned behaviour. Thus, the implicit acceptance of GBV as an inevitable result of men's natural tendency towards violence is reinforced (Alweendo et al., 2018; Nyoni & Wariva, 2017). These beliefs can be ascribed to conservative gender norms perpetuating structural violence and systemic marginalisation of women and girls.

According to Edwards-Jauch (2016), focusing on men's inherent superior physical strength, men as perpetrators, and the high levels of violence against women committed by men leads to biological essentialism. Biological essentialism assumes that men are inherently violent and aggressive, and masculinity is equated with aggression (Davoodi et al., 2020; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; van Anders et al., 2022). Furthermore, essentialist views obscure the historical, economic, political, social, and cultural context of violence and undermine the role of social structure at the epicentre of gender-based violence (Davoodi et al., 2020; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; van Anders et al., 2022).

The historical root of the church and the conversion of most Namibians to Christianity in the early 19th century also contributed to the conservative gender norms upheld by most Namibians regarding gender roles, sexual relations, and marriage. Methodist missionaries arrived in 1805, followed by the German Rhenish and the Finnish missionaries, and they established stations among natives (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1989; Namhila &

Hillebrecht, 2022). The conversion of native Namibians to Christianity was very successful, and 80% to 90% of the population remains affiliated with a Christian church (Prill, 2020). Namupala and Mushaandja (2022) examined gender roles and constructs in Namibia. They discovered the interconnected issues of sexism, racism, and other social injustices such as homophobia. They agree that religious practices like Christian evangelism, German colonialism, and apartheid regimes were central in shifting gender dynamics, and these systems perpetuate institutionalised racism and sexism. Alweendo et al. (2018), Davoodi et al. (2019), and van Anders et al. (2022) underscore the impact of conservative gender norms and essentialist views.

Recognising that many cultural and customary practices influence societal power relations is essential. In Christian culture, traditional family constructs were highly patriarchal, and domesticity represented femininity (Becker, 2004; John, 2021). Thus, women belonged at home, caring for children, doing domestic chores, and performing unpaid subsistence labour. Customarily, women got married much younger than men and had no autonomy in selecting a husband. Men reserved the right to choose and could have one or multiple wives (Brasche, 2003; Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1989). Many Namibian pre-colonial customs left decision-making, control, and ownership over assets such as land and cattle primarily under male control (Ambunda & de Klerk, 2008; Becker, 2006; Edwards-Jauch, 2016). Women could use assets as spouses or daughters, not owners and decision-makers. This created male control over the means of production and enforced gender inequality. The migrant labour system took the income-providing men away from home and left women with children. With no earning power, women became more dependent on their husbands' income, increasing inequality (Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Siiskonen, 1994).

GBV is more prevalent in relationships where women depend on their husbands to financially support them and their children (Alesina et al., 2016; Martin, 2020b,c). GBV is also linked to poverty and unemployment. A particular link exists between spousal employment status and the risk of physical violence against the female partner. As more women gain employment and economic independence, tension may grow between the couple, increasing the risk of violence (Alesina et al., 2016; Ambunda & de Klerk, 2008; Becker, 2006; Edwards-Jauch, 2016). The men may feel threatened and struggle with the change in gender roles when they no longer fit the traditional provider role (Martin, 2020b).

Some customary practices perpetuate the exposure of women to forms of direct violence and humiliation (Chitando et al., 2021; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Selebano, 2019). Edwards-Jauch

(2016) stated that customs such as polygamy in some Namibian cultures provide men with an unfair advantage and opportunities to accumulate wealth and power over women. Some customary practices force underage girls into marriage. In others, lobola (bride wealth) is an exchange of wealth between the woman's male kin and her husband and may give the man an impression of control over the woman's labour and fertility (Edwards-Jauch, 2016). Lobola is the payment of an agreed bride price by the husband's family to the bride's family (Ansell, 2001). Selebano (2019) argued that such patriarchal practices increase the power of men and devalue women as it appears to put men in control over women's sexuality (Ambunda & De Klerk, 2008; Becker, 2006; Chitando et al., 2021; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Martin, 2020b; Ngubelanga, 2021; Selebano, 2019). In certain cultures, lobola represents a transactional relationship resulting in the subjugation of the women because women find it difficult to refuse sexual advances and find it near impossible to divorce as they are required to pay double the amount of lobola that was paid for them by the groom's family for her to be granted permission to divorce (Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014; Frank, 2015).

Upon the death of her husband, certain customary practices would strip the women of their assets. In other cultures, the primary male heir of the deceased husband's estate assumes the responsibilities as the new husband of the widow together with the estate (Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014; Edwards-Jauch, 2016). This reinforces the notion that a woman is someone's property, reinforcing inequality and rendering women inferior and powerless. Unequal power relations promote structural and direct violence against women, thus increasing the risks of violence against women by men (Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014; Edwards-Jauch, 2016). Although not widely practised, many cultural norms and customs still exist in modern-day society.

Muurman (2017) described the opinion of an elder belonging to an indigenous tribe in Namibia. The elder expressed that moralism is not a product of the Christian missions. Strict discipline, morals and values are fundamental to traditional culture. Young people were expected to respect their elders, girls were expected not to get pregnant before marriage, and men could be punished for causing such pregnancies. According to the elder, girls younger than 18 would be given as brides, but the present-day phenomenon of premarital teenage pregnancies is a product of recent decades. Rules were followed because the punishment for transgressions was severe (Muurman, 2017). Traditional practices were not set in place with malicious intent. However, people may misconceive these practices, and some men may abuse their position and subjugate women (Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014).

Conservative gender norms are inevitably accompanied by negative experiences of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) community (Alweendo et al., 2018; Hermkens et al., 2022). These may include victimisation, abuse, and ostracisation. A misconception that gender identity is an indication of 'confusion' in an individual prevails, and this misconception opens the LGBTQIA+ community up for abuse. Additionally, most Christian doctrine does not make room for same-sex relationships. Thus, practices may be customary but may impede women's freedom and power.

Another factor that is linked to GBV is corporal punishment in schools and at home (Alweendo et al., 2018). The Legal Assistance Centre's definition is, "Corporal punishment is when a person in authority uses physical force intending to cause pain or discomfort for disciplinary purposes" (LAC, 2019, p.2). Corporal punishment was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Namibia in 1991. However, it is still frequently reported, particularly in domestic settings. It conveys the harmful message that violence is acceptable and effective. Children subjected to corporal punishment may turn to violence more often as adults and abuse their spouses or children. Thus, corporal punishment may impact perceptions and foster misconceptions about GBV (Alweendo et al., 2018; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; LAC, 2019; Sloth-Nielsen, 2019).

Another phenomenon related to GBV is victim blaming. Alweendo et al. (2018) concede that questions such as "What were they wearing?" or "What part of town were they in?" or "Why did they go there if they knew it was dangerous?" put the spotlight on the victim. The victim is seen as the responsible party who caused the abuse or violence due to something they did wrong. This also creates the impression that men inherently cannot control their sexual impulses and are less responsible for their violent actions if they are exposed to, for instance, revealing clothing. The implication of victim blaming is that violence is inevitable, and men act instinctively and are not at fault (Alweendo et al., 2018). Once again, such a narrative perpetuates structural violence.

Myths and misconceptions about GBV and rape also support patriarchy and perpetuate its prevalence (Alweendo et al., 2018; Fenton & Jones, 2014; Gierse-Arsten, 2020). These include but are not limited to beliefs that men and women suffer equally, domestic violence is a private matter, a man cannot rape his wife, and when women say no, they mean yes. According to Alweendo et al. (2016), the belief that substance abuse is one of the main drivers of GBV is also a major misconception and a myth. Alcohol and substance abuse may exacerbate and contribute to increased aggression and is present in many domestic abuse situations, but it is not the cause of

violence (Alweendo et al., 2018). Martin (2020b) also acknowledges that gender-based violence is more likely in relationships where one or both partners abuse alcohol. Selebano (2019) conducted a study to explore contributing factors to physical violence against women in northern Namibia. They found that several factors influence violent behaviour. Alcohol was identified as one of the main factors and was also used as an excuse to justify violence. Other contributing factors include extramarital affairs, feelings of inferiority, misunderstandings, and anger.

All the aspects mentioned above are influenced and impacted by socially constructed norms, values, practices, and ideologies set structurally throughout society's micro and macro levels. These constructs shape how individuals make sense of the world, understand it, and influence their behaviour. Furthermore, gender constructs are influenced by personal experience. How men and women view and subsequently react to each other, with or without violence, is highly subjective and changes with time. Violence is affected by sociocultural factors, including parenting, disciplinary factors, alcohol and substance use, relationship dynamics, national laws, policies, and national history (Alweendo et al., 2018; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; LAC, 2010; Martin, 2020b).

Namibian courts' attempts to curb crime

Life imprisonment is the most severe sentence under the Namibian law (2013, Tereblanche). However, the Namibian courts rarely impose life imprisonment. They instead resort to very long determinate prison sentences due to the release policy in Namibia. The chances of early release are higher for an offender serving a life sentence than an offender serving a very long determinate sentence (Terblanche, 2013). An example is the sentence of 87 years imposed on Ernestus Aibeb for multiple crimes, including a count of murder and arson (*State v Aibeb*, 2011). Another example of a long determinate sentence is 105 years for Sylvester and 85 years for Gavin Neidel (*State v Neidel and Others*, 2011). The Beukes brothers were convicted of eight counts of murder, housebreaking with the intent to rob, and robbery with aggravating circumstances, amongst other crimes.

Following an appeal of such long sentences by four offenders sentenced to effective prison terms of between 67 and 64 years, the high court declared that any sentence providing no prospects of release is unconstitutional (Rickard, 2018). Offenders sentenced to lengthy sentences would be required to serve an average of 40 years before being eligible for parole, contrary to the 25 years that an offender serving a life sentence must serve before being eligible. The attorney general pointed out that any offender with a sentence of more than 37 and a half

years would be punished more harshly than someone serving a life sentence. This would be unjust because since the death sentence was abolished, a life sentence is intended to be the harshest sentence that may be imposed.

The Namibian courts historically attempt to curb crime by imposing harsh sentences intended to deter potential offenders from committing crimes. The harsh sentences imposed are also in response to the public's desperate outcry for longer sentences. In *State v Gaweseb* (2010), the judge expressed:

It is therefore my considered view that although heavy sentences seem not to have the desired effect anymore, courts should not shy away from its duty to impose exemplary sentences where the circumstances and the facts of the matter allow it. The one way in which society can be protected is by removing convicted persons from their midst. (para. 23)

The courts express the need to communicate their intention to protect society against such crimes, detain and deter criminals, and respond to the public outcry regarding appropriate sentences (Tereblanche, 2013). Similar sentiments were aired by Judge G. N. Ndauendapo when he delivered Kangandjera's judgement (*Sate v Kangandjera*, 2016). Kangandjera brutally beat and stabbed his girlfriend in 2012. The judge agreed with the statement made by Judge A. J. Smuts regarding the prevalence and cruelty of domestic violence in *State v Bothile* (2007) when he stated:

In doing so, these sentences should reflect the determination of courts in Namibia to give effect to and protect the constitutional values of the inviolability of human dignity and equality between men and women. The clear and unequivocal message which should resonate from the courts in Namibia was that crimes involving domestic violence would be appropriately severe (*State v Kangangera*, 2016, p. 6).

An example of how the Namibian courts' attempt to implement harsh sentences for offences is the judgment of Judge A. J. Rakow in the state versus Benedictus Koper, a repeat offender (*State v Koper*, 2020). In 2014, at 24, he attacked, strangled, and raped his female acquaintance. He was convicted and sentenced to one-year incarceration or N\$3000. Koper was again convicted in 2015, on a charge of assault GBV and sentenced to six months incarceration. In 2016, Koper murdered his girlfriend and admitted that he had direct intent to kill her. He stabbed her approximately 12 times and bashed her head with the axe. The autopsy revealed that the true

extent of the brutality was much more severe. It is evident that Koper's crimes escalated in the level of violence. During sentencing, the judge proclaimed that the primary purpose of punishment is to serve as "deterrent, preventative, reformatory and retributive" (*State v Koper*, 2020, p. 10). The judge reiterated that society's interest outweighs the accused's interest. Therefore, the court must consistently prefer to impose long custodial sentences to deter others from committing such crimes. Benedictus Koper was convicted on four counts, including murder and attempted murder. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Judges regularly impose sentences of between 35 and 38 years for violent crimes instead of life sentences. For example, in 2021, Judge J. Liebenberg sentenced David Novaseb to an effective 37-year term for one count of murder, assault common, assault GBV, and escape from lawful custody (*State v Nowaseb*, 2021). Novaseb murdered his 10-month-old son and assaulted his girlfriend, the victim's mother. Similarly, Judge A.M. Siboleka sentenced Elwen Gawaxab, who was convicted of the brutal murder of a woman and the assault GBH on another woman, to an effective 37 years and six months (*State v Gawaxab*, 2018). The attack did not occur domestically, and the offender and victims were unfamiliar.

NCS's attempts to curb crime

In addition to using long-term sentences as a deterrent, in a further effort to curb crime and reduce recidivism, the NCS aims to help reform offenders by moving from punitive incarceration to rehabilitation (Hamunyela, 2014). Moving to a more rehabilitative focus involved implementing the Offender Risk Management Correctional Strategy (ORMCS) in 2008. According to Nafuka and Kake (2015), the ORMCS programme, founded on evidence-based approaches, is mainly based on the Risk-Need-Responsivity principles developed by Andrews, Bonta and Hoge in 1990. The programme was officially inaugurated in 2012.

The ORMCS views offenders as unique and emphasises that they should not be managed homogeneously but based on individual risks and needs (Chiremba, 2015; Nafuka & Kake, 2015; Martin, 2020a, 2015). [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) Offenders are allocated to correctional facilities according to their gender, age, and sentence and the risk they pose to fellow inmates, staff, and the community (Martin, 2020a, 2015; Schultz & Bruyns, 2021). Furthermore, NCS uses a web-based electronic data management system, the Offender Management Information System. The OMS allows staff to electronically store and retrieve offenders' personal details and criminal history from admission to release (Porporini & Kathuria, 2015). Before 2008, a non-violent, first-time offender with low risk could potentially be placed in a living unit with a violent, high-risk,

repeat offender (Nafuka & Kake, 2015). After the implementation of the ORMCS and the OMS, it is less likely because the OMS and ORMCS have improved the systems at NCS significantly.

Since implementing the ORMCS, the NCS correctional facilities have been classified as low, low-medium, medium, and maximum-security. Offenders are classified based on their level of risk, and their classification determines the unit in which they are accommodated. Each unit has predetermined restrictions and control over the inmates' movements (Chiremba, 2015; Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016). The closer inmates come to their release date, the more rehabilitative services they receive in preparation for release and reintegration into mainstream society. This is done to prevent recidivism once released. Table 1.4 presents the focus of ORMCS depending on each security level indicated by NCS (2017b).

Table 1.4

Level of security and focus of ORMCS

Level of security	Focus for ORMCS
Maximum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist adjustment to correctional facility environment • Control problematic behaviour • Encourage contact and relationships with family • Engage in functional literacy programmes • Prepare for needs oriented treatment activities
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control problematic behaviour • Initiate motivation to address key risk factors • Maintain family links • Engage in functional literacy programmes • Initiate needs oriented treatment activities
Low medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start making active efforts to address risk/needs factors • Address reintegration concerns Begin participation in programmes
Minimum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain active efforts to address risk/needs factors • Address reintegration concerns Complete participation in programmes

Of the 14 NCS facilities, five facilities only house male inmates; eight house male and female inmates; one facility exclusively accommodates females, and juveniles are accommodated at separate units within the facilities (Schulz & Bruyns, 2021). Only four facilities, which are Divundu CF, Evaristus Shikongo CF, Hardap CF, and Windhoek CF have maximum-security units, level one security classification. Currently, the ORMCS is implemented at four correctional facilities. Evaristus Shikongo CF, situated about 25 km outside of Tsumeb, was the first correctional facility to implement the ORMCS (Schulz & Bruyns, 2020). Elisabeth Nepemba CF, in the Kavango West Region, and the Hardap CF, 10km outside of Mariental, also meet the requirements of the ORMCS. The Windhoek Correctional Facility (Windhoek CF) implements the

OMS as well as the ORMCS, and both are in full operation (Martin, 2020a; Schulz & Bruyns, 2021). The participants in this study are housed at the Windhoek CF.

The key activities at the facilities that operate within the framework of the ORMCS are Administration, Delivering Core Structured Programmes, Education Services, Case Management Services, Security Operations, Health Care Services and Maintenance Services. ORMCS activities and phases are coordinated as part of the unit management process, mainly by the Case Management Officers (CMO) through continued offender engagement (Martin, 2020a; Nafuka & Kake, 2015; NCS, 2016). Unit management aims to create a humane but disciplined correctional facility environment that enhances the security and control of offenders through supervision as well as the facilitation of the reintegration of offenders into the community (Limbo, 2020; Martin, 2020a; Nafuka & Kake, 2015; NCS, 2016). It aims to cluster offenders into smaller, manageable housing units within a larger correctional setting. This allows a more effective deployment of active, dynamic security alternative to passive, static security (Limbo, 2020; Martin, 2020a; Nafuka & Kake, 2015; Schulz & Bruyns, 2020). This model enables better control of offenders through meaningful systems of incentives and privileges. It empowers line staff, and direct interaction and supervision between staff and offenders are more successful than traditional punitive designs (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016; Schulz & Bruyns, 2020).

The ORMCS's specific stages are listed below (Limbo, 2020; Martin, 2020a; Nafuka & Kake, 2015; NCS, 2016):

- Reception and assessment process for offenders commencing their sentences.
- Appropriate allocation of Units by security level.
- Commencement of the process of assessment of risk and needs.
- Development of correctional treatment plans based on the risk/needs assessments.
- Delivery of programmes and services to address offenders' risk and needs.
- Monitoring offenders' progress in achieving objectives/goals in their correctional treatment plans.
- Preparation of progress reports to document offender's progress in detail.
- Modification of correctional treatment plans, as necessary, if the offender's circumstances should change.
- Review of suitability for early release on parole as eligibility dates approach.
- Establishing appropriate pre-release plans, including appropriate referrals to community agencies for continued follow-up support.

Clear, formal, structured processes and procedures guide staff as well as offenders from admission through to the release of offenders.

Reception and assessment. During the initial reception and assessment process, the offender's level and nature of immediate needs are determined, and the offender is oriented to the challenges they might face within the correctional environment (Martin, 2020a; Nafuka & Kake, 2015). Their criminal history, the nature and motives of the offence, past behaviour, and other factors are examined. The assessment ascertains the ongoing risks to the staff and other inmates and the potential risks to the public (e.g. the potential to escape). The inmate is placed in a unit based on their security classification. This process also introduces them to meaningful privileges they are encouraged to earn within the facility. Privileges serve as incentives that may encourage good behaviour, ultimately allowing progress from one level of security to the next (Nafuka & Kake, 2015).

Correctional treatment plan. A tailor-made, individual correctional treatment plan, based on the inmate's risks, needs, and motivation to change, is designed in cooperation with the inmate (Schulz & Bruyns, 2020). Intermittently, the inmates' progress is evaluated, and adjustments are made to the plan as required. It helps to appropriately address their concerns, risks, and needs. The plan outlines the short-term (6 to 12 months) and long-term (12 months to end of a sentence or early release) goals and practical steps to address their needs and improve their chances of successful reintegration (Chiremba, 2017; NCS, 2016; Schulz & Bruyns, 2020).

Case management. Case management is the process in which the CMO and unit management staff help the inmates execute their correctional treatment plan. The primary responsibility to help, support and guide the inmates, rests with the CMO, but other unit management staff assist with the observation and analysis of the inmates' behaviour (Chiremba, 2017; Limbo, 2020; Schultz & Bruyns, 2020). The CMOs and other staff work with the inmates to address their needs and achieve goals identified in the individual plans. They document progress, refer, and intervene based on the inmates' behaviours, needs and concerns. The intervention might be through counselling, contact with families, education, recreation, work, or other activities the inmate is permitted to engage in based on their level of security. Thus, the inmate may gradually change their security status, for instance, from maximum to low-medium, then minimum and eventually be considered for release (Chiremba, 2017). The inmates' classification is reviewed annually based on behaviour, institutional adjustment, programme participation, etc. (Nafuka & Kake, 2015).

Following the above comprehensive sketch of the background of the research problem, I provide the study’s problem statement, main aim, objectives, and research questions below.

Problem Statement

Violence, particularly crime involving violence, is detrimental to the safety of society and impacts societal morals and relationships (Kamaluddin et al., 2015). Singh and Rani (2017) concur that, unfortunately, crime is an inevitable part of life. However, it presents an unprecedented societal problem that severely pollutes the societal climate of a country. Verdicts carried out by judges and reports in local media prove that violent crimes continue to occur in Namibia and that the numbers are not decreasing. In January 2019, Major General Peter Embubulu gave feedback on the 2018/19 festive season crime combating operations. He revealed that assault GBH cases increased from 197 to 268, rape from 65 to 87, and culpable homicide from 38 to 49. Murder cases increased from 28 to 48 and attempted murder from 25 to 28 (NAMPA, 2019). Embubulu indicated that the “increased visibility” of the police may have resulted in increased crime reporting, thus influencing the numbers.

Furthermore, the statistics in Table 1.5 provided by the Ministry of Immigration, Safety, and Security in September 2020 displayed a concerning trend. The statistics indicate that there is minimal change in the cases of murder, attempted murder, and assault GBH reported annually. The numbers of reported cases are indicated in Table 1.5 below.

Table 1.5

National Crime Statistics on Violent Crime for the period 2015-2020 July

	January - December 2015	January - December 2016	January - December 2017	January - December 2018	January - December 2019	January - July 2020
Murder	477	373	388	476	319	144
Attempted murder	586	643	560	616	578	244
Assault GBH	10681	10660	10210	10893	10636	4579

Note. These figures testify to the problem of violent crime that persists in Namibia.

There is further evidence of numerous crimes involving repeat offenders, such as Benedictus Koper (discussed earlier in this chapter (p. 33), whose crimes indicate escalating violence and brutality. Reports such as the 2017 recap of headline crime reports in the local newspaper indicate the extent of the problem of persistent violent crime in Namibia (Menges, 2017). Despite the Namibian courts' attempts to impose harsh, lengthy sentences and the NCS's

efforts to implement evidence-based rehabilitation programmes, it appears that these measures are not serving as sufficient deterrents. The impact on society is clear, yet the underlying reasons for this phenomenon remain obscure.

This study attempted to understand offenders such as Koper, not by understanding the circumstances of the crime but through an in-depth investigation of the broad circumstances surrounding the cohort of violent offenders incarcerated in the maximum-security facility. To create this understanding, I formulated one main aim, four objectives, and four research questions. Through these specific research questions, I addressed several matters that perplex society. I created clarity on whether perpetrators of violent crimes may or may not have impoverished backgrounds and whether they are educated or uneducated. I also shed light on whether their crimes are impacted by violence being a masculine norm in Namibia or whether they had been victims of abuse or subjected to corporal punishment as children.

Main Aim

The main aim was to comprehend the identities of those who commit violent crimes, mainly murder, by investigating the backgrounds, experiences, and personalities of convicted offenders. This was accomplished through four objectives that examined the factors that affected and influenced them to engage in violent behaviour.

Objectives

- Investigate the self-perceived personalities of offenders who have committed violent crimes.
- Examine the past and present relationships of offenders.
- Evaluate the impact of offenders on the lives of their significant others.
- Analyse the life experiences of offenders and how these experiences have influenced their behaviour.

Main Research Question

How do the histories, experiences, and personalities of offenders convicted of violent crimes, specifically murder, contribute to their personal identities and motivations for committing violent crimes?

Secondary research questions

- How do offenders perceive their own personalities?

- What kinds of relationships have offenders had in the past, and have in the present?
- In what ways have offenders affected the lives of their significant others?
- How have offenders' life experiences influenced their behaviour?

Rationale and Significance of the Study

In Namibia, minimal research has been conducted in the field of forensic psychology and much less research that specifically focused on examining the personality and identity of offenders convicted of violent crimes. The Namibian crime statistics showing the escalating violent crimes, the efforts made by the courts and NCS to curb crime, and community outcries to curb crime amplified the need to investigate and gain a better comprehension of the causes of violent crime in Namibia.

Approaching the investigation through a different angle that focussed on the offenders, instead of simply describing the crime sheds light on the perpetrators and the many factors that influence their criminal behaviour. These factors included various structural, historical, contextual, and systemic factors. This information may support efforts to curb crime in Namibia. The findings of this study provide an in-depth descriptive and explanatory account of the personalities of the offenders responsible for violent crimes. An attempt was made to provide precise descriptions of the offenders' perceptions. Their personality and identity perceptions were examined through a descriptive and explanatory thematic framework to gather in-depth understanding.

- The findings of this study provide a helpful knowledge base for researchers.
- This knowledge is valuable to justice, safety, and security professionals, particularly for sentencing, security classification of inmates, policy-making, and criminal profiling.
- The insights gained may assist with early identification and intervention with potentially violent perpetrators.
- The findings may aid in efforts to prevent violent crime and reduce recidivism.
- Another offshoot of the study is that it provides valuable insights to professionals working with offenders, such as social workers, psychologists, medical and legal professionals.

Operational definitions

Personality. Personality entails thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that reflect the tendency to respond in certain ways under certain circumstances (Kankaraš, 2017). Capturing the different aspects of personalities under various circumstances requires a dynamic investigation.

Dynamic exploration. Dynamic refers to phenomena that are continuously changing or developing (American Psychological Association (APA), 2023). Personality is pervasive, but individual experiences vary, and people evolve. Therefore, the study of the offenders' personalities requires a dynamic approach from a qualitative perspective that entails exploring to understand and not “predict, explain and control behaviour” but answer questions about experiences, meaning, and perspectives from the standpoint of the participants (Hammarberg et al., 2016). The exploration was dynamic because I appreciated the vastness, flexibility and complexity of their experiences, behaviour, and how they make sense of their world.

Factor. In this study, the term 'factor' is used to describe elements that influence and contribute to the perceptions and behaviours of the participants. The Oxford Dictionary defines a factor as a circumstance, fact, or influence that contributes to a result (Oxford University Press, 2023). Similarly, the APA Dictionary of Psychology defines a factor as anything that has a causal relationship with a result, event, or phenomenon (American Psychological Association (APA), 2023).

Offence. According to the Criminal Procedure Act 51 (1977), an “offence” means “an act or omission punishable by law” (p. 13). Njiri (2020) defined law as a social science dealing with the concerns of society. The people develop rules and regulations to govern their behaviour and interactions, dictating what to do or not to do. Various legal bodies validate, enforce, and impose laws, ensuring that these statutes benefit society. The legislature enacts the laws, the judiciary interprets the law, and the executive body enforces the laws. The sanctions are “penalties or coercive measures” mandated and enforced when the law, rule or order is not complied with (Njiri, 2020).

Violent crime. Violence is an extreme form of aggression with or without intent, including physical, verbal, psychological, and other acts (Allen & Anderson, 2017b; Bushman et al., 2018; Hamby, 2017; Pinna & Manchia, 2017). A crime is an act that contravenes the rules of conduct legally installed by the state, and such actions may be followed with punitive measures against the person committing a crime (Kassem et al., 2019; Wikström, 2020). Thus, criminal violence is the unlawful use of force, either intentional, accidental, reckless, or negligent, with or without intent, resulting in the injury or death of a victim.

Convicted offender. A person who commits an offence may be convicted under Namibian law (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1977, p.129). In this study, a convicted offender refers to a person who has been found guilty of a specific crime and has been sentenced and placed in legal

custody under the custodianship of the NCS. The law stresses culpability, which refers to responsibility. Thus, the person is held criminally responsible for unlawfully harming or causing the death of someone else, even if it may have been unintended. Murder means the act was intentional, and the law also makes provision for “attempted murder” when there was deliberate harm to cause death, but it was unsuccessful (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1977, p.129).

Case Management Officer (CMO). A CMO is a correctional officer responsible for doing all the casework for the offenders in a specific unit (NCS, 2016, p. 7). In this study, the CMO was responsible for the casework of the offenders in the maximum-security unit of the Windhoek CF.

Offender Risk Management Correctional Strategy (ORMCS). The NCS manages inmates through the ORMCS, which is built on the assumption that each offender is unique and should receive tailor-made intervention during rehabilitation. The uniqueness is reflected in terms of what factors may have precipitated their offending, the 'risk' they may present for future offending, the 'needs' that they may have and in terms of their motivation to address those needs and work towards changing their lifestyles (Chiremba, 2017; Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016). These differences are assessed and documented to enable the correctional services to manage inmates better and be more focused in their rehabilitative and reintegration efforts.

The following definitions have been taken from the NCS unit management and correctional strategy standard operating practices that came into operation in August 2016 (NCS, 2016). I reviewed the documents below as part of the participants' correctional case management files for collateral information.

Unit management. Unit management's main objective is placing offenders in the correct unit based on their level of risk and needs. This ensures they receive appropriate rehabilitation and allows their safe transition and reintegration into the community after release (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016). Other objectives include ensuring that inmates are assessed and monitored on an ongoing basis and managed according to their risk and needs profiles in a manner that capitalises on active and dynamic security (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016).

Correctional Case Management file. Each inmate has a Correctional Case Management file that includes all the relevant information about that inmate. It contains records from the initial Reception and Assessment phase of the offender to where they are currently in the phases of the ORMCS (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016). It includes the Assessment of Offender Risks Factors and Inventory of Offender Reintegration Concerns profile, the offender's Correctional Treatment

plan, Progress reports outlining how well the objectives for the treatment plan are being met and supporting documents for any reclassification of the offender that might have taken place (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016). I reviewed the participants' Correctional Case Management files for collateral information.

Assessment of Offender Risk Factors and Inventory of Offender Needs Reintegration Concerns (RNR Assessment). This assessment is completed as soon as the offender is received at the Reception and Assessment Unit. It assesses the offender's most significant needs, concerns and risk factors associated with their offending and indicates the priority factors to be addressed during rehabilitation (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016).

Case Notes. These are records kept by correctional officers documenting significant incidences and interactions with inmates (NCS, 2016). Case Notes provide positive and negative accounts of each inmate's overall behaviour. All correctional officers who encounter the inmates should report Case Notes. Thus, Case Notes give a good indication of the offender's conduct, relationships, and mannerisms.

Criminal Profile Report. This report documents the nature of the inmate's offences, internal and external factors that may have contributed to their offences, criminal history, patterns of offending, and comprehensive psychosocial history (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016).

Offender Correctional Treatment Plan. This is an individualised, detailed, and structured plan of how the inmate intends to achieve their goals to address their needs identified during the initial assessment. It is used by the correctional staff together with the inmate. The Correctional Treatment Plan indicates how they will take action and use the available rehabilitation programmes, educational programmes, and other services available to their benefit, and it allows progress assessment (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016).

Maximum-security unit. This is one of four security levels that offenders can be classified into. The level of security in the unit dictates the privileges the inmate has access to, the level of control over their movements and the overall restrictive measures imposed. The maximum-security unit enforces the highest level of security in NCS facilities. Most restrictive measures are in place in this unit, and more control over movement with the least privileges compared to the medium, low-medium, and minimum units (Martin, 2020a; NCS, 2016).

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis comprises six chapters, structured as follows:

Chapter One: Orientation to the Study

In this chapter, I provide the introduction, sketch the local context, and outline the problem statement. I provide a thorough background and present the study's aim, objectives, questions, rationale, and significance. I also provide the operational definitions and scope of the research and clarify the key concepts. The thesis structure and the chapter's summary conclude Chapter One.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter, I deliberate on violent behaviour and crime and the perpetrators of violent crime. I discuss the concepts of aggression and violence and explore perspectives on the causes and contributing factors to aggression and violence. Furthermore, I review literature discussing antisocial behaviour (ASB) and violent crimes such as murder and assault, including GBV. I also explore the literature on personalities related to violent crime. Finally, I conclude the chapter with a brief look at how violent crime impacts society and an overview of the suggested interventions.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

In Chapter Three, I outline the theoretical framework that guided this research. The bioecological systems theory of human development was developed as the ecology of human development by developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner. The theory evolved into the bioecological model of human development, widely applied to conceptualise behaviour. I elaborate on the origins and evolution of the bioecological model and how it is applied to conceptualising criminal behaviour and conclude the chapter with a summary.

Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology

In Chapter Four, I describe the research methods, outline the research design, and discuss the study participants and procedures I followed. I also detail the data collection and analysis process and explain the challenges I encountered during the research process. I discuss the ethical considerations and conclude the chapter with a summary.

Chapter Five: Findings

In this chapter, I present the study's findings after restating the research design, methods, purpose, aim, and questions. I provide background information on the participants. I use quotes

from interviews and reviewed documents to support the results and conclude Chapter Five with a summary.

Chapter Six: Discussion and Recommendations

In Chapter Six, I deliberate the findings of this qualitative study and the implications thereof. I discuss the results and their importance in the context of literature. I also state the study's limitations, recommend future studies, and conclude the chapter with a summary.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the background of the research problem, the statement of the research problem, the aim of the study, the research objectives, and the research questions. I also addressed the study's significance, provided the study's scope, and defined the essential terms. At the end of this chapter, I outlined the subsequent chapters of the thesis and have concluded here with a summary of the chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I outline an overall perspective on literature, deliberating on violent behaviour and crime, to grasp the phenomenon of violent crime, particularly the perpetrators.

Overview of the Chapter

I initiate this review by defining the concepts of aggression and violence and exploring perspectives on the causes and contributing factors to aggressive and violent behaviours. I also discuss the genetic, psychological, social, and environmental factors contributing to aggressive and violent behaviour.

I will further review the literature on the trajectory of ASB, mainly the age-crime curve and violent crime. After that, the review focuses on violent crimes, including murder and GBV. This was essential as I conducted this study with inmates who have been convicted of committing violent crimes, most of whom have been convicted of killing their girlfriends. I also review the literature on personality and violent crime. Finally, I conclude the chapter with a brief look at how violent crime impacts society and an overview of the suggested interventions. Figure 2.1 provides an overview of the outline of this chapter.

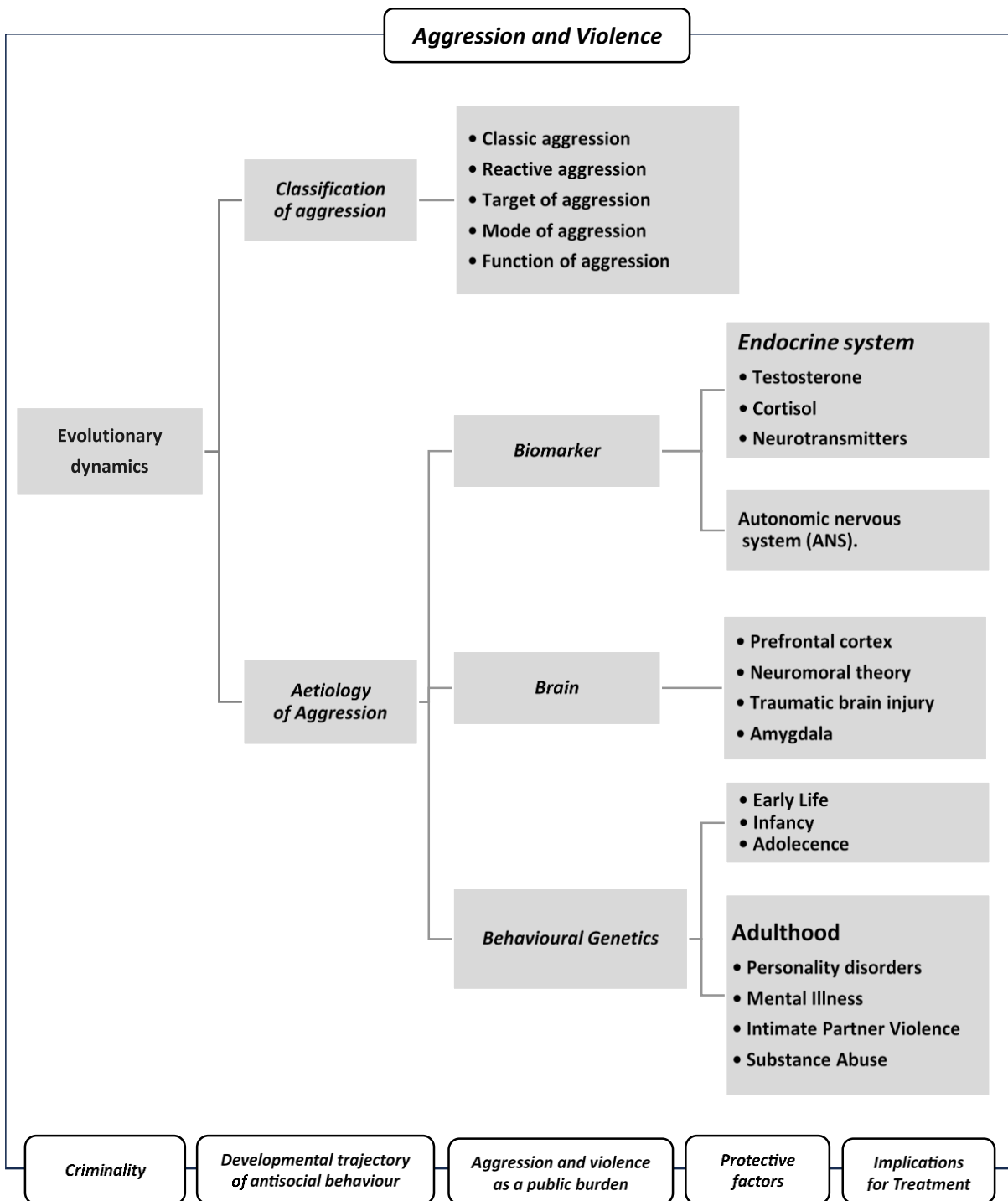


Figure 2.1
Chapter outline

Evolutionary Dynamics of Aggression and Violence

Aggressive behaviour perpetrated by one human upon another is distressing and frequently shocking, yet it remains an age-old phenomenon that persists in nearly every society (Asherson & Cormand, 2016; Daly, 2018; Wrangham, 2018). Aggression is an adaptive behaviour essential in mating, protection, and survival of the fittest (Veroude et al., 2016; Zhang-James et al., 2019). Human aggression shares common genetic pathways with animals. These remain strong in animals but have been moderated in humans through socialisation. Minor forms of aggression can be adaptive for socialisation and control, but excessive, inappropriate aggression causes societal harm (Gómez et al., 2016; Veroude et al., 2016; Zhang-James et al., 2019). For example, a persuasive salesperson or assertiveness may be acceptable behaviour described as aggressive. However, more hostile, verbal, or overt acts such as name-calling and shoving are maladaptive, and violent forms of aggression such as punching, kicking, and stabbing are more vicious, maladaptive, and thus unacceptable.

Padurariu et al. (2016) argued that human aggression has an innate and acquired feature and can be differentiated based on a psycho-sociological or an ethological perspective. From a psycho-sociological perspective, aggressive behaviour is a physical expression of impulses intended to cause moral or psychological harm. Survival of an animal species often depends on the expression of aggression through overt acts such as fighting, and this applied to primitive human societies. Both animals and humans also employ non-violent displays of aggression, like intimidating stances and sounds. In modern society, aggression often manifests less overtly through emotional and verbal aggression. Like animals, humans draw from a repertoire of behaviours to express aggression. However, unlike animals, they possess the capacity to redirect aggressive energy into other activities such as work and sports (J. R. Blair, 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016; Warburton & Anderson, 2015).

Ethologically, aggression is an innate characteristic of all animals, including humans, that originates in the primitive structures of the central nervous system (CNS) and is part of the fight or flight response (J. R. Blair, 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016; Warburton & Anderson, 2015). While aggression can sometimes offer a quick solution, it often leads to more problems, social maladjustment, and crime when expressed inappropriately. (Asherson & Cormand, 2016; R. J. R. Blair, 2018; Veroude et al., 2016). Nonetheless, people repeatedly behave aggressively. Why is this the case? Researchers study biological, psychological, environmental, and social influences on aggressive human behaviour to find answers to such questions. Next, I review literature that

defines aggression and violence. After that, I review the complexity of influences contributing to human aggressive and violent behaviour.

Definition of aggression

Aggressive behaviour can be hostile, harmful, and destructive, be reactive under provocation, or occur without provocation (Rosell & Siever, 2015). Aggression is a deliberate action with immediate intent to inflict either material, moral, psychological and or physical harm on another individual (R. J. R. Blair, 2016; Allen & Anderson, 2017a,b; Asherson & Cormand, 2016; Mancke et al., 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016). A combination of diverse actions constitutes aggressive behaviour, and not all actions causing injury are aggressive. For behaviour to be considered aggressive, the actor must intend to harm the target and the target must be motivated to avoid harm, actual harm is not required (Allen & Anderson, 2017a,b; Asherson & Cormand, 2016; Benjamin, 2016; Padurariu et al., 2016; Warburton & Anderson, 2015).

According to Hamby (2017), accidental harm without intention and harm that is an incidental by-product of helpful actions do not constitute aggression. For example, pain resulting from an accidental hot coffee spill or pain following a medical procedure like surgery does not meet the criteria for aggression. In these cases, no deliberate harm is intended, and the person undergoing the medical procedure does not aim to avoid injury.

While reviewing definitions of aggression, it became apparent that most literature discussing aggression repeatedly mentions violence. A clear understanding of both aggression and violence became necessary. Hence, I define violence and explain the distinction and relationship between aggression and violence.

Aggression and violence

According to Pinna and Manchia (2017), aggressive and violent behaviour are heterogeneous in manifestation and origin. Violence is a form of forceful physical assault causing injury to another person. Aggression is a broader construct, including physical, verbal, psychological, and other means of causing harm, not always involving physical harm (Allen & Anderson, 2017b; J. R. Blair, 2018; Warburton & Anderson, 2015). The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines violence as “The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2002, 2014). Thus, violence is excessive aggression with

extreme harm as its ultimate goal (Allen & Anderson, 2017b; Warburton & Anderson, 2015). Minor acts such as name-calling and pushing are at the minor end of the aggression continuum, and severe actions such as assault GBH and murder are at the extreme end. All violence is aggression, but not all aggressive acts are violent (Allen & Anderson, 2017a,b; Liu et al., 2013). As an illustration, when a toddler hits and bites her sibling, it constitutes an aggressive action but not violence. Conversely, when someone tries to assault another person physically, it qualifies as an aggressive and violent act, irrespective of whether the attempt leads to physical injury.

Crime is an integral part of human society, involving unlawful actions that violate legal sanctions and may lead to criminal proceedings punishable by law (Brown et al., 2015; Isiaka & Okaphor, 2018; Kassem et al., 2019; Wikström, 2020). Criminal violence includes homicide, criminal homicide, assault, robbery, rape, and sexual assault. Homicide refers to causing the death of a person, whether in self-defence or not. It includes intentional killing called murder and manslaughter, which is unlawful killing under provocation, without intention, or through negligence. Homicide may thus result from accidental, reckless, or negligent acts, even without the intent to harm (Crosby, 2020; Hamby, 2017; Sehat, 2021). For a more uniform definition, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) developed the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes, which defines intentional homicide as "unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury" (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2015, p. 17).

Under Namibian law, a person who commits homicide may be charged with "murder", either with intent or without intent (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1977). A person is said to intend to commit a crime when they act to bring about a specific result or know that their action will likely lead to that result. "It shall be sufficient, in a charge of murder, to allege that the accused unlawfully and intentionally killed the deceased, and it shall be sufficient, in a charge of culpable homicide, to allege that the accused unlawfully killed the deceased" (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1977, p. 61). Thus, culpable means the person is responsible, even if it may have been unintended. In contrast, murder means the act was intentional. Homicide has a devastating ripple effect on the loved ones of the victims and communities and impacts society, state institutions, and the economy (UNODC, 2019). The law also makes provision for a charge of "attempted murder" when there was an intention and an effort made but it was unsuccessful.

Similarly, aggressive acts and violence that do not lead to death are charged depending on the degree of violence or severity. Assault is the unlawful and intentional act of causing

another person to believe they will suffer imminent physical harm. This can range from minor to severe forms of assault, including assault GBH (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1977). Although aggression and violence are defined widely, finding a precise and uniform definition is challenging. As mentioned earlier, aggression serves various purposes, and the causes of aggressive and violent behaviour are multifaceted, with biological, environmental, and social influences (Bartels et al., 2018; Hagenbeek et al., 2016; Wrangham, 2018). Therefore, ascribing human aggression's origins to one factor or a single process is impossible. Aggression is categorised into types that enable scholars to use uniform classifications of aggression. This classification allows a better grasp of aggression and inevitably sheds more light on violence. I discuss several of these classifications in the subsequent section.

Classification of aggression

Classic aggression. Classic aggression, also referred to as traditional aggression is directed at external objects in the environment (Padurariu et al., 2016). It may include actions such as breaking a car's windows or damaging furniture out of anger.

Autolytic aggression. Autolytic aggression is directed against other people or the aggressor themselves. Autolytic aggression against another individual is called hetero aggression. The milder variant is hostility, and the extreme is murder (Padurariu et al., 2016). The type of aggression expressed, particularly ongoing, may indicate the individual's personality. Aggression directed at oneself may display depressive tendencies. In contrast, planned hetero aggression, such as a planned armed robbery or attack on someone perceived as an adversary, may indicate the presence of psychopathic traits. Psychopathic traits may include interpersonal and emotional callousness, lack of empathy, egocentricity and manipulateness, cognitive and behavioural disinhibition, emotional resilience and fearlessness, exaggerated anger and aggression (Blair et al., 2015; Miller & Lynam, 2015). Unplanned hetero aggression may be impulsive reactions to triggers, such as a reaction to a physical assault or verbal attack (Padurariu, 2016).

Aggression is further classified into two main categories based on the aims of aggression (Wrangham, 2018). These are reactive aggression, also referred to as hostile or impulsive aggression, and proactive aggression, also referred to as instrumental or premeditated aggression (Amad et al., 2020; R. Blair, 2016; Pinna & Manchia; 2017; Swogger et al., 2015; Wrangham, 2018). The terms reactive and proactive are used for consistency throughout this paper.

Reactive aggression. Reactive aggression occurs in an environment of high emotionality, such as anger, most often as a reaction to provocation (Swogger et al., 2015). Thus, reactive

aggression is essentially an impulsive, thoughtless, immediate response to an incredible frustration or event perceived as threatening (J. R. Blair, 2018; Dickson et al., 2015; Padurariu, 2016; Swogger et al., 2015; Wrangham, 2018).

Proactive aggression. Proactive aggression is relatively non-emotional; it is calculated, goal-directed, uses tools and has a reward as ultimate gain (J. R. Blair, 2018; Dickson et al., 2015; Padurariu, 2016; Swogger et al., 2015; Wrangham, 2018). Aggressors only act once they perceive the cost of their action is lower than the reward for their effort (Wrangham, 2018).

In their extensive research on aggression, Anderson and Bushman (2002) differentiate between proximate and ultimate motives or goals of proactive aggression. These types are also recognised by other researchers (Allen & Anderson, 2017b; Chester & DeWall, 2017; Y. Wang et al., 2020). The intention to harm, a feature of all aggressive behaviour, is an immediate goal. The ultimate goal refers to whether the aggressive act has an intended secondary gain or only primary harm-based goals. There are two distinct types of aggression at the level of the ultimate goal. Anderson and Bushman (2002) best illustrated this using the following example. Both robbery and physical assault are acts of aggression because both include an intention to harm the victim at a comparable level. However, they typically differ in ultimate goals. Robbery primarily serves a profit-based goal, while assault serves a harm-based goal. Some acts of aggression encompass mixed motives. Mixed motives are best illustrated by a person who robs and assaults someone during a robbery. Thus, the reasons are to gain profit and simultaneously harm the victim (Allen & Anderson, 2017a,b; Anderson & Bushman, 2002).

This concept of mixed motives helps understand the dynamics of various antisocial offences, including bullying, domestic violence, criminality, and homicide (Allen & Anderson, 2017a, 2017b; Wang et al., 2020; Wrangham, 2018). Understanding the goals and motives of aggression helps predict the recidivism of aggressors. It also helps anticipate which aggressor is more or less likely to respond to pharmacological interventions, and which aggressors are less likely to experience a decline in aggressiveness during adulthood (Wrangham, 2018). For example, an aggressor who repeatedly engages in reactive aggression may have problems regulating emotions and lose control. This person may respond to pharmacological treatment, while without intervention, they are likely to re-offend.

Padurariu (2016) postulates that how aggression is manifested differs from individual to individual and is affected by gender, age, and cultural aspects, as well as by biological and genetic differences, personality, and self-esteem. Evidence suggests that people with low self-esteem

may be more prone to exhibit reactive aggression due to anger and hostility. Those with high levels of narcissism are more likely to act with deliberate, proactive aggression (Amad et al., 2020). Hagenbeek et al. (2016) agree that human aggression is multi-faceted, encompasses a wide range of behaviours, occurs in multiple contexts, and is learned through modelling and reinforcement (Amad et al., 2020; Dickson et al., 2015; Padurariu, 2016). The complexity in the manifestation of aggression leads to further classification based on target, mode, and function of aggression (Frey & Higheagle Strong, 2018; Hagenbeek, 2016).

The target of aggression. A distinction is made between direct and indirect aggression. Direct aggression involves a direct confrontation, either physical or verbal, between an aggressor and a target. A lack of direct confrontation characterises indirect aggression (Frey & Strong, 2017; Hagenbeek, 2016). An example of direct aggression is a person physically attacking another individual. Indirect aggression encompasses threats of attack and manipulation between two parties.

Mode of aggression. Both direct and indirect aggression are further distinguished by how it is carried out, either physical, verbal, or nonverbal behaviour (Allen & Anderson, 2017b; Ehrenreich et al., 2014; Hagenbeek, 2016). Manipulation and threats could be in the form of verbal or non-verbal modes.

The function of aggression. Two parts, either “social-cognitive” or “emotional” subtypes, are proposed by Ramirez and Andreu (2006). Recently, other researchers have supported the evidence-based conceptualisation of the importance of social cognitive mechanisms in aggressive behaviour, particularly during the developmental stage of children (Contreras & Cano, 2016; Girard et al., 2019). The social cognitive subtype is goal-oriented and is associated with a positive evaluation of aggression. It mainly encompasses proactive forms of aggression, including manipulation and habitual lying. The emotional subtype contains primarily reactive forms of aggression, including out-of-control behaviours like anger outbursts (Girard et al., 2019; Ramirez & Andreu, 2006). This is essential in understanding the development of aggression.

Experiences of traumatic events including abuse and neglect within one's primary home have been linked to the development of a specific cognitive style, specifically a tendency to make hostile attributions, as well as deficits in certain aspects of social problem-solving skills (Contreras & del Carmen Cano, 2016; Girard et al., 2019).

Research suggests that exposure to trauma increases the risk of engaging in criminal behaviour. Young people exposed to violence may develop a hostile perception of society, which can lead to aggressive behaviours and difficulty in social adaptation. (Contreras & del Carmen Cano, 2016; McCoy, 2013). Individuals with a history of adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction, are more likely to exhibit delinquent behaviours, and trauma manifests in diverse forms, including substance abuse and aggression (Anda et al., 2006). The treatment of aggressive behaviour may benefit from targeting behavioural, social, social-cognitive, emotional, and physiological underpinnings separately, and it is essential to provide support and education for both youth and parents (Contreras & del Carmen Cano, 2016; Girard et al., 2019; Ramirez & Andreu, 2006).

Based on the definitions, classifications and examples provided in the preceding sections of this chapter, aggression is innate to all animals, including humans. Aggression is a component of all violent behaviour, is complex, influenced by multiple factors, and manifests differently from individual to individual. Understanding what drives people to aggression and why some people are more aggressive than others require examining the aetiology of such behaviour. Hence, in the subsequent sections of this chapter, I focus on these aetiological explanations. I explore research focussing on the physiological, genetic, and environmental factors that influence the origin and manifestation of aggression.

Aetiology of aggression

Earliest experiments. Milgram (1963) and Haney et al. (1973) (as cited in Tuvblad & Baker, 2011) deduced that most individuals could be persuaded to inflict pain on others if authority commands it and personal responsibility is removed. They reported that environmental factors, as well as social situations, affect aggressive behaviour. However, although most individuals are capable of aggressive and violent acts, the degree of aggression and pain they are willing to inflict differs. This connotes that, like other social behaviour, human aggression is subject to varying predisposing personal factors and precipitating situational factors (Huesmann, 2018; Tuvblad & Baker, 2011; Vassos et al., 2014). It is multidimensional, impacted by a combination of biological, genetic, environmental, and psychological factors (Dickson et al., 2015; Hagenbeek et al., 2016; Huesmann, 2018; Liu et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016; Swogger et al., 2015; Vassos et al., 2014).

Diverse aetiologies. Scholars agree is that there are diverse aetiologies for various types of aggression. Genetic and environmental factors are essential in both subtypes of aggression;

however, reactive aggression may be environmentally influenced, while proactive aggression may be more genetically influenced (Padurariu, 2016; Paquin et al., 2017; Wrangham, 2018). For example, a woman may strike a passer-by whom she thinks wants to assault her. She acts aggressively based on the perceived threat, regardless of whether the danger is real. This is an environmentally influenced aggressive reaction to a stimulus. Another person may carry out a planned robbery for material gain and assault the victim, causing physical injury. This proactive, aggressive act does not require an environmental stimulus and may be influenced by the aggressor's temperament and personality traits. Furthermore, if proactive aggression is repeated, it may indicate antisocial behaviour traits and criminality. Proactive aggression is also cultivated through modelling and reinforcement, while reactive aggression is more likely as a result of adverse experiences, abuse, and dysfunctional family life (Vitaro & Brendgen, 2012).

Aggressive behaviour, including antisocial and criminal behaviour, results from complex, reciprocally influential interactions between an individual's biology, psychology, and social environment (Ling et al., 2019; Raine, 2019a). Understanding the biological factors that underpin behaviour, the reciprocally influential nature of these factors, and their contribution to aggression is required to understand perpetrators of violence. This knowledge may inform policy and treatment options (Ling et al., 2019), inform rehabilitation strategies for offenders, and early intervention strategies for juvenile offenders. Below, I expound on the aetiology of aggressive behaviour, including biological, genetic, and environmental influences. According to Ling et al. (2019), three main biological explanations of antisocial and criminal behaviour exist, psychophysiology, the brain, and genetics.

Aetiology: Psychophysiology: Biomarkers

Psychophysiology, concerned with the relationship between mental and physiological processes, refers to arousal levels within an individual. A biomarker measures a person's biological state quantifiably, accurately, and in a standardised manner; thus, objectively indicating disease onset (Jurjako et al., 2019). Biomarkers, including gene expression, blood and pulse pressure, and brain activation patterns, predict potential risks without evidence of active illness or perceived symptoms and can serve as early warning signs of disease (Jurjako et al., 2019). For example, biomarkers may indicate high cholesterol and a high risk for heart disease while the patient has no symptoms.

Psychophysiology has become an essential biological explanation for antisocial and criminal behaviour and biomarkers may thus be used to indicate potential antisocial behaviour (Ling et al., 2019). There is consensus that most of the world's incarcerated offender population

comprises offenders who fit the diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) (Johnson, 2019; Jurjako et al., 2019; Newbury-Helps et al., 2017). Antisocial tendencies, such as lack of inhibition, empathy and remorse, extreme violence, and aggressive behaviour thus characterise their behaviour (Johnson, 2019; Jurjako et al., 2019; Newbury-Helps et al., 2017). The current classification of antisocial individuals relies on behavioural tendencies, failing to capture the diversity of antisocial populations beyond behaviour. Jurjako et al. (2019) suggest that a biomarker-informed classification might capture the individuals' symptomology more comprehensively and better inform treatment options for individuals with ASPD.

However, the biomarker-informed diagnosis presents some concerns, and it is still in its early stages of development (Coppola, 2018; Jurjako et al., 2019). The potential issues include the concern of medicalisation of deviant behaviour, stigmatisation, and the negative self-image that might stem from using such classifications (Jurjako et al., 2019). Nevertheless, biomarkers for antisocial and criminal behaviour have been identified because, although no definitive (neuro)biological explanation for criminal behaviour exists, neurocriminologists suggest that specific forms of neurobiological dysfunction increase the propensity for offending behaviour (Coppola, 2018).

Next, I discuss the autonomic nervous system and the endocrine system, which are relevant antisocial and criminal behaviour biomarkers.

Autonomic nervous system (ANS). The ANS acts unconsciously, linked to the fight or flight response and regulates physiological functions, including the heart rate, skin conductance, respiratory rate, and sexual arousal (Burley & van Goozen, 2020; van Goozen et al., 2021). It helps regulate stress, prepare the body for fight or flight, and restore physiological responses during resting periods. Being able to control fight or flight impacts behaviour (Fanti et al., 2019; Murray-Close et al., 2017; Todd & Machado, 2019). Studies have reported that a low resting heart rate in adolescence may be associated with an increased risk for criminality in adulthood (Fanti et al., 2019; van Goozen et al., 2021). Blunted autonomic nervous system functioning has been associated with increased antisocial behaviour, including violence (Choy et al., 2015; Gao et al., 2010; Ling, 2020; Oldenhof et al., 2019; Portnoy & Farrington, 2015).

The literature proposes the "fearlessness hypothesis", the "sensation-seeking hypothesis", and the "somatic marker hypothesis". According to Ling et al. (2019), the "fearlessness hypothesis" suggests that antisocial individuals are not deterred from criminal behaviour due to their blunted autonomic functioning. They do not experience appropriate

physiological responses to risky or stressful situations or potentially aversive consequences (Raine, 2015). They may not have accurate cognitive or behavioural responses to events, including conflict as they may not pick up on emotions and cannot feel certain emotions such as empathy. The “sensation-seeking hypothesis” suggests that blunted autonomic functioning may lead to blunted psychophysiology. Therefore, antisocial individuals may use ASB to raise their arousal levels (Ling et al., 2019; Raine et al., 2014).

According to the “somatic marker hypothesis,” an individual may have somatic aphasia (false identification and recognition of bodily states) and blunted autonomic functioning (inability to connect somatic states to emotional states like anxiety or fear) resulting in impaired emotional intelligence (Gao et al., 2012; Ling et al., 2018; 2019). Impaired emotional intelligence may impact decision-making and lead to poor decisions, risky behaviour, and subsequently increase psychopathic traits (Gao et al., 2012; Ling et al., 2018). Oldenhof et al. (2019) reported psychophysiological abnormalities indicative of emotion regulation problems in a group of adolescents with conduct disorder (CD).

In addition to investigating the role of the ANS in the aetiology of aggression and criminality, the literature highlights that studies at the biochemical level are vital. Thus, I highlight the endocrine system, which produces hormones implicated as biomarkers for aggression, violence, and antisocial behaviour. I discuss testosterone, cortisol, several neurotransmitters, the association of inflammation markers, and lipids with aggressive behaviour. I continue to discuss the brain, genetics, and its influence on aggression, violence, and antisocial behaviour.

Endocrine system. The endocrine system consists of glands that produce hormones that regulate cell and organ activity. It communicates between and within neuroendocrine and immune systems to regulate behaviour and contribute to temperament (Trifu et al., 2020; Trofimova et al., 2022). Together, the central nervous system (CNS) and the endocrine system are responsible for homeostasis and responsivity to stimuli. The endocrine system enables appropriate responses to perceived threatening stimuli and rewarding stimuli. The hormones regulate the body's growth, metabolism, sexual development, and function. Endocrine hormones include thyroid hormones, sex hormones, and corticosteroids. The end products of those two circuits, cortisol and testosterone, are linked to aggressive behaviour (Trifu et al., 2020; Trofimova et al., 2022).

There are additional hormones that contribute to aggressive behaviour, and I discuss the role of testosterone, cortisol, and neurotransmitters in the aetiology of aggression, violence and antisocial behaviour.

Testosterone. The sex hormone testosterone is implicated in the aetiology of aggressive behaviour in several studies (Carré et al., 2019; Carré & Archer, 2018; Geniole et al., 2019; M. Horn et al., 2014; Padurariu et al., 2016). High testosterone levels are linked to increased brain activation, specifically in the amygdala, triggering aggressivity (Padurariu et al., 2016). There is evidence that testosterone levels are higher in people with aggressive behaviour, as in the case of convicts who have committed violent crimes (M. Horn et al., 2014), aggressive adolescents (Carré et al., 2013) and individuals who are in sports teams with an aggressive component (Denson et al., 2018; R. I. Wood & Stanton, 2012).

Horn et al. (2014) compared incarcerated offenders in terms of clinical features and biomarkers, including cortisol, testosterone, and progesterone levels. Testosterone was indicated as a factor in aggression and antisocial behaviour through decreased or elevated levels. However, no one-to-one relation between higher testosterone levels and aggression was established. Thus, they concluded that testosterone might be more closely related to dominant behaviour than aggressiveness. Padurariu et al. (2016) reported an association between fluctuating levels of impulsivity and imbalances between testosterone and serotonin and testosterone and cortisol. Thus, testosterone also affects behaviour by influencing neurotransmitters that impact control and emotional self-regulating functions (Carré et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016).

Cortisol. Cortisol is the primary hormonal output of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, which is the body's stress response system (Bunea et al., 2017; Denson et al., 2013). Cortisol regulates various bodily processes such as metabolism, immune response, blood sugar levels and blood pressure, and reduces inflammation. It can be a biomarker for multiple ailments, including stress, inflammation, and aggression. Das et al. (2018) examined cortisol functioning and its association with aggression and psychosis by measuring morning cortisol, afternoon cortisol, and their variability. They found evidence of lower morning cortisol, afternoon cortisol, and cortisol variability among the aggressive group vs the non-aggressive group. This was also evident among the psychotic versus non-psychotic groups (Das et al., 2018). Thus, cortisol impacts aggression, particularly, low cortisol levels are linked to high total aggression measures, including reactive and proactive aggression (Das et al., 2018; Denson et al., 2013; Hagenbeek et al., 2016; Pascual-Sagastizabal et al., 2019).

Neurotransmitters. An increase or decrease in neurotransmitters such as serotonin, dopamine, glutamate, and norepinephrine are implicated in the manifestation of aggressive behaviour (Coccaro et al., 2015; Huber et al., 2022; Padurariu et al., 2016; Pinna, 2018; Reddy et al., 2018). According to Coccaro et al. (2015), serotonin is the most extensively studied neurotransmitter concerning impulsive aggression. Serotonin modulates activity in prefrontal cortex (PFC) areas, it regulates emotional responses, stabilises mood, and helps with sleep and feelings of well-being. Lowering serotonin levels in the brain can trigger aggressive behaviour (Glenn & Raine, 2014; Padurariu et al., 2016; Reddy et al., 2018). The “low serotonin syndrome” or “serotonin deficiency syndrome” suggests that people with low serotonin have an “impulsive personality”, and the “irritable aggression model” indicates that high serotonin results in elevated irritability and hypervigilance (Hemmings et al., 2018).

Unique risk factors have been found to be associated with proactive and reactive aggression, and differences in serotonergic functioning may partially underlie the contrast between the two (Hemmings et al., 2018; Qadeer et al., 2021; van de Giessen et al., 2014). Avoidance of aversive stimuli or undesirable situations may be impaired if serotonin is low, and lead to impulsive, aggressive, and violent behaviour and responses (Hemmings et al., 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016). Thus, low serotonin levels might result in a decreased affective experience of the negative consequences of punishment and a lack of appreciation for the relevance of punishment for a specific type of behaviour (Hemmings et al., 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016; van de Giessen, 2014). This might result in repeated aggressive and antisocial behaviour or repeat offending.

Other neurotransmitters, including noradrenaline, dopamine, and glutamate, are also linked to irritability, impulsivity, aggression, and violent behaviour (Huber et al., 2022; Willner, 2015). (Huber et al., 2022; Padurariu et al., 2016; Reddy et al., 2018). Reddy et al. (2018) also hypothesised that individuals with personality disorders display impaired serotonergic functioning. Thus, treating impulsive aggressive behaviours with serotonergic agents via drug therapy may be a good strategy (Huber et al., 2022; Padurariu et al., 2016; Reddy et al., 2018).

In the above section, I discussed empirical evidence of the impact of several neurotransmitters and hormones, including testosterone and cortisol, on aggression, violence, and antisocial behaviour. In the subsequent section, I continue discussing literature linking the brain, particularly the PFC and the amygdala, in the aetiology of aggression. The impact of traumatic brain injury (TBI) on the onset, development, and manifestation of aggression is

discussed. I also consider the genetic factors that play a role in aggressive behaviour and use empirical research findings on twin studies to understand the heritability of aggression.

Aetiology: Brain

Research findings substantiate specific structural and functional alterations in the brains of individuals displaying aggressive, violent, antisocial, psychopathic, or criminal behaviour. Abnormal clinical findings on neurological examinations, electroencephalogram (EEG) studies, and brain imaging scans have been evidenced (Choy et al., 2018; Ling et al., 2019; Ling & Raine, 2018; Liu et al., 2014). Studies further prove aggressive individuals may have reduced brain volumes, compromised functioning, and connectivity in vital brain areas (Ling et al., 2019). Brain regions affected are related to executive functions (Meijers et al., 2017; Pardini et al., 2014), emotion regulation (Denson et al., 2013; Pardini et al., 2014), decision-making (Coutlee & Huettel, 2012; Li & Liu, 2013; Montoya et al., 2011), morality (Li et al., 2013) and reward regions (Glenn & Yang, 2012; Korponay et al., 2017).

According to Padurariu et al. (2016), the neurobiological basis of aggressive behaviour involves a complex system of brain activity that translates emotion (motivation) into behaviour (action). The CNS regulates aggression's emotional and behavioural components. Various psychosocial and environmental factors such as abuse, frustration, and confrontation stimulate specific brain regions that process emotional and cognitive stimuli primarily associated with excitement and impulsivity. Brain regions essential in triggering aggressiveness, impulsiveness, and violence are represented by the amygdala, hypothalamus, limbic system, prefrontal cortex, and endocrine system (Batrinos, 2012; Möller-Leimkühler, 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016).

In the following section, I examine the PFC and the amygdala more closely. These two brain regions are considered vital in grasping the functioning of an aggressive individual's brain compared to that of a non-aggressive individual.

The prefrontal cortex (PFC). The PFC, located in the anterior region of the brain, is primarily associated with mediating emotional processes such as decision-making, attention, emotion regulation, impulse control, moral reasoning, and social understanding (Baker et al., 2013; Batrinos, 2012; Coppola, 2017; Q. Li et al., 2020; Lischinsky & Lin, 2020; Ott & Nieder, 2019). The PFC plays a central role in self-regulation, which refers to the individual's ability to exert cognitive control over thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. Compromised self-regulation may lead to emotional outbursts and adverse behavioural outcomes. Self-regulation has a role in

alcohol and substance abuse, aggression, violence, sexual offences, and other impulsive or risk-taking behaviours (Baker et al., 2013; Gillespie et al., 2018).

Larger PFC structures have been associated with better executive functioning and cognitive control (Friedman & Robbins, 2022; Yuan & Raz, 2014). Executive functioning refers to daily mental skills for self-control, working memory, and managing day-to-day tasks, and cognitive control is closely related to response inhibition. Dysfunction in cognitive control is implicated in psychiatric symptoms and disorders. Difficulties in executive functioning may lead to problems with focus, difficulty managing emotions, following directions, and daily coping (Friedman & Robbins, 2022; Yuan & Raz, 2014). Ling et al.'s (2019) review of studies found evidence of functional PFC impairment in antisocial and criminal individuals. A study by Darby et al. (2018) involved 17 patients who developed criminal behaviour following a brain lesion. The results revealed that although these patients' lesions were in different locations, they were all connected functionally to brain regions activated by moral decision-making. This led to the assumption that disruption of a neuromoral network is associated with criminality (Darby et al., 2018; Ling et al., 2019).

The neuromoral theory of antisocial behaviour. Research suggests that the appropriate integration of the amygdala and PFC underlies the development of morality (Herpers et al., 2014; Li et al., 2013; Ling et al., 2019). Hence, the neuromoral theory of antisocial behaviours argues that persons exhibiting antisocial, violent, and psychopathic behaviour may have deficiencies in several brain regions involved in moral decision-making including the prefrontal cortical regions and the amygdala (Glen & Raine, 2014; Herpers et al., 2014; Ling et al., 2019; Raine, 2019a).

Although common areas are affected and implicated in impaired moral reasoning, the resulting behaviour varies from individual to individual (Herpers et al., 2014; Ling et al., 2019; Raine, 2019a). Different manifestations of antisocial behaviour are characterised by differing degrees of neuromoral dysfunction (Raine, 2019a). Primary psychopathy, characterised by callousness, shallow affect and manipulation, is predominantly impacted by dysfunction in the neuromoral brain regions. Proactive aggression and life-course-persistent offending are also more affected by dysfunction in the neuromoral brain regions. In contrast, secondary psychopathy, associated with impulsivity and hostile behaviour, is less affected by dysfunction in the neuromoral brain regions. Reactive aggression and crimes involving drugs are also relatively less affected (Raine, 2018). Han et al. (2020) and Ling et al. (2019) concurred that the neuromoral

model is significant in understanding psychopathy and antisocial behaviour. However, they stressed the need for further investigation.

Amygdala. The amygdala responds to threats and provocation by stimulating the motor cortex, which initiates the motor component of the aggressive act, i.e. initiates behaviour (Gao et al., 2012; Gao et al., 2010; Padurariu et al., 2016). It processes all emotions, recognises facial and auditory expressions, particularly adverse emotions such as fear, and develops fear conditioning (Herpers et al., 2014; Ling et al., 2019). The amygdala is involved in stimulus-reinforcement learning, i.e. it allows individuals to tie their harmful actions to the anguish expressed by the victims. This connection causes aversive reinforcement of harmful behaviour. Under normal circumstances, this connection would deter the individual from taking action that will harm and cause distress to the victim (Herpers et al., 2014; Ling et al., 2019).

Amygdala abnormalities may result in a diminished ability to recognise distress or threats, disrupting the stimulus-reinforcement learning that discourages antisocial and criminal behaviour (Herpers et al., 2014; Pavlov et al., 2012; Portnoy, Gao, et al., 2013). The individual with impaired functioning will thus act, regardless of the distress and harm caused to another person. Pardini et al. (2014) conducted a longitudinal neuroimaging study with a group of men with a history of varying degrees of aggression and violence. The association between amygdala volume, levels of aggression and psychopathic features was analysed. The results indicated an evident association between overall amygdala size and aggressivity (Pardini et al., 2014). However, further research is required to investigate how amygdala abnormalities in specific regions might be a biomarker for severe and persistent aggression (Haller, 2017; Pardini et al., 2014).

Ling et al. (2019) also agreed that the amygdala is involved in criminal behaviour. However, there may be significant differences in offender amygdala presentations and offender subtypes. According to Ling et al. (2019), psychopathic antisocial individuals may exhibit amygdala hypoactivity, and non-psychopathic antisocial individuals may exhibit amygdala hyperactivity. Whereas psychopathic antisocial individuals may be more likely to exhibit cold, calculating forms of aggression, non-psychopathic antisocial individuals may be more likely to engage in impulsive, emotionally reactive aggression (Glenn & Raine, 2014).

Traumatic brain injury (TBI). Ray and Richardson (2017) define TBI as an impairment to the brain's normal function caused by damage resulting from an injury such as a blow to the head. Not all head injuries result in TBI, and TBI can vary from mild to severe. Neurological functions for self-regulation and social behaviour may be impaired due to a TBI and increase the

likelihood of developing a behavioural disorder (Williams et al., 2018). Evidence from brain scans reveals that impulsivity and aggressive behaviour may be linked to past TBI (Gao et al. 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016).

Individuals may develop a behavioural disorder in adulthood due to a TBI sustained in childhood. The behavioural problems may be more significant if the injury occurred during childhood (Li & Lui, 2012; Padurariu et al., 2016; Ray & Richardson, 2017). TBIs may damage brain regions responsible for managing emotions, impulse control, decision making, and social skills, potentially leading to many negative consequences such as poor self-control, increased aggression, impulsivity, and antisocial behaviour (Portnoy, Gao, et al., 2013; Ray & Richardson, 2017). (Ferguson et al., 2012). Furthermore, research reveals a link between TBIs obtained in childhood and grave behavioural problems, antisocial behaviour, and an increased risk of criminality in adolescence and young adulthood (Bellesi et al., 2019; Kennedy et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2015). Such behaviour includes violence, aggression, use of alcohol and tobacco, and abuse of alcohol and illicit substances. Factors such as the severity of the TBI and substance use influence the association (Bellesia et al., 2019; Kennedy et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2015).

A TBI could exacerbate potentially criminogenic pre-injury risk factors such as thrill-seeking and risk-taking. Socioeconomic deprivation and male sex are also linked to both TBI and incarceration. At-risk groups may have poor coping mechanisms and peer influences, which could compromise educational and employment capacity, further putting the individuals at risk (Parsonage, 2016; Williams et al., 2018). A TBI is a risk factor for earlier, more violent offending and is associated with lowered commitment to treatment, in-custody transgressions, and reconviction (Ray & Richardson, 2017; Williams et al., 2018). There is a high rate of TBIs and a confirmed relationship between TBIs and higher aggressive tendencies among the offender populations. TBIs are also linked to other negative outcomes, including substance abuse, impaired judgement, and impulse control, which are implicated as risk factors for criminal behaviour (Kuin et al., 2019; McKinlay & Albicini, 2016; Parsonage, 2016). However, studies fail to assess a causal relationship between offending or recidivism rates as a function of TBI and the specific cognitive processes related to TBI and offending remain unclear (Kuin et al., 2019; Ray & Richardson, 2017).

The association between TBI and crime is multifaceted (Kuin et al., 2019; McKinlay & Albicini, 2016; Parsonage, 2016; Ray & Richardson, 2017; Williams et al., 2018). Further studies are required to provide detailed information regarding the sequencing of events, TBI severity, the

influence of biopsychosocial variables co-occurring with the TBI and antisocial behaviour, and identifying TBI-specific injuries versus any other injury (Bellesia et al., 2019).

Aetiology: Behavioural genetics

Behavioural genetics examines personality's genetic and environmental origins and is vital in personality psychology and behaviour (Bleidorn et al., 2014). According to behavioural genetics, environmental factors interact with genetic factors, influencing personality stability and change. It indicates that aggressive and antisocial behaviour is primarily the result of shared genes (Palumbo et al., 2018; Wrangham, 2018). However, environmental influences contribute to a certain degree which varies from individual to individual (Palumbo et al., 2018; Wrangham, 2018). Below, I consider the interaction between biological factors and discuss the gene-environment interaction.

Interactions between biological factors. Recognising how biological systems work together to produce behaviour is essential (Ling et al., 2019). Impairment in brain regions that regulate emotions can lead to problems in emotional regulation and increase the risk of violent offending, though the specific dysfunction patterns remain unclear (Gillespie et al., 2019; Ling et al., 2019). Gillespie et al. (2018) reviewed the role of self-regulation in aggressive and antisocial behaviour, specifically looking at the neural mechanisms underlying self-regulatory processes. They explained that biological determinants of antisocial and criminal behaviour are inextricably linked through feedback loops of mutual influence. For example, the PFC and amygdala have reciprocal connections. The PFC monitors and regulates amygdala activity, and disruption in this PFC-amygdala connectivity is associated with increased antisocial and criminal behaviour (Gillespie et al., 2018; Ling et al., 2019).

Similarly, the brain and autonomic functioning have reciprocal connections that subsequently affect behavioural judgements and impact the development of morality (De Boer et al., 2015; Gouveia et al., 2019; Herpers et al., 2014; Moore et al., 2018). Garfinkel et al. (2016) indicate that emotion and cognition are reciprocally tied to bodily arousal. For example, initiating anger (conscious or subconscious) may set off neural and physiological resources. These changes influence cognitive processes, leading to potentially aggressive action (Garfinkel et al., 2016; Moore et al., 2018).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, studies have indicated that genetics impact aggressive behaviour (Palumbo et al., 2018; Wrangham, 2018), while others suggest that psychosocial environmental factors, such as poor parenting, have a strong association with

aggressive behaviour (Batrinos, 2012; Liu et al., 2013; Möller-Leimkühler, 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016). Further studies indicated that genetic, biological, and environmental factors jointly, albeit to varying degrees, contribute to aggression in the early developmental stages of individuals (Carroll et al., 2021; Gard et al., 2019; Qadeer et al., 2021; Veroude et al., 2016).

The assumption is thus that genes do not operate in isolation to develop antisocial and aggressive behaviour. Therefore, genetic influences on behaviour should not be studied in isolation. It is imperative to consider the environment in which genes are activated (Ling et al., 2019; Simmons et al., 2018). One environmental influence that interacts with genetic factors to influence behaviour is relational factors between the parent and the child (Ibabe & Bentler, 2016; Simmons et al., 2017). The parent-child interaction is prominent in reinforcing positive or negative behaviour. The following section considers gene-environment interactions and their role in developing aggression.

Gene-environment interaction. Leading the discussion, twin studies will illustrate the relevance of the environment in influencing the behaviour of individuals with shared genes.

Twin studies. Behavioural genetic studies of twins and adoptees provide insight into the biological underpinnings of criminal, antisocial, and psychopathic behaviour (Glenn & Raine, 2014; Pinna & Mancina, 2017; Porsch et al., 2016). Genetic and environmental factors play a role in maintaining aggressive behaviour from childhood to adolescence (Carroll et al., 2021; Porsch et al., 2016). Twin studies across all ages indicate that genetic factors are responsible for nearly half of the phenotypic differences linked to aggression, while the other half is due to environmental influences (Gard et al., 2019; Glen & Raine, 2014; Niv et al. 2013; Veroude et al., 2016). While twin and adoption studies indicate a hereditary component to aggressiveness, no single gene has been directly linked to aggressive behaviour. Instead, multiple genes influence neurotransmitter activities and structural brain components essential for aggression, explaining individual differences (Padurariu et al., 2016). Furthermore, heritability may also vary depending on the type of behaviour being studied and the individual's age (Gard et al., 2019). Accordingly, Gard et al. (2019) suggested more genome-wide association studies of antisocial behaviour with larger sample sizes.

ASB can be aggressive or nonaggressive (Carroll et al., 2021). Nonaggressive ASB is postulated to be more common in adolescence, short-lived, and influenced by genes and shared environment. Aggressive ASB shows more stability and has high heritability (Carroll et al., 2021; Niv et al., 2013). Inheriting the stable, heritable trait of ASB leaves a child more likely to develop

this behaviour once the environmental circumstances are conducive to perpetuating the development of antisocial behaviour (Gard et al., 2019). Environmental adversity across contexts and genetic risk factors, also called predispositions, jointly predict the emergence and maintenance of ASB.

According to Gard et al. (2019), adversity, such as poverty or growing up in an abusive environment while having a genetic predisposition, predicts ASB. The predisposition can manifest as externalising behaviour such as delinquent behaviour; internalising behaviour such as depression; poor peer relationships; psychological disorders such as CD; criminal activity; violence and aggression (Hay et al., 2014; Tien et al., 2020; van Hazebroek et al., 2019; Waltes et al., 2016). Gard et al. (2019) pointed out that the individual who has inherited a genetic predisposition to antisocial behaviour will not develop a fixed set of behaviours across all environmental situations. Due to the gene-environment interaction, they will cultivate various behaviours, enabling them to adjust to different environmental circumstances.

Tuvblad and Beaver (2013) explored the relationship between parenting style and children's antisocial behaviour in a longitudinal study and reported significant bidirectional effects. Parental styles and behaviours influence the child's antisocial outcomes just as much as the child's genetically influenced psychopathic personality style and subsequent antisocial behaviour influence the parenting style (Simmons et al., 2017; Tuvblad & Beaver, 2013). Genetic and environmental interactions between negative parenting and psychopathic personality require more in-depth exploration.

Thus far, this literature review has established that the genetic predisposition and precipitating factors for aggression and ASB vary from individual to individual, and its manifestation is also affected by environmental circumstances such as parenting styles and peer influences (Carroll et al., 2021; Padurariu et al., 2016; Qadeer et al. 2021; Veroude et al. 2016). Padurariu et al. (2016) asserted that males innately have higher aggressivity than females, and aggression among humans is primarily geared towards persons of the same age. According to Liu et al. (2013), aggressive behaviour is linked to developmental stages across the human lifespan. The subsequent section elaborates on this gene-environment interaction and influence, particularly how the developmental stages across the lifespan impact the manifestation of aggression, violence, and antisocial behaviour.

Developmental spectrum. Unique biological, social, and environmental risk factors for aggression exist across the developmental spectrum, including in-utero, childhood, adolescence,

adulthood, and old age (Liu et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016). In the subsequent section, I review several risk factors for aggressive and violent behaviour throughout the developmental spectrum.

Early life risk factors. Early life risk factors significantly impact the vulnerability of a child to develop aggressive and violent behaviour across the lifespan (Haller et al., 2014; Letourneau et al., 2019; Lipscomb et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2013; Oliver et al., 2014; Smaling et al., 2017; Tien et al., 2020; van Hazebroek et al., 2019, Winiarski et al., 2018). These early life risk factors include prenatal (during pregnancy) factors, perinatal (during birth) factors and postnatal (in childhood) factors. These factors may influence temperament and the predisposition to aggressive and violent behaviour.

Prenatal risk factors. Prenatal risk factors include any conditions or exposure during pregnancy that increase foetal susceptibility for internalising and externalising behaviour (Marshall et al., 2018; Tien et al., 2020). Prenatal risk factors include minor congenital disabilities or disruptions in neural development (Smaling et al., 2017; Tien et al., 2020; van Hazebroek et al., 2019; Winiarski et al., 2018), exposure to alcohol, drugs, and tobacco; maternal stress, mental illness, medical illness such as hypertension and diabetes, as well as maternal malnutrition (Tien et al., 2020; van Hazebroek et al., 2019; Winiarski et al., 2018). These factors may impact the developing foetus and may subsequently influence the development of aggressive behaviour. Glover (2020) examined the effects of prenatal stress on children's behavioural and cognitive outcomes. The findings suggest that prenatal maternal stress increases the child's risk of developing neurodevelopmental problems, but not all children are affected similarly. Children born to mothers who were stressed and anxious throughout pregnancy have a higher chance of emotional or behavioural problems than those born to mothers without stress and anxiety (Glover, 2020; Marshall et al., 2018).

Perinatal risk factors. Perinatal risk factors, including maternal preeclampsia, premature birth, low birth weight, assisted delivery, and foetal distress, impact neonatal brain function (Kallas et al., 2023; Marshall et al., 2018; Nordstrom et al., 2011; Winiarski et al., 2018). In combination with other risk factors, such as poor parenting and a disadvantaged environment, birth complications are associated with developing aggressive behaviours in childhood (Liu et al., 2013; Winiarski et al., 2018). Winiarski et al. (2018) reviewed research studies and confirmed a link between adverse exposures during prenatal foetal development, perinatal complications and later aggressive, impulsive, and disruptive behaviours.

Postnatal risk factors. Postnatal factors, including treatment with oxygen post-delivery, malnutrition, and traumatic brain injuries, may result in CNS damage that could impair brain function. Deficiencies in specific nutrients may hinder brain growth and development, potentially predisposing malnourished children to behavioural disturbance that may be lifelong (Bell, 2018; Liu et al., 2009).

Postnatal factors can persist beyond infancy, and risk factors for developing aggression may be present in the child's environment impacting them throughout their development. D'Souza et al. (2019) identified risk factors related to family dynamics, increasing the potential for children to develop behavioural difficulties, including aggression. These factors include maternal and paternal mental health, family dynamics such as verbal and physical conflict, and exposure to drugs and alcohol. Facing traumatic events like witnessing and experiencing domestic violence at home and witnessing substance abuse may result in mimicking such behaviour. Research consistently shows that trauma, especially during key developmental stages, increases the risk of aggression, violence, and criminal behaviour due to its impact on emotional regulation, impulse control, and decision-making (Anda et al., 2006; Ward et al., 2012).

Studies have examined how the interplay between an individual's biological factors and their environment contributes to becoming either an aggressor or a victim. Theories such as the bioecological development model recognise that youth are situated in systems with direct, indirect, and dynamic influences on development and behaviour (Bell, 2018; Defoe, 2021; Espelage, 2014; Strauss-Hughes et al., 2019). I discuss the bioecological model extensively in Chapter Three as the theoretical framework for this study.

Aggression manifests differently at various stages of development, for example, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder in children and adolescents, domestic violence in adults, and dementia in older adults (Liu et al., 2013). Next, I elaborate on these stages of development by looking at infancy to early schoolers, adolescence, and adulthood.

Infancy to early schoolers. Infants, babies, and toddlers are emotionally unintelligent and incapable of verbalising emotions; therefore, they communicate their discomfort and need for attention through aggressive acts such as screaming, crying, or biting (Liu et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016). Physical aggression in preschool children is expected, with a peak of aggressive behaviour around one and a half, two, and three (Bell, 2018; Hagenbeek et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2018). Once older toddlers and pre-schoolers develop verbal abilities, they add verbal skills to their range of aggressive expressions. As children reach school-going age, criticism or social

comparison may trigger aggressive behaviour. As they age and social interactions grow, children use language more adeptly to express aggression through bullying, teasing, insults, offensive language, and other ways (Bell, 2018; Liu et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016).

Adolescents. According to Liu et al. (2013), children's language skills, physical strength, and cognitive abilities increase during adolescence. Thus, more severely aggressive behaviour and violence may appear. Adolescents may direct aggression towards others but also start directing it towards themselves. At this stage, violence may involve weapons such as knives and may graduate to firearms. Emotions like frustration, sadness, and feeling neglected may also trigger aggression. These emotions may manifest through breaking the rules, fighting, stealing, lying, and other conduct problems (Liu et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016). Adolescents might fight with peers and adults, and some may display cruelty towards animals.

Adolescents often socialise in groups, thereby influencing each other's attitudes and social activity (Bell, 2018; Del Giudice et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2013). Consequently, peer relationships play an important role in adolescents' aggressive behaviour. Behaviour such as truancy, pickpocketing, and bullying may occur in groups, and peer pressure may lead to forced displays of aggressive behaviour. Males are generally more aggressive than females (Bell, 2018; Del Giudice et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2013).

Aggressive behaviour may increase among both girls and boys as cross-gender peer and romantic relationships develop during adolescence. (Liu et al., 2013). Aggression may spill over to jealousy, and violent forms of aggressive behaviour, such as date rape and sexual assault, may ensue. Family functioning and sociological characteristics of the community where the youth is growing up influence the developing youth (Liu et al., 2013; Logan et al., 2016). Child abuse or domestic violence at home may influence adolescents and they may emulate such behaviour (Anda et al., 2006; Liu et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2012)). Lack of discipline, neglect, and exposure to childhood adversities, including economic hardships and parental mental illness, may also increase children's risk of delinquent, aggressive behaviour (Del Giudice et al., 2018; Logan et al., 2016; Vitopoulos et al., 2019).

Exposure to complex trauma can lead children to develop serious internalising issues such as fear, depression, and somatic complaints, as well as externalising problems like anger, aggression, and substance abuse (Ford et al., 2012). Traumatic childhood experiences have been shown to affect various adult outcomes, including physical health, mental health, and criminal behaviours in adolescence and adulthood (Fritzon et al., 2021).

Behaviour problems during early childhood may predict behavioural problems later in life, and aggression in childhood and adolescence is likely to persist into adulthood (Smith et al., 2014). These problematic behaviours gradually decrease as children start school and reach early adulthood. However, a small group of children will continue to display aggressive behaviour into adulthood (Docherty et al., 2019; Hagenbeek, 2018; Smith et al., 2014). Research into the trajectory of aggressive behaviour from onset to cessation links aggressive behaviour, antisocial behaviour patterns, and ASPD. The studies distinguish between onset, frequency, duration, and cessation of offending as well as chronic offenders, non-offenders, and desisters (Ling et al., 2019; Moffitt, 1993, 2006; Piquero et al., 2012; Raine, 2019b; Tuvblad & Beaver, 2013). More research into the developmental trajectory of offending followed and established that chronic offenders differ from non-offenders and lower-level offenders who desist later in life. I elaborate on this developmental trajectory of aggressive and antisocial behaviour later in this chapter.

Aggression in adulthood. As adolescents become teenagers and mature into adulthood, aggressive behaviour may escalate into more severe and violent acts. Liu et al. (2013) stated that child abuse and IPV are relevant aspects of adult aggressive behaviour. A myriad of factors, including emotional dysregulation, emotions like frustration and anxiety; substance abuse; medical conditions such as brain injury; and psychiatric diagnoses, like personality disorders, may trigger aggressive behaviour in adults. These factors, together with power relations, contribute to violence perpetrated by men against women (Hinson & Hubbard, 2012; LAC, 2016; Matthews & von Hase, 2013; Martin, 2020a).

In the subsequent sections, I define and discuss abuse within the confines of an intimate relationship because it is relevant to the discussion of violent crime. I proceed to expound on the link between substance abuse and aggressive behaviour and embark on a detailed exploration and discussion of personality and its relationship to aggression.

Intimate partner violence (IPV). Within the Namibian context, limited research explicitly examines perpetrators of violent crime and rape. Albeit the limited research, Kefas (2019) investigated offenders' explanations of their reasons for committing rape. He reported that many factors, including certain cultural practices, unemployment and poverty, power and masculinity, and alcohol and drug abuse, influence rape. These results corroborate the notion that certain underlying societal ideologies construct conducive circumstances for practices that violate the rights of women and children and often enable their abuse (Edwards-Jauch, 2016; LAC, 2016; Martin, 2020a).

According to Jewkes et al. (2005), in the African context, the dominant patriarchal ideology creates a conducive environment for abuse, compounded by the pronounced age hierarchies. This age hierarchy and gender expectations correlate with the traditional community setup, marriages in the Namibian traditional communities, and resulting gender dynamics (Brasche, 2003; Clarence-Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988) and customs that persist (Brasche, 2003; Edwards-Jauch, 2016). Jewkes et al. (2005) stated that the “high status of men” is especially detrimental to girl children, making the girls vulnerable because they are stripped of their ability to refuse sexual advances. This generates expectations in men that they should control women and children (Jewkes et al., 2005). Therefore, this patriarchal society also sets the stage for sexual exploitation and abuse against women, including IPV.

Intimate partner violence refers to behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes harm, including physical, sexual, and psychological (Shepard, 2016; WHO, 2021a, 2021b). “Intimate partner violence includes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner (i.e., spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, dating partner, or ongoing sexual partner)” (Breiding et al., 2015, p. 11). IPV is globally recognised as a public health problem that continues to escalate (Bell & Butcher, 2015; Ceasay, 2023; WHO, 2021b; Miller & McCaw, 2019; Pallitto et al., 2013; Shepard, 2016; WHO, 2021b).

GBV and IPV are significant issues that are faced by nations globally. All women and girls are at risk of gender-based violence at some point. The WHO reports that almost 30% of women aged 15-49 years have experienced or been subjected to IPV from a partner or former partner (Bell & Butcher, 2015; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2020; WHO, 2021a; 2021b, 2023). The estimates have reduced since 2005 when a multi-country study on women’s health and domestic violence by the WHO concluded that between 50% and 70% of women experience IPV (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005; Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011; WHO, 2021b). However, the statistics indicating the reported abuse and risks remain alarming. Globally, 7% of women have experienced violence from a non-intimate partner, and psychological abuse remains high, ranging from 12% to 58% across countries (Bell & Butcher, 2015; Heise et al., 2019). In Latin America and the Caribbean, 60% and 76% respectively of women and girls have experienced forms of GBV (ECLAC, 2020). In 2020, the UN and its member and observer states united to express their support for the UN Secretary General’s call to intensify efforts to protect women and girls.

GBV occurs in the domestic sphere, public spaces, the workplace, in the context of political and community participation, on public transport, on the street, in schools and other educational settings, and in cyberspace. Violence also intersects with other forms of discrimination and inequalities, such as those that occur in the labour market, women’s lack of income and difficulties in accessing quality basic services. GBV is exacerbated when it intersects with other dimensions such as violence and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and age (Bell & Butcher, 2015; Department of Women Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD), 2020; WHO, 2014).

The common types of IPV include sexual violence, stalking, physical violence, and psychological aggression (WHO, 2021b; Kim et al., 2022; Krebs et al., 2011), and reproductive and sexual health (Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 2017; Leemis et al., 2022; Niolon et al., 2017). Table 2.1 defines the common types of IPV.

Table 2.2

Types of IPV

Stalking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stalking typically includes unwanted contacting, following, repeated harassing or threatening of an individual. It includes appearing at their home or place of business, leaving written messages or objects, or vandalising their property (CDC, 2017; Krebs et al., 2011; WHO, 2021a).
Sexual violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using physical force to compel an individual into sexual activity against their will. It includes attempted or completed sexual acts with someone who is unable to consent or refuses to participate (Basile & Saltzman, 2002; CDC, 2017; Niolon et al., 2017; WHO, 2021a).
Physical violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical violence is the intentional use of force with the potential to cause death, disability, injury, or harm (Basile & Saltzman, 2002). A non-exhaustive list of acts of physical violence includes punching, kicking; biting; shaking, suffocating; burning; pulling hair and throwing things at the victim (WHO, 2021a).
Psychological aggression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychological aggression involves acts, threats, and coercive tactics such as humiliation, control, and isolation from friends and family (Basile & Saltzman, 2002; CDC, 2017; WHO, 2021a).
Control of reproductive and sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts such as the refusal by an intimate partner to use a condom or other protection and being forced to conceive (CDC, 2017; WHO, 2021a).

Aggressive behaviour that appears in adulthood, including IPV and GBV, may also be associated with the increased abuse of substances (LAC, 2016; Liu et al., 2013; WHO, 2021). In addition to increasing the risk of violence substance use may be employed to cope with other underlying concerns. These underlying concerns could be linked to mental health and personality. Therefore, I will discuss substance abuse, and then my discussion will proceed to mental health and personality.

Substance abuse. Alcohol may be particularly harmful, but other illegal drugs may also be related to increased aggression and violence. Aggression may be applied to obtain alcohol or aggressive acts may be committed while under the influence of alcohol (Liu et al., 2013). Khan et al. (2016) conducted a literature review to explore adolescents' perceptions of substance use that contributes to community violence. The results revealed that alcohol use, particularly binge drinking, is a significant public health concern associated with various forms of violence.

Namibia has countless reported cases of alcohol abuse and research shows the link between alcohol abuse and crime (The Office of the First Lady of The Republic of Namibia (FLON), 2018; Hasheela et al., 2020; Njibu et al., 2017; Shikongo et al., 2017). Frank et al. (2019) explored social workers' and religious leaders' perceptions of the risk factors of alcohol abuse among youth in Oshikango, located in the northern region of Namibia. The participants reported that youth indulge in alcohol abuse due to environmental risk factors including family and community issues, socioeconomic factors, peer pressure, poor parental supervision, parents who model drinking behaviour, poverty, and unemployment. Furthermore, the participants noted that many alcohol outlets known as "cuca-shops" are easily accessible and willing to sell alcohol to the youth (Frank et al., 2019; Frank, 2015; Freeman et al., 2022).

This phenomenon of "cuca-shops" became problematic in the 1970s in northern Namibia (Siisskonen, 1994). Frank et al. (2019) recommended developing integrated strategies involving all stakeholders to address the challenges. Strict law enforcement should be practised on the sale of alcohol and preventing the sale of alcohol to minors. Communities must be educated on substance use and abuse, excessive drinking, and underage drinking risks. Further studies should be conducted on parents, law enforcement officers, youth, traditional authorities, and other relevant key informants (Frank et al., 2019).

Mitonga et al. (2017) conducted a study in Oshakati, in the Oshana region, also located in the northern part of Namibia. The aim was to understand community concerns, health issues, and challenges. Amongst the significant problems identified was alcohol and drug abuse, resulting in

violent behaviours, domestic violence, assault, and other crimes. Teenage pregnancies, early sexual behaviours, promiscuity, poverty, unemployment, and mental health concerns were also identified as issues that go hand in hand with alcohol abuse (Kauari & Kaundjua, 2015; LAC, 2016; Mitonga et al., 2017). Mitonga et al. (2017) emphasised that cultural, social, economic, and environmental factors must be considered for successful reform and addressing these social ills and health problems.

Based on literature, it can be deduced that although alcohol is linked to aggressive behaviour, the link is complex, and alcohol has not been conclusively shown to cause aggressive behaviour (FLON, 2018; Frank et al. 2019; Hasheela et al., 2020; LAC, 2016; Lui, 2013; Njibu et al., 2017; Shikongo et al., 2017; WHO, 2021). Alcohol may interfere with self-control and functioning. Thus, it may influence adult behaviour, leading to aggression. Other psychological and psychiatric constructs, including personality, mental health disorders, and parent-child interaction dynamics, which may or may not be hereditary, are also associated with antisocial traits, criminality, and aggression (Defoe, 2021; Mancke, 2018; Pappa et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2014). Personality disorders and mental health as well as their association with aggressive and violent crimes are discussed in the following section.

Mental illness and personality. As I mentioned above, aggression manifests in diverse ways and may be motivated by many different reasons. Aggressive and violent acts may occur when individuals abuse alcohol to cope with emotions like anxiety and fear (FLON, 2018). They may also be committed in the context of severe mental illness, particularly illness with symptoms of psychosis (Pappa et al., 2016; Varshney et al., 2015). For example, a psychotic patient may act aggressively as a symptom of the psychiatric disorder, which may cause hallucinations that command the patient to act aggressively or because of delusional thoughts.

Acknowledging the possible link between aggression, violence, and mental health disorders is essential, as both proactive and reactive aggression may have a pathological component (Allen & Anderson, 2017a, 2017c; Chester & DeWall, 2016; Padurariu, 2016; Varshney, 2015; Wang et al., 2020; Wrangham, 2017). However, the classification of aggression is not simple, exhaustive, and all-inclusive and as mentioned numerous times in prior sections, aggression and violence are multifaceted in their expression and aetiology (Bartels et al., 2018; Hagenbeek et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016). The same is valid for mental illness and the manifestation of symptoms.

Vast interest exists in understanding the criminal personality and traits contributing to criminal behaviour. Understanding criminal behaviour requires the study of personality, which is influenced by character and temperament (Bleidorn et al., 2014; Jurjako et al., 2019; Sanchez-Roige et al., 2017). Character is an evolving trait affected by sociocultural standards, and it refers to virtues gained during nurturing, encompassing individual differences in self-concepts, goals, and values (Bajraktarov Gudeva-Nikovska et al., 2017; Bajaktarov Novotni et al., 2017; Conrad et al., 2013; Nucci, 2019). Temperament is a fundamental biological, temperately heritable disposition that is relatively stable throughout life (Bajraktarov Gudeva-Nikovska et al., 2017; Bajaktarov Novotni et al., 2017; Conrad et al., 2013; Nucci, 2018). They are independent but functionally interactive components of personality where character denotes the cognitive core and temperament the emotional core of personality (Bajraktarov Gudeva-Nikovska et al., 2017; Bajaktarov Novotni et al., 2017; Conrad et al., 2013; Josefsson et al., 2013).

Personality is multifaceted and is constituted by deeply rooted patterns of emotional and behavioural traits expressed involuntarily in most areas of an individual's mental functioning (Bleidorn et al., 2019; Conrad et al., 2013; Nucci, 2019). Character and temperament influence personality, and together with the person's experiences, their personal and social identity is formed. Several scholars derive their conceptualisation of identity from the seminal work of Erikson and Erikson (1997), cited in McLean and Pasupathi (2012). Erikson originally defined ego identity as a person's sense of individuality, an experience or perception of the self as unique, some commitment and belonging in society, and a sense of continuity over time. More recent conceptualisations of identity recognise that identity is associated with various social, cognitive, psychodynamic, and philosophical theories globally (Zahid & Goth, 2022). Zahid and Goth (2022) maintain the significance of the experience or perception of oneself as novel and the sense of continuity. They expand on this to include self-esteem, self-appraisal, and the capacity for managing broad emotionality. The definition provided by Haslam et al. (2021) is very comprehensive:

A person's identity is determined not only by the attributes and traits that are unique to them as an individual (i.e., their personal identity, e.g., me who is conscientious, agreeable and resilient) but also by the social groups to which they belong (i.e., their social identity, e.g., us students, women, Catholics, Australians). (p. 640)

Essentially, "Identity is how an actor sees themselves and believes that others will perceive them" (Gottlieb et al., 2021, p. 2020). When considering personality and criminal

activity, particularly habitual offending, it is essential to understand that specific personality types and persons with certain personality traits are more prone to offend. Many offenders fit the criteria for a personality disorder; therefore, I discuss personality disorders and their link to aggression, violence, and criminality.

Criminality

Personality disorder. The American Psychiatric Association (APA) (2013) defines a personality disorder as an ingrained set of inner experiences and behaviours that start in adolescence or early adulthood. It deviates distinctly from the norm of the individual's culture, is rigid, and causes distress or impairment in most areas of the individual's functioning (American Psychiatric Association (APA), 2013). Personality disorders are not diseases; they represent learned, stable, and inflexible dysfunctional patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaviour that cause long-term deviations in cognition, emotion, and behaviour. These patterns begin in adolescence or early adulthood and continue to disrupt daily activities or cause significant distress. (Bateman et al., 2015; Hopwood, 2018; Sheehan et al., 2016). Apart from its link to developmental stages across the human lifespan, aggression is also a characterising symptom of various medical and psychiatric diagnoses, including personality disorders (Liu et al., 2013).

Although there is a correlation between the traits manifested in several personality disorders, there is a variance in how each disorder correlates with aggression (Mancke et al., 2018; Qadeer et al., 2021; Sheehan et al., 2016). In 2018, Mancke et al. published a review of studies investigating the correlation between aggression and personality disorders. They confirmed that aggression correlates with borderline personality disorder and ASPD. However, in borderline personality disorder, emotion dysregulation, hypersensitivity to interpersonal rejection, increased rumination, increased negative urgency, and invalidation were among the traits either corroborated or emerged as psychological correlates of aggression. In ASPD, reduced ambiguity sensitivity, hyposensitivity to interpersonal threats, and reduced mindfulness were associated with aggression.

ASPD is a diagnosis given to adults who repeatedly disregard or violate the rights of others, refuse to conform to laws, are manipulative and deceitful, and cause harm but show no remorse (APA, 2013; Bowen et al., 2014; El-Gilany et al., 2016; van Hazebroek et al., 2019). In most instances, a diagnosis of ASPD is preceded by a history of delinquent behaviour or a diagnosis of CD (APA, 2013). CD is characterised by the habitual violation of the rights of others and the refusal to conform to the law or social norms and is diagnosed before the age of 18 (APA,

2013; Bateman et al., 2015; Docherty et al., 2019). Thus, a diagnosis of ASPD or traits of ASPD is significant in criminal conduct. The APA (2013) acknowledges that this pattern of behaviour is commonly referred to as psychopathy and sociopathy. Most people with psychopathy meet the diagnostic criteria for ASPD, but not all persons who meet the criteria for ASPD meet the criteria for psychopathy (Bateman et al., 2015; Docherty et al., 2019).

Psychopathy is a multidimensional construct encompassing various personality traits and behaviours (Blair, 2015; R. Blair & James, 2013; Gillespie et al., 2019; Miller & Lynam, 2015). Affect, interpersonal relationships, behaviour, and character components illustrate these behaviours. Interpersonally, persons with psychopathy are manipulative, superficial, dominant, deceptive, egocentric, and grandiose. Affectively, they are unsympathetic, unable to form stable bonds, and lack empathy, guilt, and remorse. These interpersonal and affective traits are further linked to socially deviant lifestyles encompassing irresponsible and impulsive actions (Blair, 2015; Blair, 2013; Miller & Lynam, 2015). In addition, psychopathy comprises a callousness feature, which may be related to limited emotional reactivity (Kyranides et al., 2017) and a limited ability to recognise and respond to others' emotional facial expressions (J. R. Blair, 2018; Blair & Zhang, 2020; Gillespie et al., 2019). These behaviours are thought to reflect gaps in emotion processing and reduced reactivity of the ANS to emotional stimuli (Blair & Zhang, 2020; R. J. R. Blair, 2018; Fanti et al., 2018).

The traits and behaviours characteristic of psychopathy, such as impulsivity and lack of empathy, can lead to the victimisation of the vulnerable and use of violence for power. Such individuals often lack the inhibitory traits necessary to curb antisocial behaviour, contributing to both reactive and proactive aggression. (Blair, 2015, 2013; Gillespie et al., 2019; Miller & Lynam, 2015; Neumann et al., 2015; Qadeer et al., 2021). Persons with psychopathic traits are not necessarily criminal, but when combined, the traits allow them to violate social norms easily and may lead to criminal behaviour (Blair & Zhang, 2020; Neumann et al., 2015). This sheds light on why most of the incarcerated offender population comprises offenders with psychopathic traits or who meet the criteria for psychopathy and why most also meet the diagnostic criteria for ASPD (Blair & Zhang, 2020; Liu et al., 2014; Neumann et al., 2015). Psychopathy thus presents a significant challenge to the forensic setting. Therefore, the correct evaluation and diagnosis of psychopathy, ASPD, and its associated traits are essential among the forensic population.

Most individuals who commit brutal crimes against fellow humans will likely exhibit several psychological dysfunctions (Gillespie et al., 2019; Neumann et al., 2015; Padurariu et al.,

2016; van de Giessen et al., 2014; Wrangham, 2018). There is also a difference between an individual who commits a brutal crime against a fellow person once and a person who repeatedly commits such crimes. It is essential to distinguish between the once-off and habitual offenders of violent crimes and understand the factors that feed persistent, habitual aggression and offending. Persistent, habitual aggression might be perceived as a response to threatening stimuli or because of a personality trait (Allen & Anderson, 2017a, 2017b; Padurariu et al., 2016; Qadeer et al., 2021; van de Giessen et al., 2014; Wrangham, 2018).

Identifying habitual aggression is crucial in forensic settings for appropriately sentencing and classifying offenders based on their reoffending risk (NCPC, 2012). This helps ensure that dangerous repeat offenders are not mistakenly classified as low-risk offenders, thus supporting offender rehabilitation and enabling effective intervention strategies to prevent future criminal behaviour. To understand what causes repeat offending, it is imperative to investigate and grasp the personality traits of individuals most likely to offend. Considering the causes of repeat offending led me to the ensuing sections of this chapter. I discuss the criminal personality, repeat offenders, personality types, and behaviour patterns and how these influence the assessment and classification of offenders in the forensic setting.

Criminal personality. Criminality is complex because no clear, singular explanations exist for such behaviour, and offenders are not homogenous (Ling et al., 2019; Raine, 2018). Each offender has a unique identity, influenced by their personality and environment. Some violent offenders may be affected by mental illness, others by predisposition, and friends may influence others (Johnson, 2019; Liu et al., 2014; Padurariu et al., 2016; Wrangham, 2018). However limited, there are some commonalities between offenders. In 1976, Yochelson and Samenow, as cited in Blackburn (1993), proposed that criminality may be placed on a continuum encompassing a broad range of thinking processes and criminal acts. The non-criminal end of the continuum denotes responsible thinking and actions such as lawful behaviour and taking care of legal and family obligations. The opposite end of the continuum encompasses criminal thinking and detrimental and unlawful actions that do not consider legal, moral, and family responsibilities (Yochelson and Samenow 1976, cited in Blackburn, 1993).

Researchers currently apply a similar approach when assessing criminal behaviour. They evaluate specific traits and behaviours, using measures of offending, offender motivation ratings, criminal histories, and indicators of antisocial behaviour to determine the likelihood of involvement in violent crimes like sexual offences, terrorism, and recidivism (Brouillette-Alarie et

al., 2016; Goodwill & Meloy, 2019; Joye et al., 2022; Lehmann et al., 2016). This perspective of a continuum of criminality also resonates with recent scholars who view criminality as multifaceted. Criminal activity, particularly repeated habitual offending, is preceded by attitudes, social influence, and criminogenic thinking (Međedović, 2017; Whited et al., 2015, Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017).

In much the same way aggression harms society, criminality damages society by causing injury to the physical, psychological, and material resources of the individual, community, and the national government (Međedović, 2017; UNODC, 2019). Habitual offending, ultimately resulting in criminal recidivism, represents a greater danger to society than offenders who break the law only once (Međedović, 2017). To understand what drives offenders to re-offend, I reviewed literature explaining offender risks and needs that impact criminal behaviour.

Criminogenic risks and needs. Criminogenic thinking involves specific cognitive styles or belief systems that exist before criminal activity and other antisocial behaviours (Whited, 2015; Zeigler-Hill, 2017). These thinking patterns, also known as criminogenic cognitions, serve as a key indicator of the probability that an individual will engage in criminal behaviour (Bonta & Andrews, 2016; Whited et al., 2015; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017). Due to their criminogenic cognitions, the person may develop pro-criminal attitudes and condone, support, and engage in criminal activities.

To illustrate, someone with pro-criminal thinking might not be dissuaded by the threat of punishment. Consequently, they might commit a crime like theft because the immediate gain outweighs the potential consequence of incarceration. The more this individual embraces such pro-criminal thought patterns, the higher the likelihood that they will engage in criminal activities, possibly on multiple occasions. Criminogenic thinking contributes to the onset and continuation of criminal behaviour (Andrews & Bonta, 2016; Simane-Vigante et al., 2017). Zeigler-Hill et al. (2017) investigated associations between criminogenic thinking styles and pathological personality traits among a cohort of community members and incarcerated offenders. The results suggest the existence of valid associations (Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017).

The empirical evidence I reviewed links criminogenic cognitions with crime. However, it remains relevant to understand if these cognitions are developed over time or what factors are involved in forming such cognitions. When do the personality traits and criminogenic thinking patterns responsible for aggression and violence form? In the subsequent section, I explain the

developmental trajectory of aggressive and antisocial behaviour that may further assist in understanding such behaviour.

Developmental trajectory of aggressive and antisocial behaviour

Aggressive behaviour varies in its aetiology and manifestation from individual to individual and changes throughout an individual's life (Ling et al., 2019; Moffitt, 1993, 2006, 2018; Raine, 2018). The onset of aggressive behaviour may be linked to antisocial behaviour patterns and antisocial personality disorder.

Many theoretical attempts have been made to explain the development of antisocial traits and ASPD in individuals (Blair, 2013; Fisher & Hany, 2019; Kyranides et al., 2017, 2023; Lavallee et al., 2022). In an earlier study, Wolfgang et al. (1972) (as cited in Skardhamar, 2009) highlighted the evidence that 6% of persistent offenders were responsible for approximately half of the offences in a birth cohort. As per Skardhamar (2009), these findings underscore the importance of differentiating the trajectory of criminal behaviour into distinct phases, including onset, frequency, duration, and cessation, as each of these stages may have unique underlying causes. This distinction necessitated a more precise differentiation between chronic offenders, non-offenders, and desisters. Research into the developmental trajectory of offending followed and established that chronic offenders differ from non-offenders and lower-level offenders who desist later in life.

Developmental taxonomy of antisocial behaviour. Moffitt's (1993) developmental taxonomy is instrumental in explaining the causes and contributing factors to offending, particularly repeat offending and antisocial behaviour. It has been particularly influential in explaining why some individuals persist with antisocial behaviour across the life course while others' offending behaviour is limited to their adolescence (Carlisi et al., 2020; McGee et al., 2015). This taxonomy infers that juvenile delinquency encompasses two groups: a larger group that participates in antisocial behaviour during adolescence only and a smaller group that continues antisocial behaviour throughout adulthood (Caspi & Moffitt, 2006; Moffitt, 1993, 2006). The larger group is called the adolescence-limited (AL) antisocial type or late-onset desisters, and the smaller group is referred to as the life-course-persistent (LCP) antisocial type (Moffitt, 1993, 2006, 2018; NCPC, 2012). Moffitt also suggested a third group, the non-offenders who do not engage in antisocial behaviour, referred to as abstainers.

Antisocial behaviour in the AL group is attributed to social influences such as motivation, mimicry, and reinforcement (Morritt, 1993, 2006, 2018; Moffitt et al., 1996; NCPC, 2012). Mimicry refers to the tendency of AL types to mimic the antisocial behaviour of their LCP peers, aiming to gain desirable resources such as status, power, privilege, and acceptance (Moffitt, 1993; Moffitt et al., 1996). Reinforcement refers to the negative consequences of delinquent and antisocial behaviour that reinforce the feeling of independence and conquering challenges. The reinforcement helps foster pro-criminal thinking patterns because the adolescent observes and experiences rewards from antisocial activities such as truancy and theft (Moffitt, 1993; Moffitt et al., 1996).

The LCP type offender starts with less severe deviant activities early in childhood, later offending and more severe crimes (Moffitt, 1993, 2006; Moffitt et al., 1996). The LCP type of individual might bite, hit, and throw tantrums as a toddler. They may move to truancy, shoplifting, and misuse of substances during adolescence. They may graduate to armed robbery and rape in early adulthood and possibly escalate to more violent crimes such as murder later in life. This pattern could be attributed to possible neurodevelopmental abnormalities and genetic predisposition (Moffitt, 1993, 2006). Furthermore, the lack of employment opportunities for unskilled young people, particularly in the context of global economic strain, may result in vulnerable antisocial youth having an extended period of failed socialisation, resulting in the continuation of crime-related behaviour (McGee et al., 2015; Moffitt, 2018).

Moffitt and Caspi (2006) explored the gene-environment link and the onset and continuation of antisocial behaviour. The offence pattern in the LCP group is persistent and gradually worsens over time. It is influenced by genetic factors and environmental and social factors such as bad parenting and peer influence (Moffitt, 1993, 2006; Moffitt et al., 1996; NCPC, 2012; Skardhamar, 2009). The negative consequences of delinquent behaviour and other adverse experiences during adolescence may ensnare individuals into antisocial behaviour patterns that extend into adulthood (McGee et al., 2015). Barnes et al. (2013) studied sibling pairs, evaluating how genetic and environmental influences account for the aetiology of the different offending patterns in Moffitt's (1993) and Moffitt et al. (1996) Developmental Taxonomy. They concluded that genetic factors contribute significantly to developing behaviour that meets the criteria for either one of the three groups, AL, LCP, or abstainer, not only the LCP as initially postulated. Genetic factors explained between 56% and 70% of the variance in being classified as an LCP offender, 35% in being classified as an AL offender, and 56% in being classified as an abstainer.

Fairchild et al. (2013) conducted a comprehensive literature review of empirical sources comparing the subtypes of antisocial behaviour from 1993 to 2013. Psychiatric epidemiology, personality assessment, neuropsychology, neuroendocrinology, genetics, and structural and functional neuroimaging studies on antisocial behaviour were evaluated. They found empirical support for the hypothesis that LCP antisocial behaviour is a neurodevelopmental disorder with its aetiology embedded in individual genetic vulnerabilities and environmental contributions. In contrast to Moffitt's (1993) developmental taxonomy, empirical findings suggest that severe antisocial behaviour that emerges in adolescence, falling under the AL group, frequently has an unfavourable prognosis and is rarely limited to the adolescent period.

Based on the findings of the numerous studies discussed above, LCP and AL antisocial behaviour are associated with several factors, including emotion regulation deficits, brain structure and function, alterations in cortisol secretion, and atypical personality traits. This is in line with findings from studies that tie antisocial behaviour, aggressivity, and violent behaviour to hormones and neurobiological influences (Carlisi et al., 2020; Carré et al., 2018; Coccaro et al., 2015; Geniole et al., 2019; Horn et al., 2014; Padurariu et al., 2016; Pinna & Manchia, 2017; Reddy et al., 2018).

Contrary to the studies that link antisocial behaviour to hormones and neurobiological influences only, both AL and LCP ASB can be accounted for by environmental and genetic contributions (Eme, 2020; Gard et al., 2019; Moffitt, 2018). Fairchild et al. (2013) suggested that the developmental taxonomy theory needs revision because differences between LCP and AL forms of antisocial behaviour appear to be quantitative rather than qualitative. They suggest that the quality of the child's early environment accounts for the difference in the age of onset. The nature of these early experiences moderates the relationship between individual genetic vulnerabilities, environmental adversities, and the age-of-onset of antisocial behaviour (Eme, 2020; Gard et al., 2019; Moffitt 2018).

Affiliation with deviant peers, susceptibility to peer influence, unemployment, parental socioeconomic status, and the home environment are key factors contributing to adolescent delinquency and antisocial behaviour (Caleb et al., 2019; Ikediashi & Akande, 2015; Oluufemi Oyeyemi et al., 2019; Piotrowska et al., 2015; Trinidad, 2021). How this affiliation and predisposition impact antisocial behaviour during the transition to adulthood or how they contribute to desistance from delinquent or anti-social behaviour remains unclear. Studies show that individuals who are part of the AL group develop maturity, while youths who are part of the

LCP group exhibit deficits in elements of psychosocial maturity, particularly in impulse control, suppression of aggression, and future orientation (Caleb et al., 2019; Eme, 2020; Moffitt, 2018).

Adverse childhood and adolescent experiences influence youths' choice of or selection into peer networks that are considered deviant or antisocial (Trinidad, 2021). Antisocial individuals affiliate with deviant peers, which is associated with delinquency. Studies suggest that desistance from antisocial behaviour may be tied to normative changes in peer relations that occur as individuals mature socially and emotionally. In contrast, the LCP offenders continue to engage in antisocial behaviour in adulthood because they do not experience the psychosocial maturity expected of adults (Eme, 2020; Moffitt, 2018; Trinidad, 2021).

Moffitt's developmental trajectory was conceived before the emergence of cybercrime when criminal activities typically involved physical presence. As a result, it has been subject to ongoing scrutiny over the years to assess its relevance in an evolving landscape. According to Catchpole et al. (n.d.), later investigations suggested additional groups, a childhood-limited pathway (antisocial behaviour occurring only during childhood) and a low-level chronic antisocial behaviour pathway (consistently low-level antisocial behaviour throughout the lifespan), that were unaccounted for in Moffitt's original taxonomy. Nonetheless, recent assessments of the age-crime curve and the categories outlined by Moffitt suggest that it largely aligns with the initial discoveries (Moffitt, 2018) and continues to be acknowledged as one of the most influential theories in the study of antisocial behaviour (Eme, 2020). It remains instrumental in shaping assessment and treatment approaches.

Eme (2020) elaborated that epidemiological studies have suggested that an individual's engagement in antisocial behaviour undergoes significant changes across various stages of development in their life. Collectively, crime increases during adolescence, peaks in the late teens or early twenties and declines steadily as the person becomes older. This is the age-crime curve, which is well researched along with the developmental trajectory of antisocial behaviour and has been observed for individuals and groups (Akalin, 2016; Eme, 2020; Fabio et al., 2011). According to Akalin (2016), researchers have differing opinions regarding the age-crime curve. Some argue that it remains consistent across time, location, and types of crimes, while others contend that it varies based on location and the nature of the crime.

Furthermore, the relationships between age and crime vary over time, among different countries, and between genders. This variability in the age-crime curve across various countries warrants investigation because even subtle differences may help each country understand the

distinct factors contributing to criminal behaviour across different age groups within their specific context (Akalın, 2016; B. Matthews & Minton, 2018). It may also direct law enforcement and rehabilitation professionals in constructing preventive and intervention programmes.

Steffensmeier et al. (2021) pointed out that the current empirical and theoretical understanding of the age-crime curve is based almost entirely on data from the United States and a few Western societies. Therefore, it is essential to expand such research to other countries and establish if the curve remains invariable (Steffensmeier et al., 2017).

Having looked at the aetiology of aggression and offending and the possible contributing forces, the need exists to understand the impact of such behaviour and violent crime on society. In the subsequent section, I explore such consequences.

Aggression and violence as a public burden

Homicide. Adult aggression may lead to violent crimes such as homicide, as discussed below. Violent crime, including homicide, is a global public burden, a concern which exists within the African context, including Namibia and South Africa. In the subsequent review, I paint a brief picture of homicide in South Africa before delving into Namibia. This is done because Namibia shares a history with South Africa and remains closely linked in its laws, economic, and social influences.

Global picture. The UN, in its global study on homicide, emphasises that homicide and non-fatal violence create an environment that harms society, the economy, and government institutions (UNODC, 2019). “Homicide is not limited to people living on the margins of society; rather, it can affect all people, irrespective of their age, sex, ethnicity and socioeconomic background” (UNODC, 2019. p. 12). It is a worldwide public health problem. Therefore, understanding the causes and repercussions of criminal violence is essential for public welfare. It significantly burdens society through increased medical resources in emergency departments, critical care units, and psychiatric departments. Additionally, the costs of sustaining offenders in correctional facilities and greater involvement in the criminal justice system are economically taxing (Asherson & Cormand, 2016; Glen & Raine, 2014; Hagenbeek et al., 2018; Lui, 2013; Pinna & Manchia, 2017).

The consequences of violence on physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health often last a lifetime (UNODC, 2019). Non-fatal violence contributes to other leading causes of death, such as cancer, heart disease, and HIV/AIDS and violence shortens life expectancy. These health risks exist because victims are more likely to adopt behaviours such as smoking, alcohol and drug

misuse, and unsafe sex as coping mechanisms. Mental health issues are also more common in countries with reasonably high levels of violence and homicide. Violence is also recognised as a threat to education within a country. Lack of education generally lowers opportunities, translating into decreased economic opportunities for uneducated or undereducated young persons (UNODC, 2019). This vicious cycle increases young people's chances of being lured into antisocial peer groups and delinquent and violent behaviour.

Furthermore, homicide and violence in communities threaten gender equality. Societies with pronounced gender inequality tend to be characterised by higher levels of interpersonal violence against women, including homicide. Inequality generally raises the likelihood of higher homicide and violent crime rates, as marginalised individuals are more often victims of violence. (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2015; World Health Organisation (WHO, 2014). Pinna and Manchia (2017) stress the need for policymakers to continue exploring and implementing interventions to prevent the development of aggression and violence in at-risk populations. These public health approaches should include education, behaviour change, public policies, and psychosocial support (Pinna & Manchia, 2017).

South Africa. The SaferSpaces reports that SA has high rates of GBV, mainly perpetrated by men against women and children (SaferSpaces, 2023). Furthermore, the rates of GBV in South Africa (SA) are likely higher than reported because many cases go unreported (DWYPD, 2020; Human Rights Watch (HRW), 2022). They report that 25%-40% of women have experienced IPV, close to 50% have experienced emotional or economic abuse, 12%-28% have been raped (SaferSpaces, 2023) and physical violence is the most common form of violence against women in SA (DWYPD, 2020).

In 2015, Gould published a study presenting the life stories of offenders incarcerated for violent crimes in SA. According to Gould (2015), most offenders' life stories included experiences of violence in multiple settings, including their homes, schools, and communities. Their experiences also included trauma, racism, bullying, and corporal punishment. Many had poor backgrounds relating to education; most had dropped out of school for various reasons, often linked to domestic violence. Gould (2015) concluded that violent offenders are usually men who, as children, were victims of dysfunctional and broken homes. They resort to violent crime spurred by multiple factors, including their characteristics, family relationships, untreated trauma, and exposure to violence and crime. When these factors are associated with harsh punishment and the absence of supportive adults, it fosters pro-violent thinking patterns and subsequent violent

actions. Many of these offenders encountered authority and other adults outside their families who perpetuated violence against them, breeding distrust of authority figures (Gould, 2015).

Gould's (2015) findings are comparable to the factors identified by DWYPD (2020) as multiple factors vital in maintaining GBV in SA, including exposure to violence in childhood, socialising men to be violent, and women to tolerate violence. Gould stressed that these findings should not be seen as promoting violent offending. Instead, it is an opportunity to see the violence through the perpetrators' perspective and acknowledge the need for a more compassionate response to such offenders. It is imperative to do as much as possible to identify the risk factors before young people resort to violent crime and implement appropriate interventions to combat crime (Gould, 2015).

These findings also resonate with earlier findings of a study looking into the effects of community violence on learners (Mkhize et al., 2012). They reported that alcohol and drug abuse contribute to violence, and persons exposed to violence, having experienced abuse as victims, are more prone to perpetrate violence themselves compared to those who have not been victimised (Mkhize et al., 2012). Similarly, previous research indicated that the social factors perpetuating violence in South Africa include poverty, unemployment, patriarchal notions of masculinity, exposure to violence in childhood, widespread access to firearms, and alcohol and drug abuse (Seedat et al., 2009; Seedat et al., 2014).

Youth unemployment significantly affects violent crime, particularly GBV and murder (DWYPD, 2020; Mazorodze, 2020). This was reported following a study in KwaZulu-Natal, a South African province facing high levels of murder and unemployment. A social policy to create jobs for young people was suggested as a viable option to combat murder in the province. Mazorodze (2020) reported that the South African Police Service (SAPS) identified three leading causes of violent crime in SA.

- Murder because of other criminal activity, such as robbery resulting in death.
- Group criminal behaviour. This may include gang rivalry resulting in murder, violence erupting in taxis, or mobs seeking vigilante justice.
- Social behaviour that results in violence. This may be caused or exacerbated by social ills such as alcohol and drug abuse, dysfunctional relationships, unemployment, and other problems that lead to deaths.

As I illustrated in Chapter One, there are historical links between Namibia and South Africa. Therefore, the face of violent crime and the factors influencing crime in Namibia are similar to the picture in SA, although unique in many aspects. Also, as I discussed in Chapter One, since Namibia obtained independence in 1990, the Namibian criminal justice system has undergone significant changes. Yet, in many respects, the Namibian legal system remains linked to the South African system. Below, I illustrate the picture of violent crime in Namibia.

Namibia. In the Namibian context, the court is guided by the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 to determine the type of offences to prosecute. According to Namibian law, offences such as murder, culpable homicide, rape, indecent assault, sodomy, robbery, and assault are classified as severe offences. For these offences, the punishment is imprisonment for a period exceeding six months without the option of a fine (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1977). According to data provided by the NCS during my research, violent offences include murder, attempted murder, culpable homicide, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm, rape, robbery (with aggravating circumstances), any sexual offence involving a child, assault by threat, common assault, and domestic violence (NCS, 2017).

Violent crime, including GBV, has a far-reaching impact on individuals' personal well-being, is driven by poverty and the economic situation, and economic repercussions in both the private and public sectors (Kathena & Sheefeni, 2017; United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2020; WHO, 2014). Financial repercussions include but are not limited to, costs of investigations, trials, incarceration, rehabilitation, and family welfare. Kathena and Sheefeni (2017) hypothesised that in Namibia, "bad economic times result in domestic violence and greater consumption of mind-altering substances such as drugs and alcohol, leading to more violence in general and in return more crime" (p. 52). They recommended that the Criminal Justice System Forum craft a policy to reduce crime and its social and economic costs.

Reports of GBV in Namibia have increased dramatically in the preceding years, fuelled by several factors such as inequality, and patriarchal societal ideologies (Ceesay, 2023; Kefas, 2019; Ndjibu et al., 2017; Pallitto et al., 2013; UNFPA, 2020), and stigma (Shilongo, 2011). Furthermore, research indicates that alcohol abuse, jealousy, self-esteem, possessiveness, power, and control are among Namibia's leading causes of violence (Njibu et al., 2017; Shilongo, 2011; UNFPA, 2020). According to Njibu et al. (2017), many Namibians are deeply rooted in traditional values while living a modern lifestyle, creating conflicts regarding expected behaviours and relationships.

Consequently, frustrations and anxieties are bred, resulting in undesirable behaviours which may contribute to violent crimes, including GBV and IPV.

The Office of the First Lady of Namibia (FLON), in collaboration with the University of Namibia (UNAM), explored GBV from the perspective of the survivors, perpetrators, as well as front-line service providers (FLON, 2018). Half of the GBV victims who participated reported that the perpetrator was an intimate partner, mainly a boyfriend. Secondly, an ex-husband and thirdly, a husband. The offences committed by the perpetrators who participated in the study, mentioned in descending order of frequency, were rape, murder, robbery, and assault GBH (FLON, 2018). The offence patterns corresponded with statistics provided by the NCS OMS report. The largest proportion of offenders serving sentences for violent offences are those who committed assault GBH, followed by rape (NCS, 2017).

These findings are also consistent with reports from previous research (Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011; James et al., 2013; Pallitto et al., 2013; WHO, 2014) and the findings in neighbouring South Africa (DWYPD, 2020; HRW, 2021; Mkhize et al., 2012; Seedat et al., 2009; Seedat et al., 2014). The perpetrators of violence recognised the importance of honesty, trust, faithfulness, respect, mutual decision-making, and commitment in a relationship (FLON, 2018). However, they also held contradicting beliefs that violence within a relationship is made acceptable by circumstances such as infidelity, disrespect, and financial dependency. Moreover, perpetrators held firm, stereotypical, and prejudiced views about women. These views reinforced anger, frustration, and suspicion, resulting in violence. They admitted that alcohol was a significant factor in their offence behaviour. Most admit to using alcohol to relax and as a coping mechanism, although they know that alcohol fuels aggressive acts by inhibiting their judgement (FLON, 2018).

Many perpetrators found help-seeking challenging due to their fears, doubts, and the lack of available resources for assistance (FLON, 2018). Another point highlighted in the study is the perpetrator's unspoken pressure to provide for their female partners. This pressure causes fear of failure to provide, rejection, and abandonment by their partner if they fail to deliver. This pressure and resulting fears require further inquiry. These findings corroborate the perspective DWYPD (2020) put forward that socialisation and structural aspects are essential in maintaining the cycle of violence and abuse because childhood exposure to violence and trauma may make men violent and teach women to tolerate violence.

A robust solution recommended involves teaching perpetrators problem-solving skills to provide options other than violence (FLON, 2018). Additionally, men should be supported and given a platform to express their challenges and fears. They may then learn to seek and receive help with alcohol dependency and misuse problems. These findings and recommendations of FLON (2018) tie in with those of Gould (2015), that perpetrators of violent crimes need interventions to support them individually. As mentioned above, alcohol fuels the aggressive behaviour of perpetrators. Alcohol abuse is also cited as a contributing factor to aggression and violent crime in the substance abuse section below. According to FLON (2018), fear and anxiety play an additional role in alcohol abuse and subsequent aggressive behaviour. Offenders use alcohol to cope with underlying concerns such as fear of failure or rejection, and this may escalate to arguments with their partner and, subsequently, aggression and violence.

Although both men and women are perpetrators of IPV, in Namibia, IPV, including GBV, is most often associated with male perpetrators (LAC, 2016; WHO, 2018). Olayanju et al. (2013) explored IPV's magnitude, nature, and risk factors in Morocco, Nigeria, Namibia, Uganda, and Tanzania. According to them, unemployment rates, alcohol abuse, and discrimination against women, stemming mainly from traditional patriarchal norms, are high in Africa and impact IPV rates. The patriarchal system increases the likelihood of women being exposed to IPV (Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Olayanju et al., 2013).

Olayanju et al. (2013) reported a high awareness of IPV issues and a low acceptance of violence in Namibia. However, factors such as high levels of unemployment among both men and women contribute to the high IPV occurrence in Namibia. A similar study by Garcia-Moreno et al. (2005) had previously reported that over one-third of women in Namibia had reported physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner. Bikinesi et al. (2017) reported that studies on IPV in Namibia suggest rates of IPV are as high as 36%. Their study aimed to determine the prevalence of IPV among women attending antenatal care at Outapi, a rural town in Namibia's Northern region. Physical abuse among pregnant women was around 8%, and the most common type of abuse was emotional abuse. The Namibian results were comparable with Uganda and Malawi. The prevalence of IPV in Namibia was lower than in other African countries, such as Zimbabwe and South Africa, where similar studies had been conducted. Bikinesi et al. (2017) suggested further studies to examine the reasons for the difference. Olayanju et al. (2013) recommend improved access to mass media and using media to enlighten women and society about IPV as a strategy to tackle IPV.

In reviewing the literature on violent crime, particularly homicide, I examined both the global perspective and the more immediate effects that crime has on neighbouring South Africa and Namibia. Below, I provide a detailed discussion of the specific ways in which aggression, violence, and crime impose a burden on society, both at the global and local levels.

Thus far, the chapter has provided a comprehensive picture of the causes and contributing factors to aggressive and violent behaviour. The criminal personality, as well as the impact of criminal behaviour on individuals as well as society, were part of this picture. It is essential to look at the factors that could act as a barrier preventing an individual from embracing criminal behaviour. These factors are also referred to as protective factors, and I will briefly discuss these in the subsequent section.

Protective Factors

In criminology, research studies emphasise how deviant and antisocial friends influence youths and adopt similar behaviours, focusing less on how youths positively impact each other (J. Walters, 2006). There is evidence that some youths display prosocial behaviour despite exposure to traumatic experiences, disadvantaged environments, and other adversities that generally increase the risk of aggressive and antisocial behaviour. (Farrington et al., 2015; Simões et al., 2008; Walters, 2015, 2020). However, risk factors are often the focus of criminological research (Farrington et al., 2015; Portnoy, Chen, et al., 2013; Simões et al., 2008; Walters, 2020).

There is a need to identify factors that protect against developing aggressive behaviour and factors that reduce the probability of antisocial behaviour in the absence or presence of high-risk factors. Therefore, Portnoy, Chen, et al. (2013) reviewed neuropsychological and psychophysiology research into protective factors. According to them, identifying protective factors may explain why some individuals abstain from antisocial behaviour; it could help inform prevention and intervention programmes and aid risk assessment. Understanding these factors that protect certain youth from potentially adopting delinquent behaviour is beneficial as such awareness helps draw up preventive measures and interventions (Farrington et al., 2015; Portnoy, Chen, et al., 2013; Simões et al., 2008; Walters, 2020).

Attempts to investigate these positive outcomes focus on overcoming the adverse effects of risk exposure, coping successfully with traumatic experiences, and avoiding the negative trajectories associated with risks (Farrington & Ttofi, 2015; Simões et al., 2008; Walters, 2019). Although less emphasised, Walters (2020) stressed that studies prove that youth with positive,

prosocial, and supportive peer relations demonstrate more positive outcomes than those without such influence. Thus, positive peer relations are as essential to youth development as negative peer relations (Farrington & Ttofi, 2015; Simões et al., 2008; Walters, 2020). Walters (2020) postulated that these positive peer relations may be essential for preventing future delinquency.

Dick, Craig, et al. (2019) discussed the risk and protective factor model of delinquency prevention as an empirical-based method for reducing antisocial behaviours among youth. The model argues that when an adverse outcome is anticipated, the best strategy is to identify the potential risks and find ways to lower the risks. Thus, the expected result is intercepted and potentially averted. For example, the adverse effect is delinquent or antisocial behaviour, and the risks might be antisocial peers and lack of support. Increasing support and exposure to prosocial friends may act as interception, and the outcome of potentially becoming delinquent may be averted (Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2015, 2019; Farrington, Friedrich Lösel, et al., 2012; Hall, 2012; Lösel & Farrington, 2012). The factors that intercept to lower the risks are protective factors. "Protective factors are situations, events, settings, or characteristics that decrease the likelihood that juveniles will become delinquent" (Dick et al., 2019, p. 477).

Protective factors are defined as personal or social characteristics that predict a low probability of a negative outcome (Farrington, Loeber, et al., 2012; Hall, 2012; Lösel & Farrington, 2012) in the face of adverse circumstances. Protective factors can be distinguished as having direct protective or buffering effects (Lösel & Farrington, 2012). Direct are those factors associated with a reduced probability of antisocial behaviour regardless of whether other risk factors are present. On the other hand, buffering is always paired with risk factors and is defined based on interaction effects. These factors protect an individual from a negative outcome, either by buffering or reducing the impact of a risk factor (Lösel & Farrington, 2012). In other words, even if a risk factor is present, the simultaneous presence of a protective factor reduces the probability of antisocial behaviour (Portnoy, Chen, et al., 2013).

According to Portnoy, Chen et al. (2013) high IQ has the best-replicated protective effects, and executive functioning is also a possible protective factor. Elevated resting heart rate, enhanced autonomic fear conditioning, and attentional processing may also have protective effects. In general, superior neuropsychological and psychophysiological functioning protects against antisocial behaviour. Biological factors could help increase understanding of why some individuals refrain from adopting delinquent behaviour or becoming antisocial in the presence of

high social risk (Farrington et al., 2016; Portnoy, Chen, et al., 2013; van Hazebroek et al., 2019). According to Portnoy, Chen, et al. (2013), a need for further research exists.

Dick et al. (2019) conducted a one-year study with children in the 10th grade in an American public school to understand the effect of protective factors on delinquency and criminality. The protective factors identified include having prosocial peers, opportunities to learn and practise social and academic skills, and being recognised and rewarded for involvement and achievement. The rewards and recognition further act as positive reinforcement. Similarly, other researchers agreed that parental supervision and school engagement are protective factors (Farrington et al., 2015; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017). Positive reinforcement leads to a strong attachment to prosocial teachers and peers and fosters prosocial activities and commitment to education, which protects against delinquency (Farrington et al., 2015; Henson et al., 2017). To ensure these protective factors are enhanced, the family must enforce these prosocial interactions and restrict potentially antisocial interactions (Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2015; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017; Kabiru et al., 2014).

Parental monitoring, religiosity, and perceived self-worth support prosocial behaviour, although whether religion is a protective factor is not ascertained definitively (Dick et al., 2019; Kabiru et al., 2014). Many intervening variables, such as peer groups, impact whether religiosity results in aversion to criminality. Yet some evidence suggests that the absence of religion plays a role in fostering youth antisocial behaviour. This is possible because religiosity helps foster beliefs in a normative prosocial system that reinforces positive value systems and restricts specific behaviour. Religiosity may be a supportive structure, even without positive parenting, prosocial peers, and role models (Dick et al., 2019; Henson et al., 2017; Kabiru et al., 2014).

Preventing adverse outcomes such as aggression, delinquency, antisocial behaviour, and crime is essential. However, the need exists to understand the best intervention strategies for such behaviour and criminal activity. The management of aggression, delinquency, antisocial and criminal behaviour is discussed below. Thereafter, I conclude the chapter with a brief summary.

Implications for Treatment

Asherson and Cormand (2016) stated that aggression has a high cost to individuals and society, yet considerable uncertainty remains about the best ways to manage aggressive behaviour. Whether human aggression should be viewed as criminal behaviour to be dealt with by the criminal justice system, a mental health problem managed by healthcare services, or a

social issue managed by social support systems varies across time, local regions, and different societal groups. Criminal and psychopathic behaviour have neurobiological, social, environmental, and psychological basis (Choy et al., 2018; Glenn & Raine, 2014).

According to Choy et al. (2018), empirical evidence suggests that biological functioning, such as psychophysiological arousal and neurodevelopmental processes, can be influenced by social factors. The implication is that neurobiological systems may be malleable. Thus, biological risk factors for offending can be suitable targets for behavioural change. Therefore, treatment programmes for offending may improve by considering the biological mechanisms that underlie antisocial behaviour (Choy et al., 2018; Gillespie et al., 2018, 2019). Asherson and Cormand (2016) also reiterated that aggression does not reflect a single aspect of behaviour but is underpinned by multiple aetiological pathways, requiring different interventions (Choy et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2013; Mancke et al., 2018). Traditional treatments designed to address the psychophysiological variances are characteristically behavioural (Ling et al., 2019). Identifying distinct pathways to treating aggression targeting social, psychological, and medical treatments can improve outcomes for individuals and society regarding antisocial behaviour (Asherson & Cormand, 2016; Ling et al., 2019). Interventions in multiple spheres may mitigate the onset and continuation of antisocial behaviour.

According to the UNDOC (2019), education used as a preventive and intervention strategy in formal and informal settings is critical in reducing violence and homicide in communities. Education helps strengthen essential life skills that build resilience to crime and victimisation and increase employment opportunities. This acts as a protective factor against crime and violence. Societal problems impacted by violence and crime, such as GBV, may also be tackled differently. As GBV is fuelled by high levels of inequality, promoting equality and empowering women is another way of combating violence in society.

Chapter Summary

In this review of literature, aggressive and violent behaviour and the various contributing factors to the aetiology of such behaviour were explored. The contributing factors examined included social, psychological, biological, and genetic factors. Psychiatric disorders that have aggressive behaviour as part of the symptomology and the interplay between various mental health, genes and environmental factors in causing and perpetuating criminal behaviour were presented. Literature was presented discussing the well-researched trajectory of antisocial behaviour and the age-crime curve. After that, the review focussed on violent crime, including

murder and GBV trends locally, how violent crime impacts society, and suggested interventions. Finally, protective factors and possible solutions to the social problem of violent crime and treatment options for violent offenders were discussed. In the following chapter, I discuss the theoretical framework of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the previous chapter, I reviewed relevant literature. This chapter outlines the theoretical framework that guided the research. I used the bioecological theory of human development, derived from the developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1917–2005) work as the theoretical framework.

Overview of the Chapter

Bronfenbrenner's earlier conceptualisation of the ecological theory applied to understanding the impact of the environment, mainly the family system, on child development, framed as the ecology of human development. Over time, Bronfenbrenner's research expanded and encompassed the impact of genetics and reciprocal processes within the environment. This led to the framing of the bioecological theory of human development, widely applied to conceptualise behaviour.

As an African psychologist, I recognise that psychology has historically centred on Eurocentric perspectives. Yet, I see the importance of integrating theories from the Global North while acknowledging the unique experiences and historical subjugation of African people. As a psychologist who wishes to immerse herself in understanding the lived realities of Africans, I look to the concept of "scholarly extroverts" and "scholarly introverts", highlighted by Ratele (2017). While "scholarly extroverts" are guided entirely by theories, models and problems of the Global North, "Scholarly introverts look to the experiences and realities, streets and paths in their countries for their ontological, epistemological, methodological, and technical interests" (Ratele, 2017, p. 7).

To understand African experiences and move towards critical African psychology, we must immerse ourselves in understanding African experiences. In doing this research, I believe that, in the absence of a theoretical orientation that is specifically Namibian or African, the bioecological theory provides a lens through which such conceptualisation becomes possible. It provides a framework for conceptualising and studying to create insight into the participants.

Nwoye (2017) explored what the concept of "African personhood" is and whether the Nguni proverb "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" (translated as, "a person is a person through other persons") is true. "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" is significantly related to the African concept of

“Ubuntu” which is described by Letseka (2012) as expressing social interdependence and a profound connection with community. “Ubuntu refers to a collection of values and practices that black people of Africa or of African origin view as making people authentic human beings. While the nuances of these values and practices vary across different ethnic groups, they all point to one thing – an authentic individual human being is part of a larger and more significant relational, communal, societal, environmental and spiritual world” (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020, p. vi).

Nwoye (2017) offered an African psychological theory of personhood and concluded that, just like in other parts of the world, mature Africans are not born, they are made. Nwoye (2017) states that “because we hail from different climes and cultures, we owe the content and pattern of our personhood to the environment and cultures to which we belong” (p. 58). Furthermore, the differences between African individuals can be explained by the variation in biological endowment, their language, culture and environment (Nwoye, 2017). An understanding of the person can only be gained by studying these aspects. Gade (2012) explored the South African of African Descent’s understanding of “Ubuntu”. The findings indicated two clusters of understanding among people. The first defined ubuntu as “a moral quality of a person”, and the second cluster defined it as “a phenomenon according to which persons are interconnected” (p. 494).

Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory offers a comprehensive framework for understanding human experiences by delineating various interconnected layers that influence an individual. I believe this perspective enables an examination of the participant's experiences, emotions, and self-perceptions, which remain deeply rooted in their unique African history. Through the bioecological theory, researchers can delve into the worldviews, perspectives, and personal experiences of individuals at multiple levels that simultaneously impact them.

This approach facilitates a deeper analysis of how interconnected systems shape the individual's experiences, including the effects of a shared history of subjugation under colonisation, as well as collective economic, political, and cultural traumas. It also allows for the exploration of the person's moral and cultural identity, relationships, and lived experiences encompassing both traumas and achievements.

In this chapter, I will elaborate on the origins and evolution of the bioecological model and how it is applied to conceptualising criminal behaviour.

Causes of Crime

A crime is an action that harms others and breaches the rules of conduct legally instated by the governing body of a particular country. Therefore, the state must prevent such acts or follow punitive measures against the person committing a crime (Brown et al., 2015; Isiaka & Okaphor, 2018; Kassem et al., 2019; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2019; Wikström, 2020). Numerous attempts have been made to explain the cause of criminal behaviour. Some perspectives look to intrinsic factors such as personality as a root cause, while others look at external influences.

Crime is a result of is the outcome of an automated process referred to as the “perception-choice process” initiated and guided by the interaction of the person’s crime propensities and the setting’s criminogenic inducements” (Wikström, 2014; Wikström, 2020). The person may choose from various habitual or deliberate actions in response to a specific circumstance. The decision is impacted by the motivators, which are the goals the individual wants to attain, the individual's moral filters and self-control (Hirtenlehner & Kunz, 2016; Wikström, 2014; Wikström & Treiber, 2016). This model is based on the Situational Action Theory, first proposed by Wikström in 2005. The Situational Action Theory suggests that people commit acts of crime because they perceive these actions as a viable means to obtain the reward they seek within a specific circumstance, or when faced with external pressure, they fail to exercise the self-control required to act in line with their morals. Thus, people are the source of their actions, including criminal conduct. However, the causes of their actions, such as poverty, unemployment, and social circumstances, are situational (Hirtenlehner & Kunz, 2016; Wikström, 2014; Wikström, 2020; Wikström et al., 2018).

Kathena and Sheefeni (2017) stated that, in some perspectives, crime may be perceived as a consequence of the individual’s problems, such as low self-esteem, recklessness, and possible mental illness. Some experts note that trauma, whether directly experienced or passed down through family and cultural histories, profoundly affects individuals' psychological and behavioural growth. Studies indicate that experiencing trauma heightens the likelihood of criminal activity (Cruse & Ford, 2011; Ford, 2012; Ford, Chapman & Cruise, 2012; Fritzson et al., 2021; Mkhize et al., 2012; Seedat et al., 2009; Seedat et al., 2014; Ward et al., 2012).

The lasting effects of genocidal practices, colonisation, current policies, and systemic racism are tied to intergenerational trauma, which stems from trauma transmitted across generations. This kind of trauma results in a ripple effect, impacting not just the direct victims but

also significantly affecting their families, especially spouses and children. A deeper understanding of how such multigenerational disruptions affect familial and cultural development is crucial for effectively supporting affected families (O'Neal et al., 2018). Research shows that trauma has biological, psychological, and philosophical after-effects, often leading to various adult disorders, behaviours, and health issues. These effects can persist and impact future generations (Baez, 2016).

Other theorists focus on ecological causes, suggesting that people are prone to crime through external temptation rather than internal drives. Many scholars recognise ecological causes and focus on the importance of crime and places of crime (Eck & Weisburd, 2015; Hipp & Williams, 2020, 2021; Hirschfield et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2017). Economic and social variables, such as economic growth, income inequality, urbanisation, and education, are all considered to impact individuals' criminal behaviour.

Eck and Weisburg (2015) studied different theories that recognise the importance of locations where crime happens in explaining and understanding crime. They inferred that an area's deteriorated economic conditions, combined with numerous potential locations that may be targeted for crime, give rise to many forms of crime (Eck & Weisburd, 2015). Hirschfield et al. (2014) referred to a 30-year longitudinal study done by Hipp (2011) on 352 cities. They found that neighbourhoods with higher income inequality are impacted more by crime. In 2015, Chamberlain and Hipp reviewed crime in neighbourhoods using data from the National Neighbourhood Crime Study in 79 cities. They concluded that not only do the disadvantages in the main neighbourhoods under study impact crime rates, but the disadvantages in nearby neighbourhoods also increase violent crime in the main neighbourhoods (Chamberlain & Hipp, 2015). Hirschfield et al. (2014) concurred that in addition to crime being influenced by the characteristics of the place and the people that live there, a neighbourhood's crime risk is also influenced by the crime risk of its surroundings. There is evidence suggesting a connection between crime and specific hotspots and considering geographic spaces in crime control is essential (Braga et al., 2019; D'Orsogna & Perc, 2014; Malleson & Andresen, 2016; Rosser et al., 2017).

Several researchers examined factors that impact criminal behaviour, particularly violent criminal behaviour. To a varying degree, factors that impact violent criminal behaviour include poverty (Lymperopoulou & Bannister, 2022; Wikström & Treiber, 2016), social factors including homelessness (Aykanian & Lee, 2016), high population density (Cabrera-Barona et al., 2019),

psychological factors (Bonta & Andrews, 2016; Kamaluddin et al., 2015), and income inequality (Coccia, 2017b, 2018). Another perspective conceptualises violent behaviour through the lens of the impact of climate, particularly the impact of hot temperatures on behaviour. This perspective is referred to as the heat hypothesis. The heat hypothesis proposes that hot temperatures can increase aggressive behaviour and violence in society (Behrer & Bolotnyy, 2022; Blakeslee et al., 2018; Coccia, 2018; Harp & Karnauskas, 2018; Heilmann & Kahn, 2019), leading to violent crime.

Based on the multitude of perspectives explaining criminal behaviour, the causes of crime and criminal behaviour are multifaceted. Thus, I concur with Kathena and Sheefeni (2017) that the societal impact of crime is vast and cannot be underestimated. I recognise that individual behaviour, including criminal behaviour, occurs within a context. Consequently, crime may not be viewed in isolation from its context. Therefore, the ecological framework is valuable in conceptualising human behaviour and fitting for this study. The ecological framework has been extensively applied to childhood development and provides a complete perspective of the factors that affect specific behaviours, including the social determinants of behaviour. It can also be applied to understand less-than-desirable behaviour such as violent, aggressive, and criminal behaviour.

Using Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model to examine crime in Africa enhances our understanding of the environmental factors influencing criminal behaviour. This model highlights the need for interventions at multiple levels, including family and education improvements as well as systemic socioeconomic changes. Effective crime prevention strategies in Africa must engage with the complex dynamics of individual, family, social, and cultural influences, advocating a holistic approach that promotes positive development and addresses the underlying causes of crime to build a more equitable society.

Evolution of the Bioecological Theory

The bioecological theory is based on evidence that no single determinant factor exists for human behaviour, including violent behaviour. Multiple factors, including individual, interpersonal, and societal factors, and the interaction between these factors influence whether violence is encouraged or inhibited within a person. Therefore, violent behaviour must be investigated from a biological, psychological, and sociocultural viewpoint. Bronfenbrenner (1977) initially conceptualised the bioecological theory as the ecological model of human development. It has undergone significant expansion and evolved into the bioecological theory of human behaviour. It remains valuable in a variety of settings, offering a way to simultaneously emphasise

individual and contextual systems and the interdependent relations between these two systems (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Eriksson et al., 2018; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Mary & Antony, 2022; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017).

The ecological model of human development explains the effect of direct and indirect social interactions on the individual's development and subsequent behaviour. It describes how an individual's development is affected by varying levels of environmental systems ranging from smaller, proximal settings in which individuals directly interact to larger, distal settings that indirectly influence development (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017). The essential premise is that changes in one system will reverberate in other systems, impacting the individual on numerous levels. Thus, to understand human development, looking at the individual's immediate environment and including the larger context surrounding the individual is essential.

Phases of development: Ecological model

As mentioned, this ecological model underwent substantial developments from inception as the general ecological model until the end of Bronfenbrenner's life as the bioecological theory of human development. Rosa and Tudge (2013) described the development of Bronfenbrenner's model as distinct evolutionary phases. The phases are divided into three distinct periods identified as Phase One (1973–1979), Phase Two (1980–1993), and Phase Three (1993–2006).

Phase One. According to Rosa and Tudge (2013), Phase One (1973–1979) emphasised the ecology of human development. Bronfenbrenner (1975) explained that ecology implies a fit between the organism and its environment (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Guy-Evans, 2023; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Furthermore, for an organism to survive and thrive, the alignment between the organism and its environment must be even more precise. Development refers to an ongoing process of progressive structural and functional changes in the relationship between the organism and its environment. This concept implies a sense of continuity within the organism and its surroundings. In essence, development can only occur when the environment remains stable. Therefore, contexts that exhibit enduring qualities are essential. However, even the most stable environments undergo change. Thus, environments themselves experience development and can consequently impact and be influenced by the organisms that inhabit them, including cultural factors (Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1975), dynamic relations among the person, the environment, and the other people within that environment involve engagement in reciprocal

activities that impact the individual. The premise is that several interdependent systems operate on various levels, influencing the individual to varying degrees, depending on the proximity to the individual (Eriksson et al., 2018; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020a; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017).

Settings. In his earlier conceptualisation of the ecological system, Bronfenbrenner (1977) described the microsystem as a complex set of relations between the individual and the environment in the immediate setting, such as the home, school, and workplace, and a fit between the individual and their environment was essential for survival (Eriksson et al., 2018; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). He conceptualised this ecological environment as comprising systems at four different levels. “The ecological environment is conceived topologically as a nested arrangement of structures, and each contained within the next” (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 514). The setting is a particular place with characteristics, and the individual engages with people and multiple settings through specific activities and by filling various roles such as a son, daughter, or employee.

Microsystem. The microsystem is the innermost system containing links between the individual and the immediate environment surrounding the individual. This is where the individual engages in activities, social roles and builds relationships by interacting in face-to-face settings with physical, social, and symbolic features (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Eriksson et al., 2018; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). This environment could include but is not limited to places such as the peer group, home, school, and workplace (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Within this context, proximal processes take place and impact individual development.

Mesosystem. The mesosystem is a system of microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The mesosystem includes interrelations among major settings that the developing individual is part of. It also includes other individuals such as acquaintances and work colleagues with whom the individual has direct contact in several settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). For the child, the mesosystem may encompass interactions that link family and school, and peer groups (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Eriksson et al., 2018; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). For example, children abused at home (family experiences) might withdraw

from their friends (peer experiences) at school or youth camp. The mesosystem represents the relatedness between family, work, church, and social life for an adult. For example, having a new-born baby and limited rest (family life) may impact performance at work (work life).

Exosystem. The exosystem is an extension of the mesosystem and embraces other social structures, both formal and informal. These social structures include major institutions of society such as the world of work, the mass media, and public agencies (Erickson et al., 2018). These social structures do not themselves contain the developing person but impose upon the immediate settings of the individual, thereby exerting influence indirectly on the developing person groups (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Eriksson et al., 2018; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). According to Rosa and Tudge (2013), this indirect influence may be negative or positive through community contexts and social networks.

The exosystem encompasses the individual's community and social contexts. For the child, the exosystem may include the relations between the parents' workplace and the home the child shares with the parents. The parents' spaces, such as work, influence the child even though the child seldom enters these spaces (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). For example, the adolescent's experience of increased stress at home might be influenced by the parents' unpleasant work environment, causing the parent frustration and irritability, thereby influencing the adolescent's home life. Similarly, the worry about the adolescent's deviant behaviour at school might affect the mother's level of engagement and output at work. This may impact the mother's sleeping pattern, level of fatigue, and overall irritability, which, in turn, may affect the parents' relationships at home and trigger aggressive behaviour within the family.

Macrosystem. The macrosystem includes the economic, social, educational, legal, and political systems embedded within the three systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Eriksson et al., 2018; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). It encompasses implicit and explicit rules of society, such as laws, regulations, and norms. Macrosystems are not stagnant; they continually change over time. Change is continual across all systems, and successful relationships are based on reciprocal processes between the individual and other people such as family, friends, and others, as well as the systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Understanding the alignment and interaction of these ecological

systems between and within themselves and the individual aspects, is vital to understanding and explaining a developmental outcome (Erickson et al., 2018).

Phase Two. According to Rosa and Tudge (2013), during Phase Two (1980–1993) it paid more attention to the role of the individual and developmental processes. According to the bioecological model, to reach full human potential, an intervening mechanism connecting the individual's inner (genetics) with the outer (environment) is required (Erickson et al., 2018). This is a two-way process that occurs over time. During this phase, Bronfenbrenner focussed more on the passage of time and its impact on development and revised the concepts of microsystem and macrosystem. Bronfenbrenner started formulating a research paradigm, the Person-Process-Context model during this phase (Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

In the Person-Process-Context model, developmental outcomes are viewed as a result of interactions between the person and the context. Terms were reviewed and redefined. For instance, the macrosystem was redefined to consider the influence of culture and time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). More emphasis was placed on the close and reciprocal face-to-face interactions with the child's immediate environment, referred to as "proximal processes" (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017). An aspect of time was also introduced, referred to as "chronosystem" (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

Chronosystem. The chronosystem encompasses the changes within the individual and the environment over time and how these changes impact the individual's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017). It is the fifth and last layer in the nested structures mentioned above and grasps changes and consistency over time. The chronosystem encompasses, but is not limited to, changes over the life course of the individual, changes in the family structure, socioeconomic status, and employment, as well as the degree of changes in capacity and ability over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Crawford, 2020). For example, the impact of a couple's divorce on the child or the impact of a parent being diagnosed with a terminal illness and how this affects not just the child but the family over time. Rosa and Tudge (2013) mentioned that the chronosystem contains internal and external elements of time and historical context, and in revised models, this level includes the influence of policy.

Bronfenbrenner (1986) looked at the chronosystem model, which examines how changes and continuities over time in the environments in which the individual lives influence the

individual's development (Crawford, 2020; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). The most basic chronosystem focuses on life transitions. Two types of transitions are usefully distinguished. The normative transitions include transitions such as school entry, puberty, entering the labour force, marriage, and retirement. The nonnormative transitions include death or severe illness in the family, divorce, moving, and winning the lottery. These transitions happen throughout the lifespan and often directly impact developmental changes. A more advanced form of chronosystem looks at the cumulative effects of an entire sequence of developmental transitions over the individual's life course (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Crawford, 2020; Mary & Antony, 2022).

Phase three. Phase three (1993–2006) marked the defining of proximal processes and the development of the Process–Person–Context–Time model (PPCT) (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Bronfenbrenner's (1994) explanation of the general ecological model includes two pertinent propositions (Poppa et al., 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). The first proposition states that human development, particularly during, but not limited to, the early years, is reliant on processes of increasingly complex reciprocal interaction. These reciprocal interactions occur over an extended period between the developing person and the objects and symbols in the person's immediate environment. Bronfenbrenner referred to these interactions as proximal processes. Rosa and Tudge (2013) explained, "... the developing individual was consistently viewed as influencing and being influenced by the environment" (p. 243).

The second proposition states that the form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes differ as impacted by the characteristics of the developing person and the environment in which the processes are taking place (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa et al., 2020; Yubero et al., 2017). For instance, the mother-child interactions represent proximal processes essential to the child's development. Still, other factors such as the environmental context (e.g. the parent's economic status) and the child's characteristics also impact development significantly. The proximal processes were recognised as more impactful on the child's development than the environmental context.

Subsequently, Bronfenbrenner developed the ecological model further and started referring to the bioecological theory, recognising the essential role of genetics in development (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Erickson et al., 2018; Poppa, 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) reconceptualised nature versus nurture in human development. The bioecological theory acknowledges that genetic material does not represent

finished traits but interacts with environmental experiences in determining developmental outcomes. In this re-evaluating and further developing the ecological model, Bronfenbrenner (1994) recognised that human development involves interaction between the biological and psychological person and their environment. Therefore, heritability is highly influenced by the environment and events. Furthermore, heritability can vary significantly due to the influence exerted on the individual based on proximal processes and the quality of the environments in which the proximal processes occur (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Erickson et al., 2018; Poppa, 2020).

Bronfenbrenner (1994) emphasised that the bioecological model implies that many human beings may possess genetic potentials for development beyond those that have been realised. Unattained potentials may be actualised through increased exposure to proximal processes in the environment. This refers to the reciprocal impact between the individual and the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1994) and how these reciprocal processes may tap into genetic potential over time. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) identified four principal components in the bioecological theory that are fundamental in shaping the individual's development through dynamic, interactive relationships among these components (Crawford, 2020; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa, 2020). These components constitute the Process-Person-Context-Time model (PPCT).

Process. The first and most core component of the model is the process. The process refers to the construct encompassing the interactions between the individual and the environment, called proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Crawford, 2020; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa, 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). These proximal processes operate over time and are postulated as the primary mechanisms producing human development. The influence the proximal processes have on the developing individual is impacted considerably by the qualities of the developing person, the immediate and more remote environmental contexts, and the periods in which the proximal processes occur.

Person. The second component of the model is the biopsychological characteristics of the person (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Crawford, 2020; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa, 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Three types of person characteristics are identified. These characteristics shape the path of future development by affecting the direction and power of proximal processes throughout life. The first characteristic is the disposition of the individual. The disposition sets proximal processes in motion in a particular developmental domain and maintains their

functioning. Secondly, the bioecological properties of ability, experience, knowledge, and skill are required for the effective functioning of proximal processes at a given stage of development. Thirdly, demand characteristics encourage or dissuade reactions from the social environment. Thus, demand either fosters or disrupts the operation of proximal processes.

Combining these three characteristics in varying patterns of person structure leads to further differences in the direction and power of resulting proximal processes and their developmental effects. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) also explained that in the bioecological model, the three types of person characteristics are also incorporated into the definition of the microsystem as characteristics of parents, relatives, close friends, teachers, mentors, co-workers, spouses, or others who participate in the life of the developing person regularly over extended periods.

Context. The third component and defining property of the model is the context dimension. The bioecological model stresses the contribution of the proximal processes involving the interaction of the developing individual, not with people but with objects and symbols, to the development of the individual (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Crawford, 2020; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa, 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). These objects and symbols form part of the environment, constituting part of the context in which the individual is developing. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) stated that some environmental features may foster, and others may interfere with the development of proximal processes. Characteristics of the environment that interfere may include turbulent circumstances, instability, and chaos in the principal settings where the individual's character develops. These include the family, schools, peer groups, and neighbourhoods (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

Time. The fourth defining property of the bioecological model is the dimension of time that has three successive levels: the micro, meso, and macro (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) explain.

Microtime refers to continuity versus discontinuity in ongoing episodes of proximal process. Mesotime is the periodicity of these episodes across broader time intervals, such as days and weeks. Macrotime focuses on the changing expectations and events in the larger society, both within and across generations, as they affect and are affected by, processes and outcomes of human development over the life course. (p. 796)

The characteristics of the environment in which the developing individual exists are essential in its objective properties and in how its objective characteristics are subjectively experienced by the person living in that environment. This equal emphasis on an experiential, subjective perspective and the objective view is important because few external influences significantly affecting human behaviour and development can be described solely in objective physical conditions and events (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris 2007). Therefore, in the bioecological model, objective and subjective elements are postulated as instrumental in influencing human development. Neither alone is presumed sufficient. The complexity of this essential subjective perspective and how it impacts individuals differently depending on their characteristics, context, and processes involved (Bronfenbrenner & Morris 2007; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

According to Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007), experiential and experience are related terms but are typically applied to somewhat different spheres. Experiential typically refers to cognitive development and primarily involves shifts in how individuals perceive their surroundings as they progress through various stages of life. The life stages commence in early infancy and extend through childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and, ultimately, old age. In contrast, experience is more centred on emotions, expectations, apprehensions, aspirations, uncertainties, or personal convictions. Emotions, which start developing in early childhood and persist throughout one's life, exhibit stability and evolution. These emotions can pertain to oneself or others, particularly family members, friends, and close acquaintances, as well as the activities we participate in, including those we favour or disfavour. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) state:

But the most distinctive feature of such experiential equalities is that they are emotionally and motivationally loaded, encompassing both love and hate, joy and sorrow, curiosity and boredom, desire and revulsion, often with both polarities existing at the same time but usually in differing degrees. (p. 797)

Other objective characteristics of the environment are also influential. Not necessarily more or less influential because the two sets of forces are mutually reliant on each other; thus, their impact on each other is inevitable (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007).

During phase three, proximal processes were further developed (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Proximal processes, as described earlier, involve reciprocal interactions between the developing individual and significant others, such as persons, objects, and symbols in the individual's

immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Crawford, 2020; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Hertler et al., 2018; Poppa, 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). These processes include activities between parents-and-child and child-and-child, for example, playing, reading, and learning new skills (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Proximal processes were viewed as the most powerful predictor of human development, and individual characteristics and environmental aspects influence proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Hertler et al., 2018; Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

As explained earlier in this chapter, the bioecological theory was developed in its infancy as a more ecological model of human behaviour to explain childhood development. The model underwent substantial developments from inception and evolved into the bioecological theory of human development, taking genetics and heritability into consideration. Throughout the years, the model has been useful in conceptualising human behaviour across many spheres.

Application of the bioecological theory

Eriksson et al. (2018) depicted the usefulness of applying Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model to conceptualise mental health. Based on the bioecological perspective, mental health is determined by a reciprocal impact between individual characteristics, the ecological systems in which the individual exists, and the interplay within and among these ecological systems. The application of the bioecological model was also found valuable in other spheres such as higher education. Bond and Bedenlier (2019) concluded that the theory might be of value in conceptualising the person, the socioecological milieu and the time perspective in conceptualising the student's academic performance, success and failure. Poppa et al. (2020) found the theory applicable to conceptualise the experiences of institutionalised children. The theory is valuable in conceptualising sociological factors such as culture and race and psychological concepts such as resilience and belonging (Crawford, 2020; El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Mary & Antony, 2022). The theory is also linked to understanding psychological health and violence (DaViera & Roy, 2020) and nursing (de Sousa et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the WHO (2002) and Krug et al. (2002) pointed out that within a developmental context, this ecological model illustrates how violence may be caused by different factors at different stages of life. The bioecological model also introduced the chaos theory into this model (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). Understanding the emergence of aggression during development can be seen from the perspective of acknowledging that youth exist within environments that exert direct, indirect, and ever-changing influences on their growth and

conduct. These environments, which play a dynamic role in shaping youth development and behaviour, may at times appear unpredictable and be perceived as disorderly (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Espelage, 2014).

In the evolution of the bioecological model, Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) discussed the role of chaos in the bioecological model. Living in a chaotic environment such as a household, family, and community filled with a lack of structure, abuse, fear, anxiety, and uncertainty is troubling and undesirable for parents and children and makes it very difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle and provide security (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Espelage, 2014). Safety and security provided by a predictable, calm daily routine for oneself and one's family and household help individuals meet values and goals that give meaning to life. Safety and security also keep conflicts and disagreements relatively low. Chaos interferes with proximal processes that produce competence. On the other hand, chaos also generates proximal processes that lead to dysfunction (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). Thus, chaotic settings provide little opportunity for the individual to experience well-being and can ultimately influence the development of aggression and violence.

As I clarified earlier, the social-ecological model is a framework that centres on comprehending how the personal attributes of children interact within their environmental settings or systems (micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chronosystem), either facilitating or deterring incidents of victimisation and perpetration. Espelage (2015) applied the social-ecological framework to illustrate the perpetration and victimisation aspects of bullying. The bioecological model, together with the family stress model, has also been used successfully to study chaos within the family life and the impact on child conduct problems and callous-unemotional behaviour (Mills-Koonce et al., 2016) and on development and executive functioning (St. John & Tarullo, 2020).

The WHO (2002) used the ecological model to conceptualise child abuse and is applied to understand youth violence, IPV, and elderly abuse. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory offers a framework for understanding IPV and its impact on women, children and communities (Huang et al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; Vass & Haj-Yahia, 2023; WHO, 2002). Violence involves the individual in various contexts, and each context carries certain risk factors for violence. Interpersonal violence results from interaction among many factors at four equally important and influential levels (Sheng, 2020; WHO, 2002). Like other forms of aggressive and abusive conduct, IPV is typically acquired through exposure, interaction, and participation in one's social

surroundings. Once this violent behaviour is learned, it tends to persist as a method for resolving interpersonal conflicts throughout an individual's life. Furthermore, various aggressive and violent behaviours often go hand in hand, meaning that involvement in one type of abusive behaviour is linked to participating in other violent acts (Huang et al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; Vass & Haj-Yahia, 2023).

The ecological model explains the multifaceted nature of violence and conceptualises interpersonal violence and how an individual's intricate interactions within the five environmental systems can influence their inclination to engage in intimate partner violence behaviours (Huang et al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; Vass & Haj-Yahia, 2023; WHO, 2020).

Like the WHO, others have used the ecological model to conceptualise violence in South Africa. Ward et al. (2012) used the model to conceptualise interpersonal violence and van der Merwe et al. (2013) used the ecological model to conceptualise the complex causal and contributory factors for antisocial behaviour, violence, and the relationships between ASB and violence. They recognise the value of the ecosystemic model in recognising the connections between the various contexts that the person exists in, and therefore, none of the systems can be viewed in isolation. Sibisi (2021) also used the ecological systems theory in analysing school violence, as the root causes of such violence typically arise from a combination of personal and environmental factors specific to the individuals involved. The individual and their environment are separate but exert influence on each other. (Ward et al., 2012) defines the systems as:

“Microsystems are where daily interactions shape their behaviour most closely; exosystems comprise contexts that affect the lives of families, their neighbourhoods, extended family systems, and services; and the macrosystem comprises more distal influences such as government policies, norms and ideologies, and the economy” (p. 215).

Although the WHO (2002) refers to the ecological model, the multiple references made to the impact and influence of biological factors on the individual level imply the use of the bioecological theoretical perspective, which, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, was an evolved version of the general ecological model. The diagram below depicts the various levels formulated in the ecological model initially conceptualised by Bronfenbrenner in his seminal work in 1977.

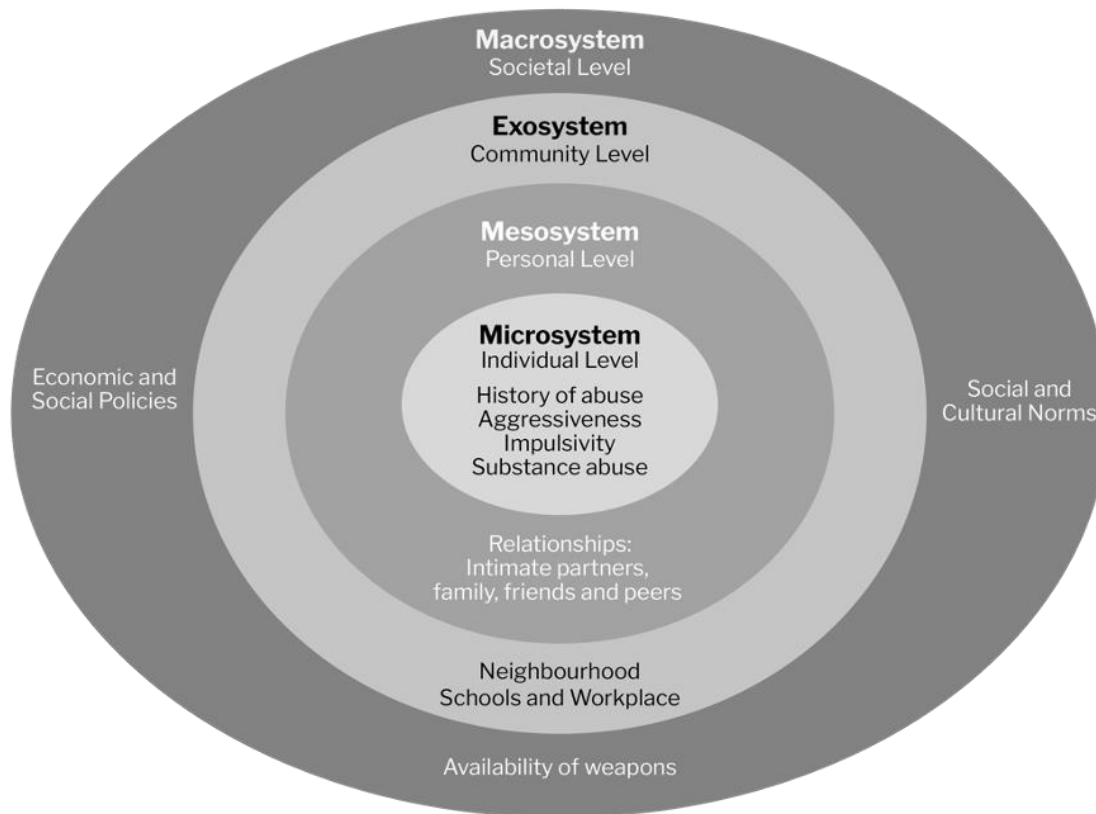


Figure 3.1
Ecological model

The model is adapted from Bronfenbrenner’s seminal work in 1977 and the WHO’s 2002 model. There is a bidirectional influence in and between the systems, depicted by the arrows with dotted lines.

Individual level (Microsystem). The individual level, resembling the microsystem, is influenced by personal history and biological factors (Hébert et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; WHO, 2002). These factors include a history of having experienced abuse as a child, being diagnosed with a personality disorder or psychological disorder, and having a history of behaving aggressively or impulsively. These may influence the way in which the individual behaves and may increase their likelihood of becoming a victim or a perpetrator of violence. Additional factors at this level may include a history of poor performance at school or substance abuse.

Personal level (Mesosystem). The personal level resembles the mesosystem. Personal relationships influence the personal level, also referred to as proximal relationships. These relationships include family, friends, intimate partners, and peers (Hébert et al., 2017; Huang et

al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; WHO, 2002). The type of relationships fostered may influence the risks of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

For instance, having friends or family members with a history of violence can impact whether a young person gets involved in violent activities or becomes a victim of violence. This influence is likely because peers and community members can all play a role in shaping an individual's behaviour through shared experiences and interactions. Also, being in a home where domestic violence is an ongoing factor and becomes the norm increases the likelihood that a child might not only be the victim of abuse but may become a perpetrator of violence because family members influence individual behaviour. Living in a household where domestic violence is a recurring issue and has become a norm raises the risk that a child may not only suffer from abuse but also adopt violent behaviour. This is because family members have a significant influence on individual behaviour. In the same way, intimate partners shape an individual's behaviour and responses.

Community level (Exosystem). The community level, resembling the exosystem, is influenced by the contexts in which social relationships occur. These include but are not limited to schools, neighbourhoods, and workplaces (Hébert et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; WHO, 2002). The environment in which a young person lives, such as a neighbourhood marked by high unemployment and elevated crime rates involving activities like drug dealing and alcohol abuse, can also elevate the likelihood of engaging in violence. These social contexts possess characteristics that exert significant influence on the individual.

For instance, residing in a neighbourhood where drug dealing, and violence are prevalent may prompt the young person to associate with peers who use drugs. As a result, the young person might be influenced to initiate drug abuse, leading to the risk of addiction. This, in turn, could lead to involvement in the illegal drug trade, potential conviction, and incarceration. All of these factors combined may contribute to the individual displaying aggressive behaviour.

According to the WHO (2002), communities where people do not stay in a specific residence for prolonged periods and move many times; communities with a highly diverse population, with little of the social “glue” that binds communities together; communities with high population density; communities with high poverty rates; and communities with low institutional support have been associated with violence.

Societal level (Macrosystem). The societal level resembles the macrosystem. These societal factors include economic and social policies that maintain socioeconomic inequalities between people. These factors may include the availability of weapons, social and cultural norms such as patriarchal societies, parental dominance over children, and cultural norms that endorse violence as an acceptable method to resolve conflicts (Hébert et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; World Health Organisation (WHO), 2002).

According to the WHO (2002), these factors play a crucial role in either promoting or restraining violence. They can either diminish the barriers against violence or generate and maintain divisions within society or tensions between various groups or nations. The WHO (2002) also points out that on a higher societal level, the health, educational, economic, and social policies that maintain high levels of economic or social inequality between social groups form part of the factors that influence violence.

Process-Person-Context-Time (P-P-C-T). As mentioned earlier, during the evolutionary phase of the development of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, the Process-Person-Context-Time (P-P-C-T) model was formulated. In the P-P-C-T model, proximal processes are viewed as progressively complex reciprocal interactions between a person and their environment (Hébert et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2015; Poppa et al., 2020; Sheng, 2023). The reciprocal interaction "must occur fairly consistently over extended periods of time" (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994, p. 317). The PPCT model sees an engaged individual as part of a vibrant, ever-changing social and ecological system. As time progresses, ongoing and mutual exchanges occur across the four levels (micro, meso, exo, and macro-systems). Consistent reciprocal interactions happen among the activities involving objects and people (proximal processes), the individual's personal traits and personality, the environment (comprising micro, meso, exo, and macro-systems), and the passage of time (chronosystem). Below is an illustration of the Bioecological model, adapted from the WHO (2002) version.

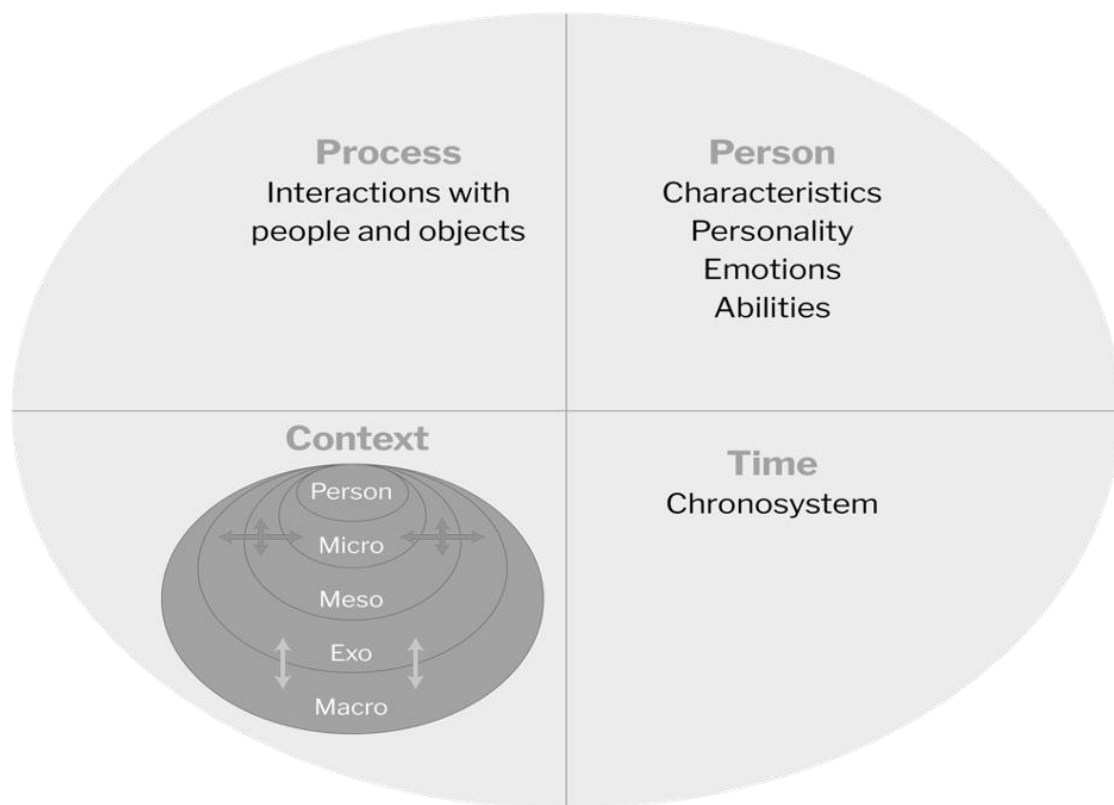


Figure 3.2
Bioecological model

The bioecological model may be used to understand how a child who was born to a mother who experienced complications associated with pregnancy and delivery (pre- and perinatal) may suffer possible neurological damage (individual-level risk factor), the neurological damage may lead to difficulty in socialising, resulting in a possible diagnosis of a psychological or personality disorder.

Those above may result in difficulty in managing behaviour in the child, such as mood swings, anger outbursts, and poor academic performance. A combination of these factors may further cause parenting problems and result in a poor parent-child relationship (relationship level risk factor). The strain caused by these factors may further impact the relationships between the rest of the siblings and the parents and their social contexts. These factors all influence the child and further impact the behavioural outcome of the child, increasing the risk of violent behaviour. Early in the child's life, the risk of violence could be predicted based on neurological damage and psychological problems. When individual-level risks coexist with other risks, such as interpersonal level risks, including poor parenting practices, the risk of violence increases.

The above illustrates how the bioecological framework draws attention to the manifold causes of violence. It also demonstrates the impact of risk factors within the family and broader community and social, cultural, and economic contexts on the individual.

Criticism of the bioecological model

Navarro and Tudge (2023) have underscored the relevance and value of the bioecological theory and the P-P-C-T model. However, they contend that, in this digital age, virtual microsystems emerge as pivotal contexts where young individuals engage in close interactions. Consequently, there is a need for researchers in the development field, irrespective of their specific areas of study, to consider how digital environments affect the outcomes they are investigating. They propose making essential adjustments to account for our highly technologically driven world while maintaining the fundamental principles of bioecological theory (Navarro & Tudge, 2023).

They suggest a significant modification to the microsystem concept, introducing the idea of two distinct types: physical and virtual microsystems. Furthermore, Navarro and Tudge (2013) underscore the significance of macro-level influences, such as cultural and subcultural variations within society, when examining development in the digital era. These modifications have a far-reaching impact on the P-P-C-T model, prompting a reevaluation of proximal processes, individual characteristics, environmental factors, and time (Navarro & Tudge, 2023). Ashiabi and O'Neal (2015) examined proximal processes and contextual processes and their varying impact on children's development. Their findings corroborated that the impact of contextual factors and proximal processes is contingent upon an individual's traits and the particular developmental outcome in question. However, the evidence supporting that proximal processes exert a more dominant influence on development than contextual factors is only partially substantiated (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015).

Ettekal and Mahoney (2017) have questioned the conventional idea of nesting within ecological systems theory. In the traditional view, various systems are depicted as nested, with each system contained within the next. However, this nesting concept may not precisely capture the interconnectedness of these systems. For instance, if we consider out-of-school activities as a microsystem and the policies related to funding for these activities as an exosystem, ecological systems theory would suggest that activities are essentially a subset of activity policies.

Conversely, an alternative network-based approach would see these as two distinct systems existing in separate settings—one involving the focal individual and the other not. These

systems influence each other through the patterns of social interactions among individuals directly and indirectly connected to both systems. The network approach shifts the focus away from the physical location of social interactions (where the activity is seen as the microsystem) to the individuals engaged in those social interactions within that setting (where the set of relationships among individuals within the activity becomes the microsystem). Advocates of the network approach argue that it better captures the complex overlap among individuals' ecological environments (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the theoretical model that underpins the research. I started the chapter by elucidating the relevance of looking at criminal behaviour from an ecological perspective. I recognised the relevance of employing the bioecological theory in conceptualising violent behaviour by looking at the individual characteristics of the participants and the context in which they exist. Therefore, I considered the manifold factors that impacted their development and may have subsequently impacted their behaviour, influencing the pathway to violent outcomes. After that, I explained the evolution of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of human development from its infancy as a general environmental through its evolution as the bioecological model. I concluded this chapter by illustrating how this bioecological model may be relevantly applied to violent behaviour, and I wrapped up with some critique. Chapter four explains the research design and methodology of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methods I employed to conduct an in-depth exploration of the offenders convicted of violent crimes and incarcerated at the Windhoek CF, maximum-security unit.

Overview of the Chapter

In this chapter, I outline the research design, discuss the study participants, and the research procedures followed. I also give a detailed account of the data collection and analysis process. Challenges I encountered during the research process are addressed, as well as ethical considerations and the chapter concludes with a concise chapter summary.

Research Design

A research design is the element that turns the research questions into a practical project. It is an essential part of the research process, provides a framework, and encompasses the theoretical approach, data collection and analysis methods, sampling plan, and research procedures (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Miles et al., 2014). The research design guides the researcher's choice of methods and procedures employed to answer the main research question and depends on the purpose of the research. The question "How do the histories, experiences, and personalities of offenders convicted of violent crimes, specifically murder, contribute to their personal identities and motivations for committing violent crimes?" guided this research.

I aimed to explore the personalities, life experiences, and relationships of the offenders and to generate insight into the factors that impacted and influenced them to commit violent crimes. I chose a qualitative research design because it will produce the most meaningful results. Qualitative research stresses investigating and comprehending the meaning an individual or a group ascribes to a social or human problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). How people experience phenomena, make sense of their experiences, and explain their behaviour are the essence of qualitative investigations (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Austin & Sutton, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Miles et al., 2014). Within the qualitative framework, I decided on a descriptive research design. Descriptive studies aim to determine and describe the characteristics of the variables in the situation (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019; Al-Ababneh, 2020). Therefore, the descriptive research design was the most suitable to answer the research questions, and it helped me present a close to accurate description of the participants.

Depending on the framework and aim of the researcher, the researcher may direct the study toward utilising specific methods to collect and analyse data, including structured or unstructured interview approaches (Asenahabi, 2019; Austin & Sutton, 2014). This descriptive design utilised qualitative interviews, utilising a semi-structured research design. Various data-gathering methods, including observation, assessments, inventories, interviews, and questionnaires, are valuable in qualitative research. Choosing methods that have been proven reliable, that the researcher is skilled and knowledgeable in, and that have more strengths than weaknesses is advised (Almalki, 2016). Information suitable for studying aggressive and violent behaviour includes self-reports, history of arrests, scores on personality inventories and other abilities such as intelligence, and reports from significant others (Eisner & Malti, 2015; Ravyts et al., 2021). I utilised interviews and offender case documents in this study.

Population and Sample

I define and discuss the research population and sampling procedures in the following section. After that, the processes I followed in selecting the sample, which consisted of ten offenders, are explained.

Population

The difference between general, target, and accessible populations should be well-defined to confirm the credibility of the sample, sampling techniques, and research findings (Asiamah et al., 2017). Population refers to the entire set of cases or individuals from which the researcher draws the sample (Omair, 2014; Taherdoost, 2016). The target or total population is the sum of individuals who have specific, more defined characteristics of interest in common. The accessible population is the individuals who fit the characteristic of interest and are available and accessible (Asiamah et al., 2017; Omair, 2014) and the final sample is drawn from this accessible population.

Based on the information obtained from the report on Prison Reform by Schultz and Bruyns (2021), the Namibian Correctional Facilities' (NCS) general population of sentenced offenders in 2018/2019 comprised 3994 males and 113 females. This population represents the entire population of offenders from which the sample was drawn. The target population for this study consisted of offenders serving long-term sentences. Therefore, looking at the population of offenders serving long-term sentences is in 2018 to February 2019 when I selected the sample and conducted the interviews is relevant. Due to limited statistics, 2018/2019 offenders' sentence

data is unavailable. Fortunately, Schulz and Bruyns (2021) provided useful data on 31 March 2020.

Table 4.1 was extracted from Schulz and Bruyns' (2021) report on the length of offender sentences on 31 March 2020. This table provides valuable information about the long-term sentence criteria required for this study population.

Table 4.1

Sentence length: 31 March 2020

Sentence length	Sentenced offenders in NCS
0-1 year	2823
1-3 years	1357
4-10 years	172
11-20 years	72
21 to 30 years	15
31 to 35 years	3
36 to 40 years	0
41 to 50 years	1
More than 50 years	1
Life sentences	11
Habitual criminals	0
State President Decision Patient	19
Total	4374

In March 2020, the population of offenders serving sentences over ten years was 92. The general population for this study thus was taken from a small population of offenders, who are all serving long-term sentences of more than 21 years. Unfortunately, the same data for 2018/2019 was not available. However, although the offender population might have changed, the change was most likely not by very large numbers based on data from the National Crime Statistics provided in Table 1.5 in Chapter One. Therefore, I assumed the population of offenders serving long-term sentences would not have changed substantially between October 2019, when I finalised the interviews, and March 2020. Thus, I assume that the numbers are representative of the target population identified in 2018/2019 when the sample was selected, and the interviews were conducted.

The target population for this study consisted of offenders serving long-term sentences for violent crimes, particularly murder, in Windhoek. CF. Schulz and Bruyns (2021) indicated that narcotic, economic and violent crimes were the most prevalent offences for which offenders were convicted and sentenced during the period 2015-2020. Of these, violent crimes were 22%. The complete list of offenders convicted based on specific crime categories is attached as

Appendix A. Table 4.2 indicates those convicted of violent and sexual offences. I have included sexual offences such as rape because it is part of violent crimes, and some participants in this study have convictions of sexual offences.

Table 4.2

Convictions according to crime categories: Violent offences and sexual offences

CRIME CATEGORY	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Violent offences					
Culpable homicide	3	3	6	2	1
Murder	10	12	8	6	6
Attempt murder	5	2	1	3	1
Robbery	7	8	21	15	9
Violence against persons	51	83	51	50	39
Escaped from lawful custody	10	9	5	16	4
Possession of illegal firearms	2	2	1	2	1
Other	7	13	24	20	29
Subtotal	95	132	117	114	46
Sexual offences					
Buggery	2	2	1	1	2
Rape	8	4	4	2	5
Statutory rape / Child molestation	0	1	0	0	0
Subtotal	10	7	5	3	7

The accessible population consisted of the offenders incarcerated at the Windhoek CF, in the maximum-security unit. The participants were convicted of violent crimes, mostly murder. The inclusion criteria were the level of violence in their offence, their sentence length, and being in the maximum-security unit. The CMO identified the accessible population from which the sample was drawn.

Sampling

I defined the general, target, and accessible population for this study in the population section above and the final sampling process is discussed below. Sampling is a process of selecting subjects from a defined population to represent that population. Samples should provide rich data for analysis and should allow interpretations or generalisations about a population (Moser & Korstjens, 2018; Pandey & Pandey, 2015; Taherdoost, 2016). The quantitative paradigm relies more on probability sampling, using random selection of larger representative samples, while the qualitative paradigm relies more on deliberate, non-probability sampling, accessing smaller samples (de Vos et al., 2011; Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

For this study, I employed purposive sampling, a subtype of non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling, also referred to as judgemental sampling, enables the researcher to rely on their judgement in selecting cases that meet requirements (Bless et al., 2013; de Vos et al., 2011; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Purposive sampling allowed me to use my judgement to select suitable participants. Having committed a violent murder, having a long-term sentence, and being detained in the maximum-security unit in Windhoek CF were the criteria. From the accessible population, I was able to select the final sample of willing participants with the assistance of the CMO. Table 4.3 illustrates the sentence length of the participants in the current study.

Table 4.3

Sentence length: Participants

Sentence range	Participants	Sentence length
21 to 30 years	1	22 years
31 to 35 years	2	35 and 35 years
36 to 40 years	1	38 years
41 to 50 years	3	46, 47, and 50 years
More than 50 years	2	55 and 60 years
Life sentences	1	Indeterminate

Table 4.4 below indicates the number of offenders detained in the various security units in the different Namibian correctional facilities.

Table 4.4

Number of inmates as per security classification: 31 March 2020

Sentence group	Number of inmates
Unclassified	2207
Minimum	255
Low medium	666
Medium	949
Maximum	297
Total	4374

In March 2020, there were 297 offenders in Namibia's four maximum security units. Based on the percentage increase in the entire offender population from 2018/2019 and 2019/2020, the offender population in the maximum-security units may have also shown an increase of 13%. Of these offenders in the maximum-security units, the focus was only on offenders serving long-term sentences for violent crimes such as, but not limited to, murder, culpable homicide, and rape.

I approached the correctional service to identify the offenders who matched the inclusion criteria. The CMO initially identified 20 willing offenders who formed the accessible population. I reviewed the case files of those 20 offenders and used my judgement to refine the sample further. Offenders who did not entirely fit the criteria were omitted, and only 13 were identified as matching the requirements. At a later stage, one offender withdrew from the study. Two offenders were transferred to another correctional facility before their interviews were conducted. It was not possible to reach them after their transfer. Thus, they were excluded. The final sample, therefore, consisted of ten offenders. Nine offenders were convicted of murder, and one of attempted murder and rape. Table 4.5 illustrates the final sample and the offence type.

Table 4.5

Sample: Offence type

Offender pseudonym	Offence type
Offender1	Count 1 – Rape Count 2 – Rape Count 3 – Attempted murder, assault
Offender2	Count 1 – Murder Count 2 – Murder Count 3 – Assault with grievous bodily harm (GBH) Count 4 – Malicious damage to property Count 5 – Attempted murder Count 6 – Attempted murder Count 7 – Attempted murder Count 8 –attempting to defeat and/or obstruct the cause of justice
Offender3	Count 1 – Murder Count 2 – Murder Count 3 – Attempted murder
Offender 4	Murder with direct intent
Offender 5	Murder and rape
Offender 6	Count 1 – Murder Count 2 – Robbery Count 3 – Attempted murder. Count 4 – Malicious damage to property. Count 5 – Possession – cannabis
Offender 7	Double Murder
Offender 8	Murder and Robbery
Offender 9	Murder
Offender 10	Count 1 – Murder Count 2 – Attempted murder- guilty on assault with GBH

Qualitative research favours smaller samples to gain insight into the complexity, depth, variation, or context surrounding a phenomenon under study (Gentles et al., 2016). True to the nature of qualitative studies, in this study, I intended to obtain rich information from a small

sample, a maximum of ten candidates, each with two or three significant others. I was not able to include three significant others for each participant. Two participants’ significant others lived in remote areas, and access to cellular networks and electricity was unreliable. I attempted to contact them unsuccessfully on numerous occasions. One participant chose not to provide contact details for significant others. Therefore, the final sample consisted of ten participants, also referred to as offenders or inmates throughout this thesis and two significant others each, for seven participants. One CMO was overseeing all ten participants. Thus, ten interviews were conducted with him. Table 4.6 illustrates the final sample and the number of interviews conducted.

Table 4.6

Sample: Interviews

Offender pseudonym	Significant other interviewed	CMO	No of Interviews
Offender 1 (Anthony)	Mother Father	CMO	4
Offender 2 (Brandon)	Unreachable	CMO	2
Offender 3 (Cleophas)	Cousin 1 Cousin 2	CMO	4
Offender 4 (David)	Unavailable	CMO	2
Offender 5 (Eliphas)	Sister 1 Sister 2	CMO	4
Offender 6 (Freddy)	Mother Cousin	CMO	4
Offender 7 (Gerson)	Unreachable	CMO	2
Offender 8 (Hannes)	Father Mother	CMO	4
Offender 9 (Ismael)	Sister Mother	CMO	4
Offender 10 (Jacob)	Mother Sister	CMO	4

Procedure and Timeline

Procedure: Summary of timeline

The procedure, the timeline, and the process are outlined in Figure 4.1 below.

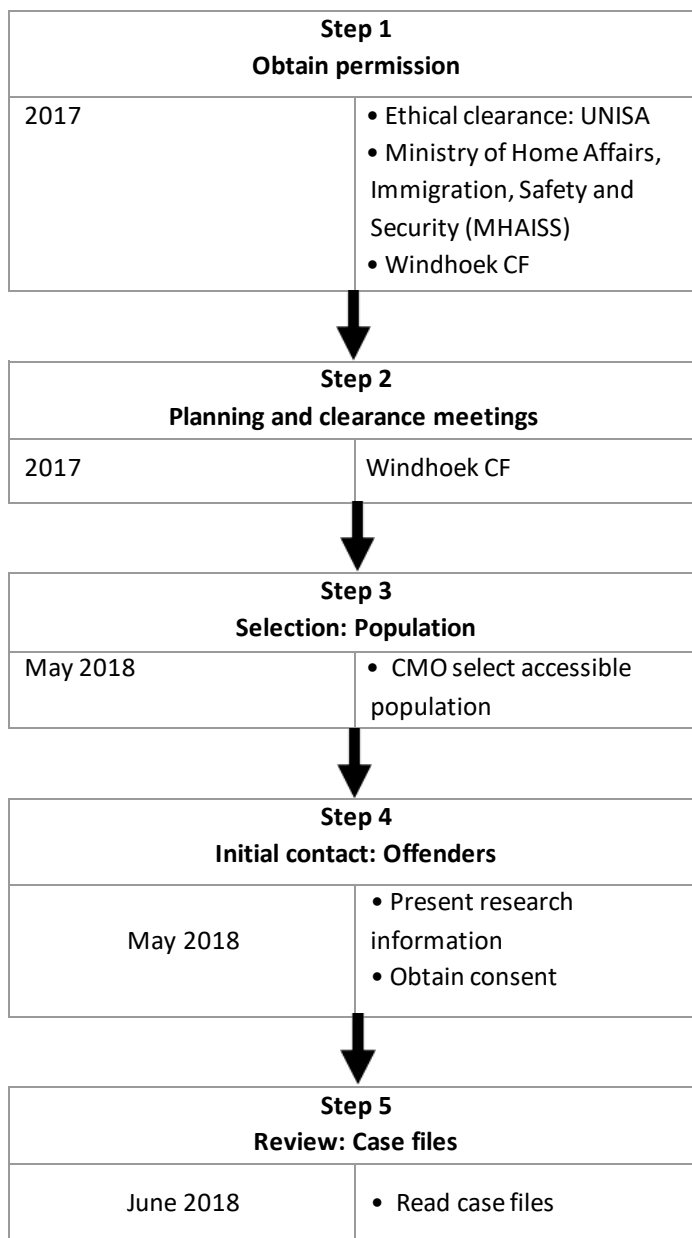


Figure 4.1

Procedure: Process model

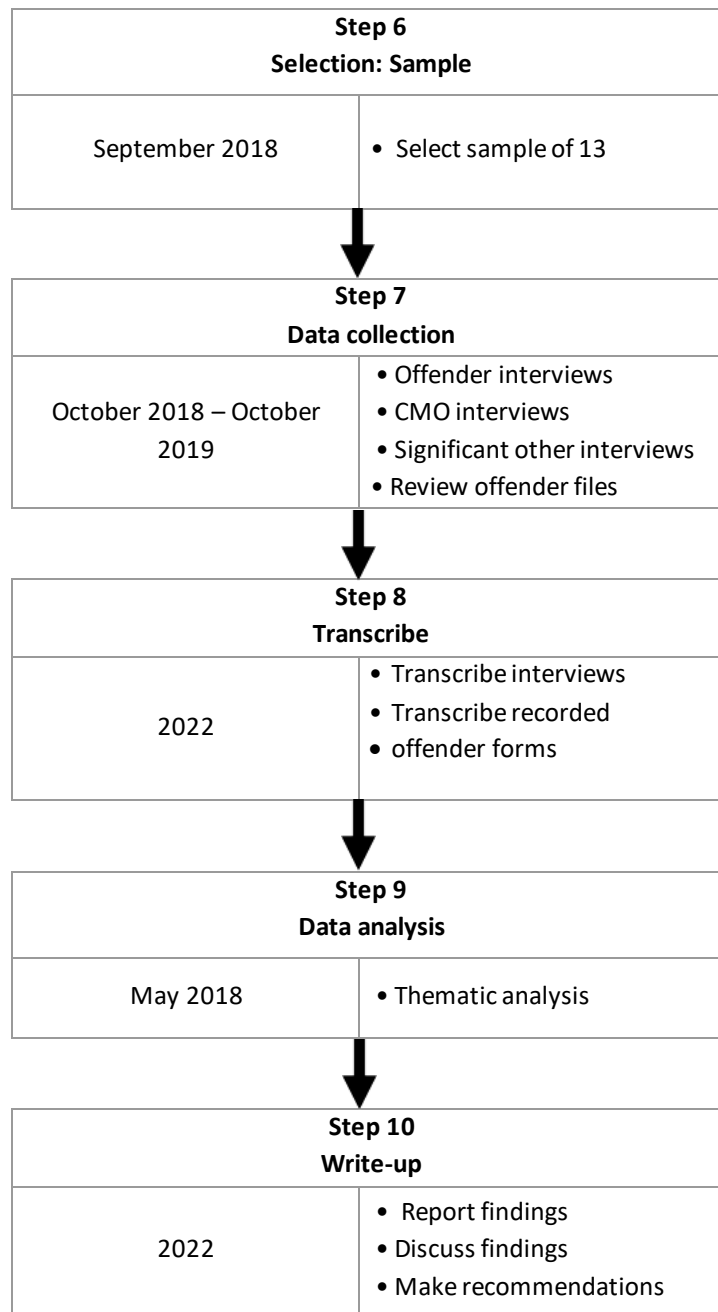


Figure 4.1

Procedure: Process model continued

It is important to consider the practical aspects of how research is conducted. Planning, actions taken, and timelines are essential. Only through practical actions such as doing research will there be an understanding of phenomena. In this section, I discuss the procedures employed, actions taken during the research process, the challenges encountered, and how I dealt with challenges.

Procedure: Actions taken

Obtain permission. The first step in this research process was to obtain permission from various bodies and organisations. Ethical clearance from the Ethical Clearance Committee at the University of South Africa (UNISA) (Appendix B) was obtained in November 2016. Once this permission had been obtained, I contacted the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAISS), which governs the NCS, for permission to conduct the research (Appendix C). When I had obtained permission from the MHAISS, the Commissioner General of NCS was contacted and granted permission.

While waiting for approval, I trained a research assistant to assist with administrative tasks, mainly during data collection. The research assistant was valuable in helping me manage the volume of data and all the administrative aspects that go hand in hand with conducting research. The research assistant has a bachelor's degree in psychology. At that time, she had been working in psychology for three years as an administrator and personal assistant to a clinical psychologist. She was aware of the highly confidential nature of the assessments, the personal information of the participants, and the sensitive information obtained during interviews. She signed a confidentiality agreement to participate in the study as an assistant and protect the anonymity of the participants.

Planning and clearance meeting. The second step in the process was to contact the Windhoek CF. The Windhoek CF was chosen as the appropriate setting for this study because it is the largest of only three facilities in Namibia with a maximum-security unit.

Meetings with WCF. I held several meetings with various NCS staff members based at Windhoek CF. The meetings were to discuss procedures and expected conduct in the facility, ensure clearance was permitted in terms of security measures, discuss timelines for interviews, and arrange for the offenders' selection, assessment, and interviews. As civilians, my research assistant and I required substantial information before being allowed to visit the facility outside of visiting hours frequently and to enter areas designated for staff only. We were informed of the expected dress code and what constitutes contraband, i.e. items such as cigarettes, mobile phones, and laptops that we were not allowed to have with us when we entered the facility. We were informed of visiting hours, mealtimes, and daily lock-up times that would not be optimal for us to make appointments. We were allowed to ask questions and were given additional information needed when doing the Windhoek CF research.

Selection of population. The third step in the procedure entailed the selection of the accessible population. The CMO selected 20 offenders that matched the sampling criteria mentioned under the population section.

Initial contact with offenders. During the fourth step, I contacted the accessible population. Once the CMO had selected the offenders, he scheduled a meeting for me with the 20 offenders who were potential participants. During this meeting, the purpose of the study, procedures, and the consent form (Appendix D) were explained verbally and provided to the offenders in writing. Additional questions were answered, and the offenders who agreed to participate signed consent forms at the end of the meeting. The data collection process was initiated only after the participants understood the purpose of the research and the process and the consent forms had been signed. This was essential because I required permission from the offenders before reviewing their case files.

Reviewing case files. The fifth step in the procedure entailed reviewing the offenders' case files in the presence of the CMO. I read through the offenders' case files and narrowed down the participants.

Selection of sample. Step six involved making the final selection of participants. The case files were pivotal in enabling me to select the participants who fit all the sampling criteria. For example, one offender was excluded at this stage because although serving a long-term sentence in the maximum-security unit, he was convicted of stock theft, not a violent crime. After reviewing the case files, 13 offenders were selected as the final sample.

Data collection. Step seven in the procedure was the data collection through interviews with the offenders, the CMO and the significant others. Additional information was obtained by reviewing the various documents in the offenders' case files. The research assistant helped with scheduling interviews with the CMO and significant others, receiving emails from the CMO, storing forms received from NCS and other entities, and storing the data collected during the data collection phase. She also assisted by operating the recording device and making additional notes during the interviews. This is discussed in detail in the Data Collection section.

Transcribe. The eighth step of the procedure involved transcribing the recorded interviews and information in the case files. The documents in the case files were transcribed because they were not available electronically, and I was not allowed to make copies of them. Therefore, I read the information out loud and recorded it. This process involved finding a

qualified transcriber and transcribing some of the recordings myself. This process also involved double-checking the transcriptions completed by the transcriber. The process is described in detail under semi-structured interviews.

Data analysis. Step nine in the procedure was data analysis, using thematic analysis (TA). A detailed discussion of the data analysis process, partially aided by software, will be discussed in the Data Analysis section.

Write-up. Step ten was the final step in the procedure. This was the process of completing the write-up of the results. This involved reporting the findings, discussing the findings, and making recommendations.

Procedure: Challenges

I encountered a few obstacles during the research process. Below is a list of the main challenges.

- There was only one CMO overseeing 13 participants. I was not allowed to make copies of the case files, and the CMO had to be present and oversee the handling of the case files. Interviews were conducted only when the CMO was available to escort the offenders to the interview venue, supervise the interview, and return to their unit after the interviews. The CMO's work schedule was the main challenge during the data collection. Some interviews and appointments to review case files were rescheduled because of ad-hoc meetings the CMO attended, or because the CMO was on leave, or absent for the day. This caused major delays in completing the data collection.
- Not being allowed to copy the case files presented further challenges with time. Having to read, record, and transcribe the information further lengthened the process significantly.
- All the interviews were also conducted around a strict routine followed in the correctional facility. For example, on several occasions, at the time of a scheduled interview, there were unexpected delays, including the CMO's work-related engagements, or the CMO's unavailability for personal reasons. Several times, the CMO asked security personnel to escort the participants, and the security personnel would also be delayed. When the interviews started late, they would be terminated before they had been concluded, and the interview would have to continue at another time convenient for the CMO. This was due to the strict schedule of the offenders, including daily lock-up at 15h00.
- An additional challenge that caused stress and frustration during the research process was the delay in finding a suitable and capable transcriber in Windhoek. As a student doing

research and a full-time employee with family responsibilities, I had very little time to transcribe all the interviews and case files by myself. However, finding a suitable transcriber proved challenging due to the interviews' sensitive content and extensive length. Consequently, the transcription and data organisation process extended over nearly 18 months.

Data Collection Tools and Techniques

In this section, I explain the tools and techniques used for data collection. Firstly, I clarify the role of the researcher in qualitative research. The discussion then proceeds to the semi-structured interviews with the offenders, the CMO, and the significant others. The interviews were the main data collection methods and yielded the main data for the data analysis in this study.

The role of the researcher in the qualitative data collection process

In the qualitative research approach, the researcher is the main data collection instrument, responsible for managing the data throughout the various stages of collecting, analysing, and reporting (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Nowell et al., 2017; Shufutinsky, 2020). However, the researcher, as the main instrument, is one of the chief criticisms of qualitative research. Therefore, the researcher must be conscious of personal biases, values, and perceptions that may influence the topic under study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Shufutinsky, 2020). As I mentioned in Chapter One, my interest in crime and the offender population was shaped by my personal experience of losing my brother due to manslaughter. I became intrigued by the criminal mind and the consequences of crime, particularly violent behaviour. I, therefore, pursued clinical psychology as a career. Professionally, I worked with forensic patients in the state psychiatric facility for two years, first as an intern psychologist in 2011 and then as a psychologist in 2012.

In addition to gaining experience in evaluating offenders for the court, working for the state psychiatric facility gave me invaluable insight into the inmate population. I was tasked not only with forensic evaluations but also with providing psychotherapy to inmates from the general correctional facility population. In private practice, my interest in forensic psychology intensified after I had lost yet another close family member due to murder in 2015. Therefore, it made sense to deepen my understanding of offenders by focusing my doctoral thesis on violent offenders. My prior experience with the offender population is invaluable, and it gave me valuable insight and awareness that I brought to this study. However, I remained vigilant because the same background that provides valuable insight also increases the probability of personal bias. The

potential existed for personal bias to influence how I perceived, made sense of, and interpreted the data.

Bias in research practice happens due to explicit or implicit value assumptions or worldviews affecting the implementation of research methods and outcomes (Almalki, 2016; Asenahabi, 2019; Fusch & Ness, 2015). As the use of qualitative methods increases in social science research, more effort has been made to address the criticism of the potential lack of rigour and subjective nature. I acknowledged this probability and made every effort to ensure objectivity. The specific measures I took to ensure I remained objective and yielded reliable results are discussed below in the data collection and analysis sections. Among these efforts was reflexivity, which is recommended to minimise bias and strengthen rigour in qualitative research. Reflexivity refers to the researcher maintaining an awareness of their influence and opinions on what they are studying and, concurrently, of how the research process is affecting them (Connolly, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Mackieson et al., 2018; Probst, 2015).

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews. A qualitative interview is a good source of information that enables the researcher to gain insight into the emotions and cognitions of the interviewee (Cruickshank, 2012). Qualitative interviews, also called semi-structured interviews, allow the researcher to pre-plan questions and allow the interviewee to elaborate on and collect opinions on an issue (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017; Alsaawi, 2014).

An interview schedule aids in pre-planning questions, ensures that specific topics are covered, and allows the researcher to flexibly facilitate a meaningful discussion between the researcher and participant (Dempsey et al., 2016). The order in which the questions are asked may change during the interview, and the interviewer may use additional questions and prompts as needed. However, the interview schedule is followed as far as the topics and themes of the questions are concerned (Dempsey et al., 2016). A semi-structured interview schedule, adapted from the SAPS questionnaires for sex offenders, was used to interview the offenders, their significant others, and the CMO (see Appendix E, Appendix F, and Appendix G). The interview schedule focused on exploring the offenders' childhood, adolescent and adulthood problem behaviour, perceptions, and criminal history.

Practical aspects of conducting qualitative interviews require the researcher to prepare the interview tools, such as the recorder, before the interview. Restrictions limit what researchers

can bring into correctional facilities (Field et al., 2019). Often computers, recording equipment and mobile phones are restricted. In line with the reports by Field et al. (2019), as a researcher, I was not allowed to enter the correctional facility with a mobile phone. Thus, I purchased a recording device that was permitted in the facility. Recording the semi-structured interviews is helpful because the volume of the information is so large that note-taking alone will not sufficiently record all the detail, and when recorded, you can listen again to pick up the tone and timbre of the voices (Alsaawi, 2014; Grosseohme, 2014).

In this study, the semi-structured interviews of the offenders provided the primary data for the analysis. These interviews were supplemented by collateral information collected through semi-structured interviews with the significant others and the CMO. The average interview time with the offenders was 90 minutes, and 20 minutes with the significant others and the CMO. As recommended by qualitative researchers, the interviews were audio-recorded, and I made additional notes while conducting the interviews. I ensured that the offenders were informed and consented to be recorded before the interviews (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017; Alsaawi, 2014; Grosseohme, 2014). Recording the interviews and Case Notes in this study were essential, mainly because thematic analysis, the data analysis method used in this study, requires verbatim recording of the interviews.

The recordings were uploaded onto the laptop computer and deleted from the recording device as soon as we returned to the office following an interview, and the transcribing was done from the laptop. I stored the recordings on an institutional laptop computer from the Namibian University of Science and Technology (NUST), where I am employed as a lecturer. I also installed ATLAS.ti 8 on this computer and utilised the institutional licence for my research purposes. The computer is password and firewall-protected and has an institutional antivirus managed by the institutional Information and Technology (IT) department. Additional notes on the study and MCMI-IV answer sheets were kept in a secure, locked cabinet at my clinical practice, amongst other confidential files.

The methodology is influenced by the ontological and epistemological perspectives (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014; Wright et al., 2016). Researchers who adopt a more relativist ontology and constructionist epistemology emphasise researcher reflexivity and the co-construction of reality (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014; J. L. Johnson et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2016). Reflexivity refers to the potential influence of the researcher's bias and preconceived ideas may influence decisions and actions, thus the outcome of research (J. L. Johnson et al., 2020; Stacey, 2019; Wright et al.,

2016). Reflexivity is critical to be considered early in the research process. As a researcher with a constructionist perspective, I explored the subjective experiences of the offenders and how they impact and shape their reality. I know my subjective experiences, thoughts and perspectives and their impact on how I view and shape my reality. Hence, as an instrument in this research, my subjective perspective is essential and should be noted. For transparency and credibility, I had to keep track of what I was thinking, feeling, and doing during the research process and how my inner world impacted the research process and, ultimately, the outcome.

Therefore, I kept reflective field notes from the onset of the proposal to the completion of the data analysis and report writing, particularly during the data collection and analysis process. The research assistant also made additional notes during the interviews. These are essential field notes to supplement the notes recorded in the reflexive diary. The reflexive diary is necessary for recording logistics, methodological decisions, as well as reflections on the researcher's personal values, interests and further insights that may have an impact on their interpretations (Forero et al., 2018; Nowell et al., 2017; Stacey, 2019). The reflexive diary assists in the co-construction of the reality of the researcher and the participants and is very valuable.

Semi-structured interviews are advantageous because they provide ample opportunity to explore the subject, probe, and get in-depth information on the participants' experiences (Adams, 2015; Alsaawi, 2014; Austin & Sutton, 2014). In this study, the semi-structured interviews enabled in-depth information to be obtained. Interviewers are also encouraged to ensure that the interviewees have sufficient information regarding the research and that the interview setting is where the interviewees feel comfortable. Keeping the questions interesting and showing interest and appreciation for the interviewee's responses and involvement in the study is essential (Alsaawi, 2014; Percy et al., 2015). Thus, I was conscious of remaining focused, cautious, and sensitive and listening carefully so as not to miss any cues and to ensure that relevant topics were not missed. I intentionally remained respectful to the participants, expressed appreciation, and was transparent throughout the process. I continuously tried to adhere to interviewing techniques essential for semi-structured interviewing, as Adams (2015) suggested. Based on Adams's (2015) suggestions, I took a casual, conversational approach deemed pleasant, neutral, and professional, allowing probing in a relaxed, comfortable setting without judgement (Adams, 2015). This allowed me to establish rapport with the participants.

Adams (2015) encourages interviewers to occasionally repeat what the participant said, concisely, in one or two sentences, using mainly the participant's own words. This active listening

technique helped strengthen the perception that I am captivated and remain interested, and I understand what the participant is sharing (Adams, 2015; Austin & Sutton, 2014). I used prompts and specific questions to encourage participants to elaborate, but most of the time, simply using the phrase mmm, or repeating what the participant said was sufficient to encourage them to elaborate and continue sharing their experience. When using semi-structured interviews, the actual conversation may diverge from the original order in the interview guide. Thus, the interviewer must be flexible and steer the conversation back to the intended area (Adams, 2015; Austin & Sutton, 2014). The interviewer must also be able to pursue new areas of interest that are relevant and open during the interview (Adams, 2015). I believe I was successful in doing this.

Namibia recognises 13 languages as national languages, with English as its official language according to the country's language policy, but most Namibians speak English as a second or third language (Norro, 2022). Most offenders incarcerated in Namibian correctional facilities have only basic primary school education or no education, although approximately 60% are proficient in basic English (Bruyns & Schulz, 2013). The accessible offender population from which the sample for this study was drawn comprised different ethnic groups. The final sample consisted of ten non-White men. One, was Coloured, three were Nama, one was Nama/Coloured, two were Damara, one was Damara/Herero, and two were Ovambo. Only one participant was unable to understand English. However, most were fluent in Afrikaans and preferred to speak Afrikaans in the interview. David could not speak Afrikaans and could understand very minimal English. His interview was conducted with the help of an interpreter. Although Ismael could converse in Afrikaans and English, he was not fluent in both languages. Therefore, the interview was conducted in Damara. The remaining eight interviews were conducted in Afrikaans.

As a researcher, I am fluent in Damara, Afrikaans, and English. Therefore, I was able to do all the interviews myself. I enlisted the assistance of the CMO to interpret during the interview with David. I ensured that I instructed and coached the CMO while considering guidelines on interpreting and translating research material (Heim & Tymowski, 2006; Shiva et al., 2010). Fortunately, David had a basic understanding and some questions he would answer without waiting on the interpreter. Some questions would require more clarification than others to ensure he understood correctly. Most often, even when he understood the questions, his responses would be in Oshiwambo.

The transcribing was done by a transcriber who had previously worked as a professional transcriber for the court. After the transcriber had completed each transcription, I reviewed each

recording and accompanying transcription and made relevant edits to ensure everything was captured accurately. The documents in the offender case files were transcribed verbatim by a third-year university student studying Human Resource Management. I also double-checked every transcribed document.

Semi-structured interviews: Challenges. I encountered several challenges during the semi-structured interview process, and these challenges are outlined below.

Time. One main drawback of qualitative interviews, such as semi-structured interviews, is that they are time-consuming, starting from organising the interview, conducting the interview, transcribing, and finally using the transcribed material as data for the analysis (Adams, 2015; Alsaawi, 2014). The challenge of time was encountered during this research. Several participants placed much more emphasis on narrating the events surrounding the crime and the incident itself than focusing on their life experiences before committing the crime. It required time-consuming, probing, and redirecting the interview to keep them focused.

An example was with Eliphas, who spent 30 to 45 minutes talking about the incident. It required significant encouragement, probing, and redirecting to have him focus the discussion on his childhood and life experiences. During this time, it was essential that I remain interested and not reveal impatience or frustration. Due to the slow progression of his account, that interview was extended to the following day.

Interviewee reluctance and accessibility. Another challenge of using semi-structured interviews in this study was that some interviewees refused to answer certain questions or changed their enthusiasm when encountering sensitive aspects of the topic. An example of this was David, who insisted that he does not remember the crime he committed, and he refused to discuss the incident as well as the victim. The interview process with the significant others were conducted telephonically because all the family members lived in other towns, many in rural areas. Getting hold of many family members was challenging and required several phone calls. This inevitably further prolonged the data collection and the entire research process.

Routine lockdowns. Field et al. (2017) mentioned that the issues that may present challenges when conducting research in security organisations such as correctional facilities are routine “locked-down” times. The routine lockdown took place daily at 15h00 in the WCF. The research was conducted around the rigorous daily routine and the availability of correctional staff, mainly the CMO. The CMO escorted the offender to the interview, supervised the interview

with the inmates and escorted them back to the cell for lock up after the interview. When he was unavailable, the CMO would postpone the interviews or appointment to review case files or he would arrange with a colleague to provide the same support.

CMO availability. The availability of the CMO presented further challenges as this would sometimes result in interviewing over two days. At times the interviews were postponed due to the CMO's unavailability. I discussed these challenges extensively under the challenges encountered during the procedure.

Unforeseen delays. Feld et al. (2019) stressed that researchers may find access to correctional facilities is terminated at short notice in the event of a high-risk situation. Such periods may come without warning, and the length of such periods can also not be predicted. These unplanned lockdowns are due to high-risk situations, and these inevitably lead to delays and changes in timelines for researchers. There were no high-risk situations that led to lockdowns during my research process. However, the security measures at the entrance to the facility caused major delays several times. Due to the security measures and changing personnel, interviews were delayed several times while we waited for clearance. The process was congruent with how Beyens et al. (2015) described that the researcher's access to inmates is a constant negotiation with gatekeepers.

Setting. Further contextual challenges that influenced the interview process included the circumstances of the setting. Correctional facilities are not naturally amenable to the conditions required for research because they are highly rigid institutions centred mainly around security and safety issues (Beyens et al., 2015; Field et al., 2019). Researchers must be aware of and consider these issues. Many challenges remain even when correctional staff are eager and willing to support research (Beyens et al., 2015; Field et al., 2019).

One of the challenges Field et al. (2019) pointed out is that venues made available for research may present a challenge. Researchers may conduct interviews in meeting rooms, clinical examination rooms, gymnasiums, and visiting areas. Often, these spaces are being used simultaneously for their usual purposes. Accordingly, the interview room availed by the correctional facility for the interviews was a visitation room next to the courtyard, which other offenders had access to. The rooms surrounding the courtyard were used for training, educational, and psychosocial services for offenders. Thus, there were intermittent distractions from other inmates passing by and making comments while on their way to training, class, or other activities. The interruptions posed a potential risk of breaching confidentiality. Therefore,

efforts were made to minimise distractions and maintain confidentiality. The interviews were paused when other offenders walked past and were within earshot. The interviews were scheduled based on the availability of the CMO. Although the CMO was supportive, he did not completely control his schedule. Many unscheduled activities and unforeseen incidences regularly required his attention.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis (TA)

The data analysis procedure that was followed is presented in this section. As the study was qualitative, in-depth analysis of lengthy, semi-structured interviews was required. Qualitative data analysis may be complex mainly due to large data sets that require in-depth analysis and must be presented in a logical, concise report (Austin & Sutton, 2014; Mohajan & Mohajan, 2018). Mohajan (2018) inferred that qualitative research is difficult to define clearly but is guided by research questions and most often inductive in nature. Qualitative research uses data analysis methods including coding, identifying themes, patterns, and processes to make sense of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Kalpokaite & Radivojevic, 2019; Percy et al., 2015). Different types of research fall under this umbrella of qualitative research. These include narrative research, ethnographic research, content analysis, as well as thematic analysis (TA), which is the method I used to analyse the data in the current study.

Thematic analysis provides a method to identify, analyse and interpret themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2015; Terry et al., 2017) and allows you to organise and describe the data in detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). TA is a suitable method for studies that aim to uncover meaning systematically through associating and analysing the frequency of themes in datasets, discovering relationships, and comparing concepts (Ibrahim, 2012). Codes, themes, and concepts are essential components of TA (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2015; Terry et al., 2017). Themes as the larger patterns of meaning within data, codes are the smaller building blocks of themes, and concepts are the core ideas that underpin a specific theme. TA enables researchers to identify patterns within and across data related to participants' lived experiences, views, and perspectives as well as behaviour and practices. TA also attempts to elicit an understanding of participants' state of mind, including thoughts and feelings (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2015). TA is suitable for analysing large datasets, such as lengthy interviews with many participants, and small datasets, such as case studies. I utilised TA particularly because I was dealing with substantially long

interviews that required in-depth analysis to illicit patterns, create understanding, and describe participants' lived experiences, views, and perspectives, as well as behaviour and practices.

Akin to all forms of qualitative research, TA is guided by the research question (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017; Mohajan & Mohajan, 2018). Within the qualitative framework, the research question may evolve throughout coding and theme development, and TA is well-suited for most research designs. TA is flexible in terms of the research question, sampling size, data collection methods, and an approach to meaning generation (Braun & Clarke, 2015; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

In the present study, I identified the codes and created the themes, utilising ATLAS.ti: 8, specialised software for qualitative data analysis to aid in managing the data during the data analysis process. The interviews were lengthy; thus, the volume of data was immense, and I found the software highly beneficial in this regard. According to the user guide by Friese et al. (2018), ATLAS.ti: 8 allows the researcher to extract, categorise, and connect segments of data from larger datasets and various sources and types of documents. It enables the researcher to uncover patterns and themes and test hypotheses.

ATLAS.ti: 8 also helps with organising documents, coding, memoing (taking notes for varying purposes such as reflective notes or specific notes about the process, participant, and observations), comparing data sets, and presenting data and many more features (Friese et al., 2018; Soratto et al., 2020). I found these features of ATLAS.ti: 8 immensely resourceful and efficient. It enabled me to save time and generate data relatively quicker than if I had attempted to do so manually. Although software helps with managing and organising data, the software does not conceptualise and generate themes. Thus, the data analysis process was challenging and arduous.

Several authors have identified different versions of thematic analysis, all different versions with the same underlying approach (Terry et al., 2017). According to Percy et al. (2015), there are three types of thematic analysis. These are inductive analysis, theoretical analysis, and thematic analysis with constant comparison. Inductive analysis does not utilise pre-existing categories guided by theory to fit themes. On the other hand, the theoretical analysis uses predetermined categories based on theory as the basis for creating themes, and these themes are searched for during analysis. TA, with constant comparison, may assume either inductive or theoretical analysis. The data is collected and analysed as the research is conducted. Every subsequent case is compared with a previous case as the analysis constantly moves back and

forth between current data and the data that has already been coded (Percy et al., 2015). The data analysis for this study was inductive. I explored and allowed the themes to emerge as the analysis continued without fitting the themes into a specific theory.

The analysed data consisted of six to eight documents for each of the ten participants. The final number of documents per participant was determined by their case file content and the number of significant others interviewed. Two offenders did not have case notes and one did not have the Assessment of Offender Risk Factors and Inventory of Offender Needs and Reintegration Concerns document.

The set of eight documents that were reviewed for each offender is listed below.

- Offender interview
- Significant other's interview 1
- Significant other's interview 2
- CMO interview
- Assessment of Offender Risk Factors and Inventory of Offender Needs and Reintegration Concerns
- Correctional Treatment Plan
- Criminal Profile Report
- Case Notes

A total of 68 documents were uploaded on ATLAS.ti: 8 for analysis. Braun and Clarke's (2006) 6-phase guide to thematic analysis was the method followed to analyse the data in this study. Figure 4.2 illustrates these six phases. After that, I provide a step-by-step discussion of the implementation of these phases.

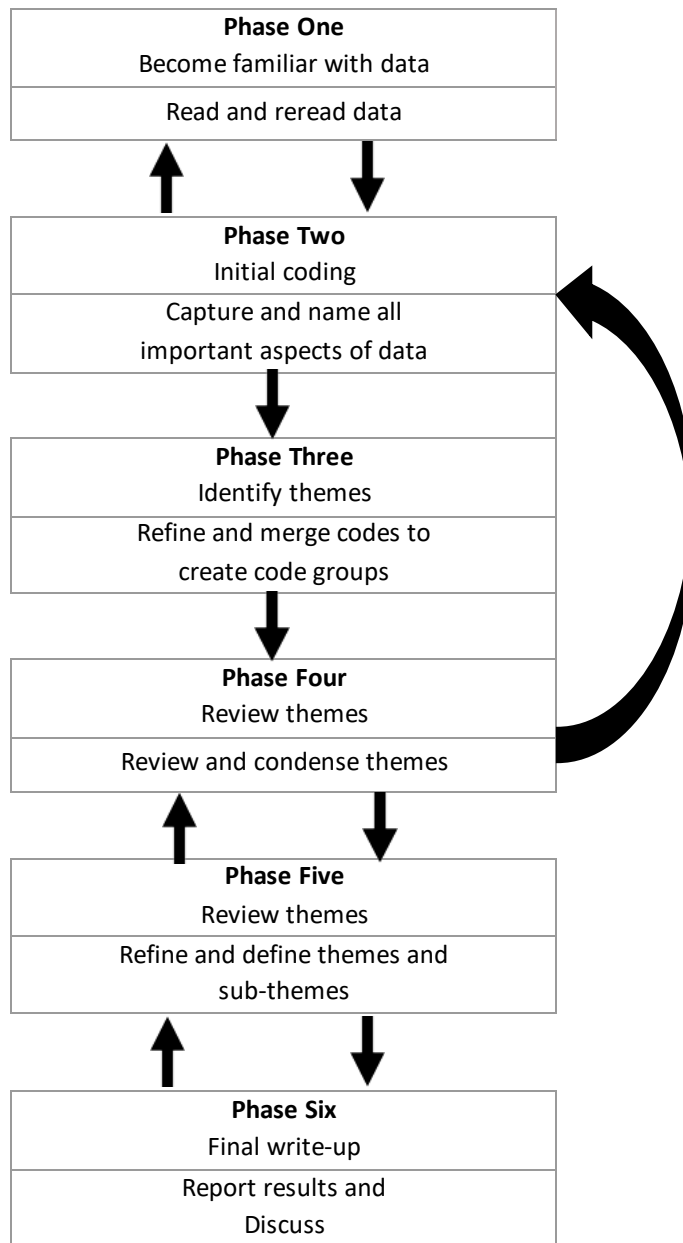


Figure 4.2
Six Phases of TA

Phase One. The initial phase required that I, as a researcher, become very familiar with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2015; Terry et al., 2017). I familiarised myself with the data by reading, rereading, and transcribing the interviews verbatim while taking notes of any additional ideas, as advised by Braun and Clark (2006). Braun and Clark (2006) agreed that transcribing is a very effective way of familiarising yourself with the data. I transcribed Ismael's interview because the interview was conducted in Damara. The transcriber, as well as the research assistant, were unable to understand Damara.

Furthermore, I transcribed several interviews with family members. After the professional transcriber and the student had completed the transcribing, I double-checked all the transcribed interviews against the original audio. To increase accuracy, I played the recordings several times to ensure that the correct words and sentences were captured. Even though it was an extremely time-consuming process, it was necessary to ensure the accuracy of the data captured. This experience allowed me to fully comprehend the comment by Whiting (2008) that such essential processes exponentially increase the time required for data analysis.

Phase Two. This phase involved generating initial codes through initial lists of ideas about what is interesting in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2015; Terry et al., 2017). According to Braun and Clark (2006), coding may depend on whether the themes are 'data-driven' (only guided by the data) or 'theory-driven' (approached with specific questions in mind). The coding for this study was data-driven. The entire dataset was worked through and coded. I captured the most important data, i.e. meaningful sentences, phrases, story segments, expressions, and insights, and gave these appropriate names to link to subsequent data. This process was lengthy and frustrating, particularly after realising I had too many codes. I had to work through the codes, merge some, redefine and reduce the codes to a more manageable number. The codes were condensed from the initial 1080 to 825 and again further to 509. There are no specific guidelines about a particular number of themes, yet it was very engaging work, condensing and combining these themes.

Phase Three. This phase involved identifying and constructing the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2015; Terry et al., 2017). The data and the research questions influenced the themes, which are flexible and open to change. This phase started after all the data had been coded and collated. I rechecked 509 themes to ensure each had a clear definition and description and moved over to grouping the codes. During the grouping and identifying themes phase, the codes that belong together are grouped under a theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Different codes were organised, and the overarching themes were identified. Some codes were part of more than one theme. During this phase, sub-themes were also identified. This was also a lengthy process, and I often found myself describing, defining, and redefining codes and themes.

Phase Four. This phase involves reviewing and refining the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2015; Terry et al., 2017). Once again, this was a lengthy and challenging process. I realised that I had initiated the refinement of themes earlier when I started identifying and defining themes in phase three. I experienced phases three and four as fluid because some processes overlapped and took

place simultaneously. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), some codes may be eliminated during this phase, and other multiple themes may be collapsed into one theme. This phase required me to reread the data to ensure that codes had not been missed and relevant data had not been overlooked. Thematic maps, which help visualise the data as a mind map, were used to help make sense of data. ATLAS.ti: 8 is very useful in generating thematic maps if the data is coded and themes have been created. I used this practical feature.

Phase Five. According to Braun and Clark (2006), phase five starts once the researcher has a satisfactory thematic map. This phase involved defining, refining, and redefining the themes and the data within the themes to determine the aspects of the data captured by each theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2015; Terry et al., 2017). It also involved me writing a detailed analysis of each theme, ensuring that each theme relates to the research question. At this phase, I could look at and refine not only the main themes but also the sub-themes.

Phase Six. This phase involved the final rework of themes presented and discussed in the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2015; Terry et al., 2017). Braun and Clark (2006) emphasised that care should be taken to ensure the final analysis is succinct, comprehensive, accurate, logical, non-repetitive, and interesting data account. I made every attempt to adhere to the recommendations mentioned above, and a colleague and my supervisors checked my process.

Thematic Analysis is a fluid process described by Nowell et al. (2017) as an “iterative and reflective process that develops over time and involves a constant moving back and forward between phases” (p. 4). This is precisely what I experienced during the data analysis stage of this study.

Data analysis: Challenges

I discuss the main challenge encountered throughout the data analysis phase.

Time consuming. The entire data analysis process was extremely tedious, arduous, and at times frustrating and repetitive, but maintaining momentum was important. Describing, defining, and redefining codes and themes was needed. Narrowing the themes was possible only by revisiting codes repeatedly and merging overlapping codes. This was required with code groups, networks and network groups that formed the final themes. The final set of code groups comprising the subthemes is 23, and the final themes are six. I kept a manual reflexive journal and memos for reflective notes on ATLAS.ti: 8. Four memos helped me track my thoughts and

ideas throughout the data analysis process when coding, merging codes, conceptualising themes, linking code groups, and creating networks.

Trustworthiness of the qualitative research

Postpositivist enquiries such as constructionist research cannot apply the traditional positivist criteria of validity, reliability, and objectivity because qualitative studies are concerned with subjective realities, straying from purely objective positivist views (Hadi & Closs, 2016; Stacey, 2019). This study was qualitative; thus, the above-mentioned traditional validity, reliability, and objectivity measures may not be applied. Qualitative research does not emphasise reliability in the same sense of consistency as quantitative research (Hadi & Closs, 2016; Stacey, 2019). Qualitative research aims to extract responses at a specific time, place, and interpersonal context. It also assumes that research and situations can never be replicated, exactly. Thus, consistency in the traditional sense is not possible. Therefore, I employed different strategies to establish trustworthiness in my research.

Trustworthiness is recognised in the qualitative research sphere as corresponding with reliability and validity in the positivist sphere (Gunawan, 2015; Stacey, 2019; Anderson et al., 2007). Clarity on how the validity and reliability of this study were established is essential. Therefore, I briefly explain below what is important to focus on and how I attempted to ensure trustworthiness was achieved.

The theoretical paradigms underpinning the orientation and standards of discipline for the researcher influence the criteria the researcher uses to evaluate the trustworthiness of the research (Kornbluh, 2015; Levitt et al., 2013). Trustworthiness refers to the overall impression of quality associated with specific research, rigour in executing the research, applicability of the research methods, relevance of the study, and believability of the findings (Baillie, 2015; Kornbluh, 2015; Rose & Johnson, 2020; Stacey, 2019). The more rigorous the research process, the higher the chances the research will be accepted as relevant and trustworthy (Hadi & Closs, 2016; Stacey, 2019). Rigour implies that the research was executed methodically and to a high standard.

However, ensuring quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research presents a significant challenge for researchers. If there is uncertainty and doubt in the readers' minds about how the researcher collected, analysed, and interpreted the data, it is very difficult to determine the trustworthiness of the research process (Braun & Clarke, 2015; Hadi & Closs, 2016; Nowell et

al., 2017). According to Nowell et al. (2017), the qualitative researcher, as the instrument, must take on the responsibility to assure rigour and trustworthiness.

Validity, as assumed by quantitative research, is also impossible within the qualitative research framework (Hadi & Closs, 2016; Stacey, 2019). Positivists assume that the subject of a research study has a concrete reality in an objective sense, uninfluenced by subjective perceptions. On the other hand, qualitative research views the social world as diverse, impacted by subjective perceptions of the research subjects and the researcher. Furthermore, generalisability is not a concept the qualitative researcher aims to achieve objectively. Instead, qualitative researchers aim to illustrate that the findings may be transferred and have meaning or relevance if applied to other situations, contexts, and individuals (Hadi & Closs, 2016; Stacey, 2019). True to this assertion, I cannot claim that the findings of this current study may be generalised to other contexts, but my methods may be applied in other contexts and yield different but meaningful results. The integrity of the qualitative research process and the quality of the research results should be evaluated with criteria that differ from the criteria for quantitative research (Hadi & Closs, 2016). Evaluation should be done by looking at trustworthiness, ability to demonstrate rigour and relevance.

Researchers agree that the criteria for determining and maintaining trustworthiness in qualitative research, created initially by Guba and Lincoln, remain relevant and valuable (Morse, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017). What is referred to as rigour, reliability, validity, and generalisability in quantitative research was replaced with credibility, transferability, and dependability. Therefore, these are identified as criteria parallel to internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity intended to loosely achieve the same purposes of quality as in positivist inquiries (Levitt et al., 2013). Credibility in qualitative research is said to correspond to internal validity in quantitative approaches, transferability to external validity or generalisability, dependability to reliability, and confirmability to objectivity (Hadi & Closs, 2016; Stacey, 2019; Anderson et al., 2007). However, the parallel criteria for achieving quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research do not achieve synonymous goals as their corresponding standards of rigour in quantitative research.

Nowell et al. (2017) illustrated how the original, widely accepted criteria of trustworthiness established by Guba and Lincoln could be applied to qualitative studies using thematic analysis. Seeking to achieve trustworthiness in this study, I followed these standards to

ensure trustworthiness. I define credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity and thereafter, a table illustrates how these were interwoven in the study.

Credibility. Credibility refers to whether the analyses are believable (J. L. Johnson et al., 2020; Rose & Johnson, 2020; Stacey, 2019; Anderson et al., 2007). Cope (2014) suggested that the researcher describing their experience during the research process and verifying the research findings with the participants enhances credibility. Furthermore, the researcher should demonstrate engagement, methods of observation and paper trails. In this study, I opted not to share details with the participants. Instead, I remained engaged and kept a meticulous paper trail of all my actions during the research process.

Further methods to enhance credibility include prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, triangulation of the data, and researcher and data triangulation. Member checking by giving participants the interview transcripts to agree or disagree with the findings is also recommended to enhance credibility (Baillie, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017; Anderson et al., 2007). However, triangulation is not relevant for all studies, and member checking may also not be possible with certain participants who cannot read through lengthy transcripts (Baillie, 2015).

In this study, triangulation by using a different researcher to conduct interviews was impossible. Thus, I used the collateral interviews with the significant others and the CMO as multiple sources to verify, support and understand the offenders' accounts. The offenders' case files were also reviewed. Since the participants in this study were offenders, it was not feasible to once again request permission from the WCF to be granted repeated access to the participants for member checking. This would have increased the time required for the research process exponentially. Most participants' command of written English also would hamper their ability to verify the transcripts. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, and I kept meticulous notes of the process and described their experience while conducting the research.

Dependability. Dependability refers to whether the analyses are consistent and can be repeated and may be achieved when another researcher agrees with the decision-making of the principal researcher at each stage of the research (Cope, 2014; Rose & Johnson, 2020; Anderson et al., 2007). To ensure dependability the researcher should aim to make the process as logical, explicit, and repeatable as possible, and keeping an audit trail is highly recommended (Baillie, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017; Stacey, 2019; Anderson et al., 2007). To ensure dependability during this research, a significant attempt was made to keep a record of all the stages and the decision-

making process. This was achieved by keeping a reflexive diary and memos throughout the entire research process.

Transferability. Transferability refers to whether the analyses can be transferred to other contexts (Rose & Johnson, 2020), like the generalisability of the study. Qualitative research provides detailed descriptions of the settings in which research is conducted so the reader has enough information to discern the transferability of the study (Stacey, 2019; Anderson et al., 2007). This is an essential aspect of transferability because qualitative research does not use large probability samples to ensure the findings' generalisability. In the present study, to ensure transferability, I provided sufficient information about the research and detailed descriptions of the context, participants, and the research process, as advised by Levitt et al. (2013) and Anderson et al. (2007).

Confirmability. Confirmability is concerned with establishing that the researcher's interpretations and findings are clearly derived from the data and not the researcher's biases (Cope, 2014; Rose & Johnson, 2020). According to Cope (2014), the researcher can achieve confirmability by clearly outlining the data with detailed descriptions and quotes to support the interpretations and conclusions reached. Confirmability is established when credibility, transferability, and dependability are achieved (Baillie, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017; Anderson et al., 2007). In the present study, I included detailed descriptions of the data and participant quotes to ensure confirmability.

Authenticity. Authenticity allows the reader to grasp the essence of the participants' experiences through the richness and accuracy of the quotes provided by the researcher (Cope, 2014; Stacey, 2019). Authenticity is ensured when a researcher collects data from participants and keeps audit trails of participants' lived experiences. Furthermore, as suggested by Cope (2014), I remained engaged with the data, rechecked all the transcriptions, and kept a paper trail.

Audit trails. Audit trails encompass the authenticity criteria described above. According to Baillie (2015), detailed descriptions are required as well as detailed records of the research process, inclusive of the reflexive journal, memos, all decisions made and all other aspects that influenced the research process (Cope, 2014; Stacey, 2019). During this research process, I kept a reflexive journal, and the data analysis software ATLAS.ti 8 was used to assist with organising data and documenting all ideas in memos. The software also allowed me to store the transcripts, record the coding process, draw up thematic maps, and arrive at the final interpretations. This

reflexive journal was an integral part of the research process. This auditable evidence increases the trustworthiness of the study.

Below is an illustration of the process employed to ensure trustworthiness during the TA process for this study. Table 4.7 is adapted from Nowell et al. (2017).

Table 4.7

Step by step process to ensure trustworthiness during thematic analysis

Phases of thematic analysis	Means of establishing trustworthiness
Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolong engagement with the data • Triangulate different data collection modes (interviews with offenders, significant others, CMO, case files, and MCM1) • Document theoretical and reflective thoughts • Document thoughts about potential codes/themes • Store raw data in well-organised archives in Atlas.ti 8. • Keep records of all data field notes, transcripts, and reflexive journals
Phase 2: Generating initial codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher triangulation and supervisor initial codes vetted by the colleague and supervisor • Reflexive journaling • Use of a coding framework • Audit trail of code generation
Phase 3: Searching for themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher triangulation • Diagramming to make sense of theme connections • Keep detailed notes about development and hierarchies of concepts and themes
Phase 4: Reviewing themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher triangulation • Themes and subthemes vetted by supervisors • Test for referential adequacy by returning to raw data
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher triangulation • Supervisors debrief and consensus on themes • Documentation reviews of themes • Documentation of final theme naming
Phase 6: Producing the report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher review • Describing process of coding and analysis in sufficient details • Thick descriptions of context • Description of the audit trail • Report on reasons for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices throughout the entire study

In qualitative research, maintaining trustworthiness is paramount, and it goes hand in hand with adhering to ethical practices. Throughout the research process, it is essential to maintain ethical practice. According to Healy (2009), there is very little guidance on how to deal with ethical dilemmas that arise during research with offender populations, particularly because offender populations are vulnerable and sensitive issues may arise. Bhatia and Aggarwal (2021) mentioned that there is close monitoring and regulation of behavioural research in correctional settings, and some guidelines have been published. Despite this, they agreed with (Shaw et al., 2020) that it is difficult to implement specific guidelines due to many problems and differences amongst populations and structural challenges.

Ethical considerations

Ethics in social science research are concerned with norms intended to ensure that research is undertaken in ways that benefit rather than harm research participants, researchers, and the rest of the community (Bos, 2020; Hughes & Scholtz, 2019). Understanding crime and criminal behaviour is essential and warrants research on the offender population. However, research on the offender population is fraught with unethical practices (Ako et al., 2020; Field et al., 2019; Worley et al., 2016). Historically, offender populations have been subjected to abusive research, used unethically for convenience, and obvious power imbalances have existed between the researcher and the offender subjects (Ako et al., 2020; Shaw et al., 2020). It is important to consider ethical practices when doing research with offender populations.

As an incarcerated population, historically, offenders are vulnerable to exposure to practices such as abuse and violation of their rights, mainly due to being in a situation of a disproportionate balance of power (Ako et al., 2020; Field et al., 2019; Shaw et al., 2020). Due to their lower levels of education, they may consent to research without fully understanding the jargon and language used in the information and consent letter (Field et al., 2019). Furthermore, offenders may feel obligated to participate in the research.

As a researcher, I was aware of the vulnerability of this population. I was also aware that because of my position as a researcher, who came with permission from authorities to conduct research, the participants may have automatically placed me on unequal footing with them as soon as I approached them to request participation. This is because as an incarcerated population has limited freedom, they inevitably feel marginalised, disadvantaged, misused, and as if their rights are also limited. Therefore, I approached my position as a researcher strategically and carefully. I believe upholding ethical practice when conducting research with these offenders was

of utmost essence. I made every effort during the research process to safeguard the offender's autonomy and respect their rights, so they maintain their dignity irrespective of their crimes. I dealt with them respectfully and dignifiedly and encouraged them to ask questions to clarify the research procedure and reasons for the research. I explained to the participants that no incentives or rewards would be provided for participation. Relevant questions were answered before the participants signed consent agreeing to participate voluntarily.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical Clearance Committee at the UNISA (Appendix B). Permission was obtained from the relevant authorities at the MAHISS to conduct research at the Windhoek CF. When requesting permission, the research process and intended purposes were explained to the stakeholders. Efforts were made to maintain the confidentiality of the participants and ensure they maintained their rights and dignity. The participating offenders were allowed to use pseudonyms to maintain anonymity. The offenders were approached and interacted with in a respectful, dignified manner.

As a professional psychologist and researcher, I was bound by an ethical responsibility to disclose any illegal activity (Roberts & Indermaur, 2008). This may apply when the participant discloses information regarding present illegal activity and crimes or past undisclosed crimes. It may include smuggling drugs into prison or confessing crimes such as murder in open, unsolved cases. I explained the limits of confidentiality clearly to the offenders. However, there were no such incidents requiring disclosure. Furthermore, it is ethical and good practice to share the research findings with the institution and the stakeholders (Field et al., 2019). The MAHISS and the Windhoek CF were informed that the final thesis would be shared with them.

Chapter Summary

I discussed the research design, population, sample, and sampling design in this chapter and explained the data collection instruments and processes. The qualitative data analysis process, thematic analysis, that I employed was also thoroughly discussed, as was the trustworthiness of qualitative research. I also discussed the importance of ensuring that research is conducted ethically. In Chapter Five I present the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE FINDINGS

In this chapter, I present the findings of this qualitative, descriptive study. The descriptive study was the best fit because it aims to determine and describe a person's profile, situation, and events as accurately as possible (Al-Ababneh, 2020).

Overview of the chapter

I begin this chapter by briefly stating the purpose and aim of the study and the research question. Next, I provide background information on participants, followed by a concise overview of the aim, objectives, research questions and the final themes and subthemes. I then provide a detailed description of the results, supported by quotes from interviews and reviewed documents. This is the core focus of Chapter Five. The chapter concludes with a summary, and the results are discussed in Chapter Six.

Through this study, I sought to understand the key factors that influence individuals convicted of violent crimes in Namibia, particularly murder, and how these factors shape their identities. I accomplished this through four focused objectives. I addressed these objectives by conducting in-depth interviews with participants and using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2015) to analyse the narratives of participants, their significant others, and the CMO. I also analysed the documents in each participant's case file. The complete case file contains the correctional treatment plan, criminal profile, the Assessment of Offender Risk Factors and Inventory of Offender Needs and Reintegration Concerns and Case Notes of each participant.

Ten offenders participated in this study. I embarked upon the study with the intention of interviewing two significant others for each participant. However, two participants' significant others could not be reached due to their remote residential areas and lack of access to a cellular network, and one participant chose not to provide contact details. Therefore, I only conducted interviews with the significant others of seven participants. One CMO was overseeing all ten participants. Therefore, I conducted ten interviews with the CMO to obtain collateral information. The final sample comprised ten offenders, 14 significant others, and one CMO. In-depth, one-on-one interviews allowed me to share their past and present lived experiences, providing rich information for analysis. I provide a clear and authentic description of the participants.

Below, I provide a table that outlines the participants, interviews conducted with significant others, their sentences, and the length of their sentences. To ensure confidentiality and protect participants' identities, pseudonyms are used. For instance, one of the participants is referred to as Anthony. The significant others also have pseudonyms, for example, Anthony's father is referred to as Anthony-dad. The CMO is referred to by his title. Table 5.1 presents the pseudonyms and the sentence information of the offenders.

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Table 5.1

Pseudonyms, biographical details and sentence information of offenders

Offender	DOB	Age	Family	Offence	Sentence	Prior convictions (PC)
Anthony	1984	35	Anthony-mom Anthony-dad	Count 1: Rape Count 2: Rape Count 3: Attempted murder and assault	22 yrs	Assault
Brandon	1987	32	Unreachable	Count 1: Murder Count 2: Murder Count 3: Assault with GBH Count 4: Malicious damage Count 5: Attempted murder Count 6: Attempted murder Count 7: Attempted murder Count 8: Attempt to defeat or obstruct the cause of justice	60 yrs	None
Cleophas	1951	67	Cleophas-cous1 Cleophas-cous2	Count 1: Murder Count 2: Murder Count 3: Attempted murder	55 yrs	Culpable homicide Murder Failing to appear in court
David	1981	38	Unavailable	Count 1: Murder: direct intent	35 yrs	None
Eliphas	1974	45	Eliphas-sis1 Eliphas-sis2	Count 1: Murder Count 2: Rape	47 yrs	Assault
Freddy	1971	48	Freddy-mom Freddy-cous	Count 1: Murder Count 2: Robbery Count 3: Attempted murder Count 4: Malicious damage Count 5: Possession: cannabis	Life	House breaking (multiple) Theft (multiple) Assault Robbery (multiple) Attempted rape (multiple) Murder Malicious damage Possession: cannabis
Gerson	1982	37	Unreachable	Count 1: Murder: direct intent Count 1: Murder: direct intent	46 yrs	None
Hannes	1975	44	Hannes-dad Hannes-mom	Count 1: Murder Count 2: Robbery	50 yrs	None
Ismael	1985	33	Ismael-sis Ismael-mom	Murder	38 yrs	Assault with GBV Assault common Escape from custody
Jacob	1975	44	Jacob-mom Jacob-sis	Count 1: Murder Count 2: Attempted murder	35 yrs	None

In conducting this study, I sought to be true to the offenders' experiences and how they convey their stories and experiences. Therefore, I tried to remain true to their style, not taking away from their true meaning. In addition to discussing their criminal offences, the participants shared their family composition, educational background, social and intimate relationships, other experiences, and opinions with me. Below is a short overview of each of the ten participants' backgrounds. I present specific direct quotes that have been selected because they strongly represent the participants' perspectives in their own words. When quotes are highlighted, there are multiple grammatical and sentence structure errors because the language is representative of the participants' styles. I used pseudonyms when referring to the participants, their significant others, and all persons named in the extracts.

Offenders' backgrounds

Anthony

Anthony, the youngest of three siblings, was raised by a single mother in Windhoek. His parents were never in a relationship, and his father passed away when Anthony was eight. A friend stabbed him during a drunken altercation. Anthony met his stepfather when he was already an adult. He maintains good relationships with his mother, stepfather, and brother but has no contact with his half-sister. Despite not being raised by his biological father, Anthony believes he takes after his biological father as "a man who likes women and who likes to drink." He light-heartedly mentioned, "Wednesday, Friday and Saturday I had to taste something. Sunday, I am resting for Monday." Anthony admitted to drinking regularly but is unaware of the true extent of his abusive drinking habits, often downplaying the impact. At the time of committing the attempted murder, he was intoxicated.

Anthony described his friends as individuals who are frequently in and out of correctional facilities. He was not afraid in the holding cells because he knew most detainees. They are men he grew up with and played soccer with in the neighbourhood he grew up in. His mother and stepfather described him as someone who grew up in the church and loved attending church and singing in the choir. Anthony held multiple positions within the restaurant and hotel industry. However, he had a previous employment termination stemming from allegations of theft. It's worth noting that the incident in question occurred during his employment at a hotel. Anthony has two children with two different women, one of whom is the victim. He was convicted of attempted murder, and two counts of rape. He has a previous charge of assault. During the interview, Anthony was boastful, flirtatious, and loud.

Brandon

Brandon was raised on a farm by married parents and attended a rural school. He described his father as a good parent when he was sober but aggressive and abusive towards his wife and children when intoxicated. Brandon repeatedly witnessed his father beating his mother. He felt extremely angry but helpless, as he was too young to help her. While Brandon was in primary school, his father served a two-year sentence for assaulting his wife. After his father's death, Brandon dropped out of school in grade 10. His alcohol abuse, which started in high school, escalated after he left school. Brandon admitted that he becomes aggressive when intoxicated and struggles to control his anger.

At the time of the incident, Brandon was single and employed as a farmworker. He faced multiple convictions for murder, attempted murder, and assault. His victims were his uncles, whom Brandon alleges were abusive toward him and their wives, who happened to be his sisters. It's important to note that Brandon often consumed alcohol with both family and friends, and he was under the influence when he committed the murders. At the time of the incident, he was 22 years old and had no prior criminal record. During the interview, Brandon came across as soft-spoken and reserved, yet he was open and forthcoming.

Cleophas

Cleophas was raised in a northern, rural community as one of six siblings by religious parents. He attended a Christian mission school and dropped out in standard 7 (grade 9). He moved to an urban area in search of employment. Under the Southwest African Apartheid regime, he found work as a contract labourer in mines, construction companies, and farms. He also worked in kitchens within the hotel and restaurant industry. Throughout the interview, Cleophas referred to the torture he experienced at the hands of the "Boers" and Damaras, and his demeanour indicated a dislike for these groups. Official documents, the CMO, and his family members corroborate his dislike for White people and Damaras. Despite this, Cleophas denied disliking anyone from other racial groups during the interview.

Cleophas has previous convictions of multiple counts of culpable homicide, attempted murder, and murder. He was on bail for a previous murder charge when he committed this murder. At the time, he was 57 years old, and the victim was his girlfriend. Although Cleophas is traditionally married and claims to have a good relationship with his nine children and wife, this claim contradicts the information provided by a family member that he cheated on his wife and abandoned his wife and children.

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Cleophas claimed that he never engaged in excessive drinking, had no issues with alcohol or drugs, and was not under the influence when he committed the murder. However, this statement conflicts with court records, which indicate that he had consumed alcohol on the day of the crime. Official records also document a physical altercation between Cleophas and the victim, initially triggered by a dispute over alcohol. Cleophas is reported to have committed a second murder after returning from a drinking establishment, suggesting he may have been intoxicated during both incidents. Furthermore, during the interview, Cleophas appeared reserved, uncooperative, and distrustful.

David

David was born and raised in a rural town as one of eight siblings. After dropping out of school in grade 4, David began herding cattle. At age 20, he left the rural town to search for work in bigger towns, eventually taking on various odd jobs, primarily as a handyman. David has three children who are under the care of one of his siblings. Despite this arrangement, he expressed hurt and disappointment with most of his family members, who have turned their backs on him.

During the interview, David refused to discuss the crime, claiming that he did not remember the incident and had chosen to leave it in the past. He denied having problems managing his alcohol consumption. He insisted that alcohol did not influence him to commit the crime, as he had not consumed any on the day of the incident. However, official records indicate that David and his girlfriend were drinking at a bar, and the incident occurred while he was intoxicated. Convicted of murder at 31, David was a first-time offender, and the victim was his girlfriend. In the interview, he spoke minimally, displaying a resistant and sceptical demeanour. He refused to provide contact information for any family members, asserting they did not care for him and would have nothing to say.

Eliphas

Eliphas is the sixth of nine maternal siblings. He never knew his biological father, who passed away when he was two years old. He considers his stepfather, the father of his youngest siblings, as his father and describes him as a role model. After dropping out of school in standard 4 (grade 6), Eliphas lived on the farm. He mentioned that he was forced to leave school because he had impregnated a girl. However, he admitted that he did not want to attend school. He preferred to work and earn money. Consequently, he began working at a very young age. He later completed training as an electrician and lived and worked in various towns. Eliphas also owned several businesses and supported his family, including his mother.

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According to Eliphas, his stepfather warned him against having too many girlfriends and children. However, Eliphas takes pride in being like his biological father, who loved women and had 27 children. He proudly stated that he had 23 children, but four are deceased, leaving him with 19. The official recorded criminal profile reports that he has children with 11 women. He was married, but his wife and two children tragically died in a motor vehicle accident while he was driving. Two other children passed away due to illness. Eliphas maintains good relationships with his mother, most maternal siblings, and most of his children. However, several mothers refuse to allow him access to their children. Eliphas explained that as a young man under South African Apartheid rule, he served as a soldier in the South-West African army. He was forced to witness and participate in the torture of older adults and saw multiple killings. According to Eliphas, he overcame this trauma through prayer.

Eliphas was previously charged with assault on more than one occasion and incarcerated. The official criminal profile indicates that he was 34 when he committed rape and murder. The official record does not mention whether Eliphas was intoxicated during the crimes. He denies both offences. Eliphas admitted to drinking excessively and wasting money on alcohol. Most of his friends also drank heavily, and he would regularly visit bars and drink with random people and acquaintances. Eliphas was open during the interview, speaking at length and eagerly elaborating. He acted overly familiar and confident, claiming exaggerated friendships with the arresting officers, police officers, and court officials. He also mentioned that he knows my family.

Freddy

Freddy was born and raised in a coastal town by a single mother, living with his sickly grandmother, younger brother, and several cousins. His family interviews and criminal profile reveal that they lived an impoverished and difficult life. His mother earned very little as a domestic worker and supplemented her income by brewing and selling alcohol from home. She was an alcoholic and Freddy and his siblings were exposed to many abusive boyfriends. Freddy often found himself alone with his grandmother and began drinking secretly from the alcohol that his mother sold at home. By 12, he was already abusing alcohol and smoking cannabis frequently. He regularly caused trouble at school and dropped out in standard 5 (grade 7).

Freddy's biological father passed away when he was just four years old, but he maintained a close relationship with his paternal grandfather, who served as a stable and positive influence in his life during his early years. However, over time, Freddy gradually stopped visiting his grandfather. His behaviour took a troubling turn as he began lying and stealing items

both from home and school. This pattern escalated after he dropped out of school, and he started associating with delinquent peers, engaging in theft, breaking into houses, and frequently getting arrested.

Freddy's employment history was marked by instability, as he mostly relied on odd jobs such as painting and handyman work. He never achieved financial independence or stability. During the interview, Freddy admitted to resorting to theft and robbery as a means of obtaining quick and easy money. Contrary to official criminal records, he claimed he was never in a serious relationship and had no children.

However, it's worth noting that official criminal records presented a different picture, indicating that Freddy was single with one child, and the child's mother had passed away during his time in prison. The records also suggested that his relationship with his child was stable. Freddy had a history of multiple previous convictions, including theft, assault, and murder. He had been incarcerated multiple times and was out on bail when he committed his most recent offence. At the time of the incident, Freddy was 23 years old and intoxicated.

His mother married his stepfather, his youngest brother's biological father, while Freddy was already incarcerated. She stopped drinking and, according to Freddy, is now a church deacon. His relationship with her has significantly improved, and they speak regularly. He maintains good relationships with his brothers and a paternal cousin. Freddy was open and cooperative during the interview, boasting about his notoriety in his childhood neighbourhood and the correctional facility. He eagerly discussed his offences in detail, without concern for the impact on others, and exhibited an overly confident and self-assured demeanour.

Gerson

Gerson is one of seven siblings, and he was raised on a farm under extremely difficult circumstances, especially financially. According to his criminal profile, Gerson described his father as having a "don't care" attitude. He was raised by his mother and his grandparents. Gerson believes his grandfather did the best he could, "even if it meant selling goats and sheep to pay for their school fees and basic needs, such as toiletries". Gerson explained that he went to live with his aunt and uncle, whom he views as his parents. Gerson believes his uncle and aunt were a very bad influence on him. They were often involved in criminal activities such as stock theft. They forced him to commit crimes like selling stolen livestock, animal skins, and meat. He claims he was arrested, charged, and detained because of them on more than one occasion. His uncle had also been incarcerated multiple times.

He began working as a handyman on a farm and was promoted to foreman. He also worked at the farm bar owned by his uncle and aunt, helping them on the farm in general. Gerson has four children with four different women and has a history of being involved in multiple relationships simultaneously. Gerson was 23 when he committed the double murder. The victims were acquaintances of Gerson and his co-accused. Although he was convicted, he denies the charges. He had no previous convictions but had been charged with theft and had an outstanding fraud charge. Gerson had a history of alcohol abuse, cannabis, and ecstasy use, and he admitted that he used these substances on the day of the incident. During the interview, he was soft-spoken, eager, open, and cooperative.

Hannes

Hannes, the elder of two boys, grew up in a challenging family environment. Until he was six years old, he was raised by his mother and an abusive stepfather. However, there are notable differences between the official criminal profile and the information provided by Hannes and his parents during their interviews. In contrast, Hannes and his parents explained that his younger brother's father was physically and emotionally abusive to both boys and their mother, and they frequently faced homelessness. Additionally, the official profile reports that Hannes "never met his biological father, but it did not affect him negatively because his stepfather raised him as his own child, and he always gave him the love and support he needed." It's important to clarify that this quote refers to Hannes' second stepfather, the man his mother married after leaving the abusive boyfriend. Hannes' parents are devout Christians who have an exemplary marriage and maintain a strong relationship with their sons.

At the age of six, Hannes experienced a significant motor vehicle accident that resulted in major injuries and head trauma. His recovery period caused several months of school absenteeism, and he encountered academic difficulties afterward. Hannes expresses deep gratitude towards his stepfather, a loving man who accepted him and his brother despite their challenging behaviour. When their mother married him, he brought much-needed stability into their lives. However, despite his stepfather's positive influence, the boys struggled to adapt, and their problematic behaviour continued to escalate. Consequently, Hannes and his brother attended a boarding school for boys with behavioural issues in Windhoek. Hannes revealed that he began experimenting with alcohol, marijuana, and Mandrax during high school. He became associated with delinquent peers, adopted destructive behaviour, and ultimately made the decision to drop out of school during standard 8 (grade 10). He held various jobs, primarily working as a security guard or driver. However, he was frequently terminated due to theft

allegations. Hannes admitted that whenever he secured employment, his primary focus was on finding items to steal and quickly sell to fund his drug habits.

At the time of the offences, Hannes was 27 years old, single, and had no children. He was working as a security guard and had been consuming alcohol, marijuana, and Mandrax on the day of the incident. Hannes had faced previous accusations and charges of theft but had never been convicted. During the interview, Hannes displayed openness, cooperation, and a deliberate effort to manage his Christian image. This insight provides a comprehensive view of his background and circumstances, shedding light on the complex factors contributing to his life choices and behaviours.

Ismael

Ismael was raised on a farm by a single mother and maternal grandmother. He has a good relationship with his father, a self-employed plumber and maintenance contractor. His parents were never married and separated when he was a child. He has three brothers and five sisters. Ismael dropped out of school in standard 5 (grade 7) due to medical issues and being bullied. After leaving school, he remained on the farm, helping his grandparents and taking on casual work for a construction company and other income-generating projects, such as mining and selling gemstones. However, his primary source of income was the farm, particularly livestock. Ismael supported his family, especially his mother, financially.

Ismael is a father of four children, each with a different woman, and one of these women is the victim in the case. His children live with his mother on a farm, and he maintains positive relationships with his family members and his children. According to both the official criminal profile and interviews conducted with Ismael and his family, there is no history of alcohol or substance abuse in his background. Additionally, it was reported that he was not intoxicated at the time of the crime. At the time of the incident, Ismael was 27 years old, and the victim was his girlfriend. He did have a prior history of convictions, including assault against his girlfriend and theft, which had resulted in multiple incarcerations. Interestingly, he had escaped lawful custody while awaiting trial for the current charges but was later rearrested and subsequently sentenced. During the interview, Ismael exhibited a friendly, open, confident demeanour and appeared eager to express his opinions.

Jacob

Jacob was born in a rural town and has 19 siblings, nine of whom share the same mother. According to his account and interviews with significant others, he was raised in a loving and

strict home. Jacob completed grade 12, obtained an artisan certificate and was employed full-time, allowing him to support his children and girlfriends. Jacob has two daughters with a girlfriend he was engaged to and lived with for many years. Both Jacob and his significant others mentioned that the couple drank too much, and their relationship was toxic. He has a third daughter from another woman but claims that they were never in a relationship. He was in a relationship with the victim for five years and he raised her daughter, whom he refers to as his fourth child. At the time of committing the offences, he was employed as an artisan at the mine. He maintains good relationships with his mother and most siblings. His father passed away while Jacob was incarcerated.

Jacob admitted that he started drinking and smoking "klip" (Mandrax) at a young age with his siblings. His siblings and cousins gave him wine and Mandrax to prevent him from telling their parents about their activities. He shared light-heartedly how he smoked and drank at 9. "We were a big squad, my cousins and brothers, they were all there drinking... So they were being nice, and like that, they made me taste that wine."

Jacob was 36, in a relationship with the victim, and intoxicated when he committed the murder. He had previous charges, including assault and discharging a firearm. Although he had been detained before, he was not convicted on these charges. Additionally, he faced a charge of possession of an illegal substance while incarcerated. During the interview, Jacob was outspoken, eager, opinionated, and confident.

Review of the Study

Before discussing the themes, I present a brief overview of the study's main aim, objectives, and research questions. After that, I briefly recap the main areas of the interview content. The interviews utilised open-ended questions directed by a semi-structured interview guide adapted from the SAPS questionnaires for sex offenders. This interview guide explored the offenders' childhood, adolescent and adulthood problem behaviour, perception thereof, and criminal history. These are broad areas explored to extract the personality traits, family history, and environmental circumstances that impact offending behaviour.

Table 5.2 restates the main aim and objectives. Table 5.3 restates the main research question and sub-questions of the study.

Table 5.2

Main aim and objectives

Main aim	Objectives
To explore and understand the factors that impact on and influenced the participants to commit violent crimes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the self-perceived personalities of offenders • Explore the offenders’ past and present relationships • Examine the impact the offenders made on their significant other’s lives • Examine the offenders’ life experiences and how it impacted their behaviour

Table 5.3

Main research question and sub-questions

Main research question	Sub-questions
What are the factors, associated with the offenders’ histories, experiences, and personalities, that impact on and influence the participants to commit violent crimes, particularly murder?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the self-perceived personalities of offenders? • What type of relationships have the offenders maintained in the past and at present? • What impact did the offenders have on their significant other’s lives? • How did life experiences impact the offenders’ behaviour?

Themes

Below I present the six main themes that I derived from the TA, as well as their sub-themes. Each main theme is relevant to the research questions and has three sub-themes that provide pertinent information to address the research questions. Table 5.4 provides an overview of the main themes and sub-themes. A more detailed presentation of the themes, using quotations from the interviews, follows the table.

Table 5.4

Main themes and subthemes

Main theme	Sub-theme	Sub-theme	Sub-theme
• Relationships and life circumstances	Family and upbringing	Intimacy and sexual experiences	Social lifestyle
• Character	Traits	Faith and religion	Culture and values
• Personality	Behaviour	Cognition	Emotions
• Socioeconomic profile	Education	Employment	Finances
• Lifestyle and health	Experiences and concerns	Physical and mental health	Substance use patterns
• Criminal profile and impact on the family	Context of the current offence	Criminal history	Impact on the family

The main themes, sub-themes, and the most prominent factors that comprise the sub-themes are discussed below. Extracts from the interviews and the offender documents illustrate and support the themes. Selected extracts may demonstrate meaning in more than one theme. Thus, I have utilised several extracts and quotations multiple times. I omitted non-essential verbal cues and prompts from the dialogue extracts provided in this chapter.

Main Theme: Relationships and Life Circumstances

This main theme encompasses the offenders' relationships, living environment, and experiences. Within this theme, relationships include family ties, social connections, and intimate partnerships. Family is defined as the birth family, extended family, and any other individuals considered family members by the participant. The three sub-themes discussed under this main theme are family and upbringing, intimacy and sexual experiences, and social lifestyle.

Below, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data culminating into the sub-themes that form the main theme of relationships and life circumstances. I give the results in the order presented in Table 5.4. firstly, I address the sub-theme of family and upbringing by presenting the main aspects, which are absent father figures, domestic violence, corporal punishment, neglect, criminal-minded family members, bullying, and the participants' identification with father figures.

Sub-theme: Family and upbringing

This sub-theme examines the offenders' upbringing, past and current relationships with family members, and their perception of these relationships.

Absent father figure. A notable similarity among the participants is the absence of a father figure during their upbringing and the subsequent impact on their lives. Six of the ten participants were raised by single mothers.

Anthony was raised by a single mother because his parents separated while he was a toddler. His father died when he was eight. His mother remarried when Anthony was 25, and he has a good relationship with his stepfather. According to Freddy, he never knew his father, who died when Freddy was four. He was raised by his mother with support from his maternal grandmother. Freddy's mother got married after Freddy was incarcerated. Thus, he has not built a relationship with his stepfather. Ismael's father is alive, and he has a relationship with him. Ismael's mother stated, "I am not married, his father is also not married, but he only grew up with me, not his father" (58:3).

Hannes never had the chance to know his biological father, and he suspects that his father may still be alive. When Hannes was around six years old, his mother married his stepfather, who has been a loving and supportive presence in his life. Despite this, Hannes has always felt a deep desire to locate and connect with his biological father. Hannes expressed:

Look one day, when I called my mother, I asked her, I want his name and surname, I want to track him down and see if I can't get hold of him. But I never got to that point. For me, it just felt like (pause) if I start doing that I will (pause) the relationship that I have with my dad at the moment (pause) that it will hurt him (pause) and (pause) at the end, it can easily drive him away from us. (52:101)

Gerson believes his father abandoned his family when Gerson was nine, and he died a year later. In the following extract from Gerson's criminal profile, he describes his father's negligent attitude ". . . he described his father to have a 'don't care' attitude and this resulted in him not taking care of them financially or emotionally, in other words, an absent father." (45:20)

Domestic violence. Domestic abuse played a major role in shaping the lives of many participants during their upbringing. Many of them experienced verbal abuse, substance abuse, and physical violence in their households.

Cleophas and Jacob recalled their upbringing in a household with both of their parents, characterising their parents' relationship as healthy. In contrast, Brandon also had the experience of growing up with both parents, but his childhood was marked by multiple instances of violence stemming from his father's struggles with alcohol abuse and domestic violence. Brandon's father

exhibited emotional and physical abuse, often becoming aggressive when under the influence of alcohol. In the excerpt, Brandon shared some of his experiences:

Shaw, from both sides, my mother was having a healthy relationship with us. My father had a healthy relationship too with us when he was sober, but when he was drunk, he was also beating us. My father was also charged for my mother. He cut her like [he indicates] this on the arm. My father was sentenced to two years. (12:37)

Brandon recalled being around five or six when he first saw his father assault his mother. As he grew older, he tried to protect his mother, but any attempts to intervene resulted in him and his sibling being chased away from home. He noted that his father was sentenced for assaulting his wife when Brandon was 11 or 12.

During Hannes's early years, his mother was married to his younger brother's father, who subjected Hannes, his younger brother, and their mother to both physical and emotional abuse. This abusive situation came to an end when Hannes's mother married her current husband. Both Hannes and his parents are not sure of Hannes' exact age when they married. Hannes's mother disclosed that her ex-husband would deliberately and cruelly beat her in the presence of her children, with the intention of making them witness the abuse (52:99). Hannes' stepfather described Hannes' home environment during his early childhood years:

And of course it had, had an impact on their lives. Uhm, if when he was two weeks old and three weeks old and he was already being beaten, that was rough. And the previous husband, he was abusive and he would for about one month work and then be gone for a month and they had to live under bridges and things like that and it must have been terrible. And uhm, uhm. A child's formative years very important and it will definitely have an impact. (51:19)

Corporal punishment. Corporal punishment was a significant element in the upbringing of most participants. They considered beatings as a socially acceptable and normal means of disciplining children during their childhood. None of them perceived corporal punishment as excessive or abusive.

Eliphas explained how seemingly insignificant actions would unexpectedly result in beatings. For instance, his parents forbade him and his siblings from eating at other people's houses. Thus, accepting food at someone else's house was a transgression punished with a beating. However, refusing to eat was regarded as rude. Thus, they were punished for accepting

food and for refusing to eat. Eliphas said, "If you are given food at home and you said you do not want to eat then you would be beaten" (30:95).

Often, the physical punishment was severe, as indicated by Freddy's account of an incident when he was in grade 1 or 2 when his mother beat him and injured his arm. ". . . she did beat me just for my own mistakes I did, you understand. You see this arm? It is not straight. She turned it around" (39:123). Freddy's cousin mentioned that Freddy's paternal grandfather would frequently use beatings, even as a means to teach him basic principles like, ". . . here we don't swear" (37:4). She went on to explain that Freddy's home environment was precarious because his mother's boyfriends regularly assaulted him. Ismael also recounted how his grandfather preferred corporal punishment as a means of discipline. "No, maybe you are sent to do something and you talk back or you are told to saddle up a donkey and you don't or something like that" (57:41). Similarly, Jacob described how his father would "never spare the rod" (65:27-37). He would beat all the children for one sibling's mistake. Gerson also experienced severe and frequent corporal punishment as a child. "My mother and father. They were beating me at the same time. One would beat me first, then the other will also beat me" (70:56). He regarded the beatings from his parents as abuse, but the beatings from his grandfather as discipline. In his personal interview, Gerson also shared incidences of severe corporal punishment during his childhood:

I do not have any blue mark or stab mark. I only have a car accident mark here and then my grandpa's marks [gesture with hands] . . . Those one, when you said I do not know, then you had to take some beating. (70:52)

Neglect. As indicated by their early childhood accounts, Hannes, Gerson, and David experienced forms of neglect. Freddy's mother acknowledged that her frequent absences due to work and the lack of supervision led to neglect and had a severe impact on Freddy. She also mentioned that she used to sell home-brewed alcohol, "Jabula", and as a preteen Freddy started stealing and drinking from the Jabula (40:22). Freddy's account of his childhood also indicates that he deems his mother's parenting style as neglectful and abusive:

We were sleeping in one room; the "zalie" [mom] is sleeping in the other room, the zalie drinks. There is no "toppy" [father] who will say, 'eh!' or to threaten you by beating. School uniforms are brought and you wear it only the first day to school than poof! [hand gesture indicating that it is disappears] . . . Yes, you know with a mother that is drinking.

There was never a fixed toppy. You will come find that evening is there is one toppy. After three months, another toppy. There was no support. (39:30 & 39:29)

Freddy's cousin also asserted that Freddy's mother was neglectful, leaving him with no option but to find friends for support. She explained:

But the bullying also started with this that he found some friends also, street friends. The street friends he found (pause) the mother, there was no food at their house. You know, there was nothing really, and he had to fend for himself. Because the mother goes and stays with her boyfriend and then he is left just with her family. Then he has to now see and make a plan of how he will eat. (37:17)

Criminal-minded family. Hannes' narrative indicates that both father figures previously in his life were abusive and criminal minded. Like Hannes, his brother also regularly engaged in drug abuse and theft. Gerson shared that he lived with his uncle and aunt, whom he views as his parents, from the age of 12 or 13 (70:76). However, their influence on him was detrimental due to their criminal lifestyle. He believes that their influence is the reason for his current incarceration. He elaborated about his uncle:

What always made me angry was that he was stealing often, yes. Mmm. He used people for their goods, he never left people's goods. I was always the guy who was motivating him mm. He became born again but he was still stealing people's goods . . . I told him even that the Lord is taking care of you, why are you stealing? Then he will give me something mm. I didn't know that it was a stolen thing. Then I take the thing. Then it turns out to be a stolen thing. (70:78)

Male identity is linked to father figures. The participants in this study showed remarkable parallels with their fathers. These similarities encompassed issues such as alcohol abuse, aggression, engaging in multiple sexual relationships, and having children with different partners. It's worth noting that these resemblances were not only acknowledged by the participants themselves but also confirmed by their significant others.

Brandon openly admitted that he displayed aggressive behaviour, similar to his father's, when he was under the influence of alcohol. This tendency was noticeable in many of his relationships (12:38). Hannes's mother noted that by the time she divorced her abusive first husband, both her sons had already adopted their father's destructive behavioural tendencies (53:6). Anthony humorously recounted the story of how his father met his demise when he was

killed by a friend during a drunken altercation. He described himself as similar to his father, "a player" and someone who drank "a little bit too much" (2:83).

Eliphas's biological father had a total of 27 children with various women. Eliphas shared that his stepfather attempted to advise him against having a large number of children, but just like his biological father, his own affection for women remained strong and he spoke boastfully about his love for women and his many children:

Uhm, to tell really the truth, outside I was very naughty (laugh). I had liked a lot of women. That is why I am having 19 kids. I do have 19 kids, they were 23. But the rest are deceased. . . From different women. (30:14)

Ismael's father has 15 children. Among them, only four are his full siblings. His criminal profile indicates that Ismael ". . . fathered four children from different women. . . He was in multiple romantic relationships with the deceased and another lady." (56:23). Ismael expressed chauvinistic opinions about women:

Like if I look at it, my father had many women, he had many women and has children in many women. But all those women knew about each other. My mother them all knew about each other, but there was nothing about, and, and, and there was nothing about jealousy. (57:98)

Victim of bullying. Most offenders in the study were victims of bullying at school and at home. David shared his experiences, "I was very obedient at school, but the teachers were name-calling me..." (25:34). Similarly, Freddy was bullied by children and teachers at school. Freddy's cousin believed that Freddy faced bullying and mockery from his peers because his mother did not pay school fees. She recalled Freddy telling them that ". . . the children say and attacked and beat him" (37:15). Hannes detailed how he was bullied while living in the hostel (52:116) and pressured into buying and selling cannabis and mandrax. He was afraid to tell anyone (52:52) and this bullying contributed to his negative experience at school. He explained:

Then I would make sure that if a prefect comes to my room. Then he would send me. From there to Windhoek North. I would run from there to Windhoek North (pause) to and buy weed [cannabis] and pills [mandrax]. For us, for us, and the seniors that were in the hostel. Then we would come back, if I come back, then we would go sit and smoke . . . (52:53)

Ismael's sister described him as a quiet person who would get teased but not fight back. She said, ". . . he never ever even hit a child" (60:4). Both Ismael and his mother confirmed that he was bullied at school. Jacob stutters and was regularly mocked at school due to his speech impediment (65:17). His mother also acknowledged that he was a victim of bullying and Jacob revealed that he had also experienced bullying at home by an adopted older brother (65:12).

These main aspects culminated in the sub-theme, family and upbringing. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the second sub-theme of the main theme, relationships and life circumstances. As shown in Table 5.4, this sub-theme is intimacy and sexual experiences. Under this sub-theme, the main aspects are normalised male infidelity, sexuality, alcohol and relationships, and violence against romantic partners.

Sub-theme: Intimacy and sexual experiences

This sub-theme focuses on the offenders' past and present intimate relationships, as well as the impact they had on their partners. Additionally, it explores the offenders' views on relationships, their sexuality, and their thoughts and concerns regarding sex and intimacy.

Normalised male infidelity. From the participants' interviews, it becomes apparent that most view infidelity as a typical aspect of relationships. This is particularly true regarding the firm belief that men are expected to stray while women should remain faithful. Anthony, David, Eliphas, Gerson, Ismael, and Jacob admitted to having concurrent multiple relationships.

Ismael claimed that he has always been loyal to his girlfriends, but he was hurt by more than one woman who cheated on him. Nevertheless, he has four children by four different women, and two sons were born in the same year (57:26). In his interview, Cleophas stated that he has been married for over 30 years and stays in touch with his wife, who resides in the North. However, he also mentioned a girlfriend in Windhoek. Anthony's criminal profile (3:21) reveals that he was dating two women simultaneously while also engaging in casual sex with others. Anthony light-heartedly shared that since his school days, he had been involved with many women: "Not to stay with them. But taste and pass by (laugh)" (2:91).

Sexuality. All participants identify as heterosexual and consider homosexuality to be wrong. They base their beliefs on the Bible. Apart from Freddy, they denied engaging in sexual relationships within the correctional facility. Only Freddy admitted to being sexually active in the facility and having a "laitie" (39:70). A laitie is a boy to engage in sexual activities with and support, like a girlfriend.

Alcohol and relationships. For most participants, alcohol had a detrimental impact on their romantic relationships. Eliphas acknowledged that he frequently engaged in excessive drinking with his girlfriends, which resulted in numerous relationship issues due to alcohol abuse. Similarly, Jacob revealed that his own drinking also contributed but often problems in his relationship stemmed from his girlfriend's excessive and secretive drinking habits, as well as her infidelity. Consequently, he decided to quit drinking. The following extract illustrates his thought process:

"Look, I get blamed if I go out or go and sunrise, or I go and "tiep" (pass out) . . . Then I, I am now the one accused, I went to go and sleep with some girl, and then there's an argument and, I am now the one. Mmm, Now, we both (pause) everything is put on me . . ." (65:69)

Violence against romantic partners. Cleophas, David, Ismael, and Jacob are incarcerated for the tragic act of killing their girlfriends, while Anthony was convicted of attempting to murder his girlfriend. Jacob, Ismael, Anthony, Brandon, and Eliphas have a history of aggressive behaviour towards their respective girlfriends, and they admitted to perpetrating acts of violence against their partners. The following extract from Eliphas's criminal profile illustrates his sentiments:

. . . he describes their relationship to be fine, although not perfect, because his girlfriend will spend the money given by the offender for her to go drink alcohol and buy unnecessary things for the house. This usually led to them fighting either physically or verbally about the money. (31:3)

Above, I presented the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of intimacy and sexual experiences. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the third sub-theme of the main theme, relationships and life circumstances. As shown in Table 5.4, this sub-theme is social lifestyle. Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I present are current friendships, history of antisocial friendships and behaviour, and social activities.

Sub-theme: Social lifestyle

This sub-theme encompasses the participants' past and present friendships and social circles. It was crucial to establish the participants' influence on friends and how friends influenced them. The offenders' lifestyles, associates, and criminal attitudes are essential factors considered

in each offender's risk, needs, and reintegration assessment upon admission to the correctional facility. Eight offenders scored high risk in this aspect.

Current friendships. This sub-theme assesses the participants' current friendships with other inmates, staff members at the correctional facility, and people outside the facility. Most have lost contact with friends outside the correctional facility. According to his RNR profile, Brandon stated, ". . . he is not in contact with his old friends, and they are not visiting him. He mentioned that he does not see them as good friends" (13:39). When asked about friendships outside the facility, Freddy firmly denied having friends. He explained, "Huhuh, in prison, I am not looking for friends either" (39:97).

Most participants agreed that fellow inmates can be a negative influence, potentially leading to involvement in illegal activities. Such involvement could prolong their sentences, and they believe it is not worth the risk. This sentiment was mentioned in Jacob's RNR assessment (67:8). Therefore, he avoids becoming close friends with anyone. This feeling was also shared by Eliphas, who said, "You will..., like me, I have 47 years. Those 47 years. If you have friends, then it will become 80 . . . The friend will drag you into illegal stuff" (30:134). Gerson and Ismael said they do not have friends because they do not trust anyone. However, Ismael has one fellow inmate he confides in (57:75), and Gerson said everyone, including police and correctional staff, is his friend (70:87). The CMO also explained that Gerson is very open and friendly with most people.

Hannes has no friends outside the facility, but he views a few fellow inmates as brothers from church. He particularly values one brother who ". . . stands with me in church. And uhh, sometimes when things become difficult for me, or things get too much for me in prison, he is always the one that motivates me" (52:75). Anthony admitted to maintaining acquaintances and friendships outside the facility with people who abuse drugs and are "thugs" (2:128). Despite most offenders denying friendships, the CMO mentioned evidence of friendships among inmates, particularly Anthony's friendships with fellow inmates, which are often problematic.

History of antisocial friendships and behaviour. Many of the participants in this study had past friendships with individuals involved in antisocial activities. Anthony and his friends, for instance, were engaged in various delinquent behaviours such as bullying, theft, street fights, muggings, carrying weapons like knives, skipping school, and running away from home (2:98, 2:99, and 2:105). Both Gerson and Anthony admitted that they were not afraid the first time they

were arrested and detained. Anthony even mentioned that he was familiar with everyone in the holding cell (2:63), while Gerson relied on his uncle, who had a history of legal troubles (70:78).

Freddy's criminal profile reveals that he had been involved with delinquent friends and engaged in antisocial activities since the age of 12. He began drinking at a very young age, as his mother explains that he would steal the alcohol she brewed for sale at home (40:28). He regularly participated in unlawful acts, including theft, street fights, muggings, and even stabbing people (38:17). Hannes, according to his own account, had friends who influenced him to engage in antisocial activities, including stealing, truancy, and substance abuse (52:2). His stepfather also expressed concerns that Hannes had the wrong group of friends (51:5). Similarly, Jacob's criminal profile confirms that he associated with friends who had a criminal mindset before his arrest (64:18). Likewise, Brandon also displayed impulsive behaviour, engaged in truancy, and frequently participated in fights due to friends and drug abuse (52:110).

Social activities. For most participants, leisure activities primarily involved alcohol abuse. Eliphas mentioned, "Until now when I had come to prison. But I was drinking a lot and having a lot of women. Yes, my money was just finishing in alcohol, women, and entertainment. And the alcohol as well the entertainment" (30:66). Brandon admitted that spending time with friends always entailed excessive consumption of alcohol (12:47 & 12:63). David (26:9) and Eliphas (30:16 & 30:17) regularly engaged in gambling during their leisure time, which was always accompanied by alcohol. Jacob's sister linked her brother's problems to excessive drinking and friendships:

Jacob did, uhmm (pause) let me say maybe the time he went to high school. He started getting together with friends and... okay, then he started using alcohol. But then it was not that bad but after he now went to study and grew up, then there the alcohol became much worse, because then there must be drinking every weekend. (68:11)

Above, I presented the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of social lifestyle. Below, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data culminating in the second main theme, character.

Main Theme: Character

This main theme encompasses factors such as the individual's environment, mental ability, moral principles, and ethical values. The components contributing to character primarily consist of moral wellness, an ongoing process that requires active attention and nurturing (Nucci, 2018). These components include basic moral cognition, social-emotional capacities, skills such as

empathy and perspective-taking, capacities for executive control, self-regulation of emotions and desires, and communication skills.

Within this theme, the character was derived from the participants' typical expressions, interaction styles, and usual reactions to situations. Recurrent themes in the offenders' behaviour patterns, thinking styles, and expressions of feelings were observed. The three sub-themes discussed under this main theme are traits, faith and religion, and culture and values, in the order presented in Table 5.4. I address the sub-theme, traits, first by looking at the prominent traits: abrasive, hostile, emotionally avoidant, dangerous, deceitful and manipulative, jealous, poor emotional regulation, dominant, and chauvinistic.

Sub-theme: Traits

Traits represent an individual's relatively enduring characteristics that can be used to distinguish between the individual and others and influence their behaviour across various situations (DeYoung, 2014; Turkeyilmaz et al., 2015). These enduring traits persistently influence an individual's emotional, motivational, cognitive, and behavioural states. Traits are useful in describing and comprehending how individuals habitually engage with the world. In this sub-theme, traits were conceptualised as the participants' typical behaviours and reactions, which they and others perceive as distinctive and memorable. Consequently, traits serve as significant and memorable identifiers for the participants.

Abrasive: Several offenders exhibited notably abrasive behaviour, characterised by offensive, impolite, and disrespectful conduct through both verbal and non-verbal expressions. Their actions seemed motivated by ill intentions, as they sought to deliberately irritate and provoke conflicts.

The Case Notes of Anthony (5:7) and Freddy contain multiple entries highlighting their abrasive nature. This entry presents one of many such incidents in Freddy's case notes. "As soon as the officers arrived, Freddy began instigating others not to eat unless the officer left because . . . so he told the officer to take his food and put it in his mother's private parts" (34:5). Jacob also exhibited intentionally provocative behaviour indicated in the Case Notes. Verbal abrasiveness and instigating conflict, is demonstrated when he ". . . refused to move to his cell; when officers approached him, he started applying faeces on his body to prevent them from touching him" (69:6).

Other offenders do not use overtly abrasive language, but they subtly create friction. For instance, Ismael's Case Notes indicate his tendencies to engage in actions that annoy and anger officers, intent on instigating conflict. "The offender undermined the procedures by remaining asleep during the morning inspection; he never complained about being sick and ignored questions when asked" (54:1).

Hostile and dangerous. Hostility is a personality trait characterised by intense and prolonged experiences of anger and encompasses a spectrum from annoyance and irritability to fury and rage. It is related to a general propensity to view others and the world antagonistically (Cassiello-Robbins & Barlow, 2016; Turkyilmaz et al., 2015). Hostility is defined as a deliberate desire to cause harm to someone covertly or overtly showing signs that suggest a potential inclination toward physical aggression or assault (Tsikandilakis et al., 2020). Individuals exhibiting hostility may be perceived as short-tempered, irritable, unpleasant, unfriendly, angry, and potentially dangerous. Such anger often presents as an intense annoyance, displeasure, or defensiveness and can be perceived as antagonistic. Dangerous refers to the perception of offenders as posing a risk to others due to their potential to inflict harm. This perception encompasses both how significant others view the offenders and how the offenders view themselves, considering their actions prior to incarceration and their behaviour within the facility.

Anthony, Brandon, Freddy, and Jacob have multiple entries in their criminal profiles indicating hostility. The accounts from the CMO and significant others corroborate this impression. Jacob's RNR assessment indicates that he perceives himself as someone who easily becomes angry and gets involved in arguments that are unrelated to him (41:23). Despite describing Brandon as approachable and agreeable (9:3), the CMO also labelled Brandon as dangerous and deceptive, appearing quiet but capable of extreme violence (9:4). Brandon stated, "I was very aggressive growing up. If somebody maybe said something wrongly to me, then I will quickly get angry. There were times when I walk away and there was also times I wanted to fight" (12:16). He further stated that he fought more often than walked away and his criminal profile pronounced him as dangerous due to the brutality of his crimes (11:3). Ismael's criminal profile also indicates that he is dangerous, as he has two previous convictions for assault (56:20).

Others, like Anthony and Freddy, display both abrasive and hostile behaviour. Freddy's Case Notes record an incident when Freddy "... became aggressive and started insulting Officer Johannes by saying, "Jy is net dom gebore". Thereafter, the offender picked up a broom as if he wanted to beat the officer . . ." (34:6). Anthony is characterised as volatile and an instigator of

conflict by the CMO (1:12). Such hostility is also demonstrated in an excerpt from Anthony's case notes:

. . . he confronted the officer after giving him food, officer told him to stop but he retaliated and started insulting and calling vulgar words towards the officer. He is repetitive in this exercise, saying that he will beat the officer up and threatened that he is not afraid of killing a member because he already has a further charge. (5:6)

Like Brandon, the CMO described Cleophas as appearing quiet and polite but capable of suddenly becoming aggressive and dangerous. He described Cleophas as calm and friendly, yet responsible for heinous crimes on multiple occasions. The CMO highlighted Cleophas's dangerous nature, citing instances where he violently attacked other inmates in the facility: "Aah, but he is very dangerous when it comes to others also. He; He likes fighting; Uhm. There was a time he bit another offender . . ." (17:3). The CMO agrees with Cleophas's criminal profile that he harbours hostility towards Whites and Damaras.

Jacob is also considered dangerous based on information from his interview. An incident during his childhood involving his adoptive brother, who bullied him, demonstrates his capacity for violence. Jacob recounted, ". . . I didn't even think about it. But the next moment I find myself, I was busy beating him. Yes... With that spoon full of porridge still. The one that you make the porridge with... He had open wounds . . ." (65:12). He admitted to numerous other violent incidents, including assaulting people, using weapons such as knives, and discharging a firearm in a public space (65:155).

Emotionally avoidant. Emotional avoidance refers to participants who have difficulty comprehending and expressing their emotions and lack effective conflict management skills. Instead of addressing issues directly, they often avoid conflict by ignoring the situation, walking away, or dismissing it. This avoidance leads to a build-up of anger and frustration, eventually resulting in extreme outbursts of rage that manifest in aggression and violence.

Jacob describes himself as someone who tries to avoid conflict. He claims that he is slow to anger and does not typically react immediately. However, when he does react later, it often leads to problematic outcomes (65:9). David's criminal profile also suggests inadequate conflict management skills. He described himself as a good person and he deals with conflict ". . . normally once he is angry, he argues with someone, he likes to sleep, and after sleep, he automatically forgives that person and he doesn't hold it in his heart" (26:22). The CMO

characterised Gerson and Ismael as individuals who exhibit emotional avoidance. Ismael elaborated on this avoidant tendency by stating “. . . I don't know what I do. When someone does something wrong to me, I will just talk and say, don't do that. . .” (57:35).

Manipulative. Deceitful and manipulative traits are evident in participants who engage in dishonest behaviours such as lying, cheating, and other unscrupulous tactics to accomplish their goals. These individuals may be secretive, disingenuous, insincere, and inauthentic.

During the interviews, I came to realise that deception and manipulation are widespread among offenders and are viewed as normal behaviours within the facility. For instance, Hannes explained that there are many deceitful inmates, and he cautioned my assistant and me not to trust even those called pastors (52:173). Anthony, Freddy, Hannes, and Jacob all exhibit manipulative and deceitful tendencies. According to the CMO, he holds a sense of caution toward Anthony due to his perception that Anthony is sneaky (69:22). The CMO also conveyed a feeling of defeat when discussing his assessment of Anthony. He stated, “Ai, Anthony is a person that (pause) If you are with him you have to be vigilant every time. Very, very much vigilant. It's a person who can manipulate. Ja, even the officers. . .” (1:11).

Anthony acknowledged his manipulative and deceitful nature (2:115) as a trait present since childhood. For example, when weary of attending school, he stopped going but pretended to do so, intentionally deceiving his mother (2:105). Freddy also admitted that being incarcerated taught him to be deceitful and manipulative, to do whatever it required to acquire things and create opportunities for himself. He described lying and faking illness to take advantage of hospital visits as common practice among inmates, including himself:

I have been, I went every day to the hospital. To get these things in, to survive, I am not sick! I go for the high blood and let me be referred to the acupuncture of Chinese. Chinese, you go Monday, Wednesday, Friday; Monday; Wednesday, Friday. To be pricked with those needles or what, what. Those things I do not worry with that I, am just aiming, my aim is. Yes, as long as I can get out the thing. You understand what I want! (39:81)

According to Hannes, most inmates fake illnesses. He admitted to having done this himself in the past, even going as far as obtaining medication for hypertension despite not having high blood pressure. He explained, “You take salt and salt water. Then you drink it. Then you go up to the hospital, then, they take your blood pressure” (52:135). Hannes' mother corroborated his deceptive tendencies. She mentioned that since he was a child, he regularly concealed the truth

from his parents (53:23). While awaiting trial, Hannes escaped custody, hijacked a car, and went on the run for a week (52:133). Similarly, Ismael was convicted of escaping custody while awaiting trial in 2014 (56:20).

Jealous. Jealousy is a trait that pertains to offenders who are seen, either by themselves or by others, as envious individuals. These individuals may display protective behaviours, possessiveness in their relationships, and feelings of resentment towards the achievements and relationships of others. I discovered that jealousy was prevalent among these participants.

The CMO depicted Freddy as having many friends and getting along well with others. However, he becomes very jealous when he observes those close to him interacting with others (35:14). Instances of relationship disputes and jealous behaviour were also evident in the criminal profiles of Ismael (56:13) and Jacob (64:7). Anthony admitted that he had multiple sexual partners, but he became extremely jealous when his girlfriend started talking to others (2:20). David's criminal profile similarly indicates that jealousy fuelled his attack on his girlfriend, as described in the following excerpt:

After finished eating, the deceased received a phone call and as she answered the call she went outside the room for discussion and when she finished talking, she came back to the room and the offender asked her who she was talking [to], but she refused to tell the offender who she was calling, and the offender grabbed the cell phone and tried to read some messages (24:8).

Poor emotional self-regulation. Emotion regulation entails individuals' attempts to manage their emotions to make them more beneficial than detrimental (Gross, 2015). Self-control pertains to the cognitive mechanisms that enable individuals to override or change their inner responses, interrupt undesired behavioural tendencies, thoughts, emotions, and actions, and refrain from acting on them to align them with their broader objectives (Hofmann et al., 2014; Inzlicht et al., 2014). Lack of control and stability causes people to give in to their emotions, impulses, and doubts. Even seemingly minor anomalies may plunge people with low self-control and stability into chaos (DeYoung, 2014). Behaviours such as fighting and screaming indicate a loss of control and poor emotional self-regulation.

Poor emotional self-regulation is a trait shared by many participants, and most admit that they struggle with anger management. Understanding and identifying emotions is crucial for managing and controlling intense emotions like anger. Emotions become detrimental when they

manifest inappropriately in intensity, duration, and frequency, leading to unhelpful influence on cognitive processes and behaviour.

Significant others and the CMO described Eliphas, Ismael, and Jacob as slow to anger but react in extreme ways when their temper is lost. When asked about how often he loses control of his temper, Ismael responded, ". . . always when I was outside it would regularly happen. It even happens here, but now because I am here I just stay far" (57:35). Ismael further explained his approach to anger management in the following excerpt:

I do not get angry quickly and when I finally get angry I don't know what I do. When someone does something wrong to me, I will just talk and say, don't do that. And then when the person does it again and again then I can't take it anymore because this person doesn't listen when I am telling them to stop. Then later I don't know what I do. (57:35)

During his interview, Jacob also described how he loses control once he becomes angry. This is illustrated by an interaction he had with a teacher in school:

You see, now I had switched off, I was I was (stuttering) I was off my mind (pause) and then after, when the teacher was looking at me, I said, I, I said, I told you and started swearing at her. At the teacher. . . I told her exactly, I told her, I can "mos" say, I can mos speak? So, I told her did you see now? "Jou kond se kind!" (child of a cunt). I had told you this so many times! (65:25)

Dominant. Dominance is a trait that involves the ability to inspire, influence, and direct others. Inmates with this trait exert control over others and possess leadership abilities that can be channelled positively or negatively.

The CMO identified the most difficult, resilient, and destructive offenders as dominant, influential, and capable of leading. These inmates include Hannes, Freddy (35:8), and Jacob (69:5). According to Case Notes and the CMO's impression, Jacob can cause havoc. The CMO explained that when authorities banned tobacco in the facility, Jacob formed and led a gang (69:5). He elaborated:

They put the mattresses and beds at the entrance of the units for the officers not to enter and then they burnt them. . . He was the leader. It was a serious case because the officers got to be burned. Apparently, they wanted to die because they can't smoke. (69:23)

In response, Hannes also created and led a group of inmates who retaliated against the violence instigated by Jacob and his gang. The CMO also mentioned that Gerson (43:14) and Eliphas lead, protect, and speak up for others (27:17). Eliphas proudly explained that he always helps others, "Is what I am. I always hold meetings in my cell . . . If you complain about something, and this member did not help you" (30:141). He explained that in addition to the 31 inmates in his cell, the meetings include inmates from other cells.

Chauvinistic. Male chauvinism is a trait that refers to participants who view women as inferior to men and as objects for men's gratification. Most participants in this study exhibited disregard and disrespect towards women through their actions and language. They often used language that objectified and disrespected women, believing women should be subordinate to men. They tend to normalise male infidelity. They had multiple sexual partners but demanded monogamy and loyalty from their female partners.

Fellow inmates and the CMO described Anthony and Eliphas as womanisers, and the CMO opined that Anthony (1:2) overtly objectifies women. They also boastfully identified themselves as womanisers who are desirable and irresistible to women. Anthony said, "Uhh, obviously, look, I was that kind of guy, I don't know from school days, ladies were falling in love with me, themselves" (2:91). Both Anthony and Eliphas attributed their behaviour to traits they inherited from their fathers, who were involved in multiple relationships and had children with different women. Jacob also has derogatory views of women, seeing them as cheaters and gold diggers who use men for money. He recounted how his girlfriend abused his kindness and used his money to entertain other men (65:95). He also perceived women as weak-minded and unable to resist men (65:56). Ismael expressed similar chauvinistic views of women in the following extract:

. . . Like if I look at it, my father had many women. He had many women and has children in many women. But all those women knew about each other. My mother them all knew about each other, but there was nothing about, and, and, and, there was nothing about jealous. Mmm, and the women of that time were like, if my man does that, I will also do that, there was nothing like that. So, the women of that time used to respect their men and live under the man and, so, the man, as the anchor of the house, he was respected. She respected him. But now women, when the man goes out the front door, she goes out the back door... Mmm, so that thing, women, women should maybe be taught that thing

very intensely, I think, that's what I think. Mmm, so that they stay with one man and respect him. (57:98)

These participants firmly believe that men are the breadwinners and leaders. For instance, Ismael repeatedly refers to a man as "the anchor of the house" (57:37).

Above, I presented the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of traits. Below, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the second sub-theme of the main theme, character. This sub-theme is faith and religion, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Faith and religion

This sub-theme pertains to the offenders' internal beliefs and convictions that shape their behaviour and decisions and impact their lives. The one pertinent aspect that culminated in the sub-theme of faith and religion is Christianity and faith.

Christianity and faith. Christianity and faith refer to the offenders' religious and spiritual convictions. All participants acknowledged that they were raised as Christians. However, Ismael, David, and Brandon stated that despite their Christian upbringing, they do not consider themselves Christians. Ismael's RNR assessment revealed that he "belonged to the ELCRN [Lutheran] church" (59:31), but he never showed interest or participated in church activities. Likewise, David stated that he did not see the need ". . . to participate in church things because from his childhood church was not really an issue to him" (26:26).

The remaining participants expressed their faith in God and devotion to Christianity. For these inmates, Christianity provides the rationale for their behaviour, motivation for change, and a sense of purpose. Cleophas mentioned that his father was a committee member in the church, his mother was in the church choir, he attended a Christian school, and he reads his Bible daily (15:10). Several participants, including Cleophas (16:1), attended bible study in the facility and received a certificate of completion. Others, like Hannes, not only completed the bible study but also mentioned that, ". . . in church, I am standing as a head leader; I'm standing for the congregation. . ." (52:72).

Gerson also identifies as a Christian, emphasising his strong faith in God. According to Anthony's mother and stepfather, he grew up in the church and sang in the choir. The family is religious and always seeks answers from their faith and God. Anthony explained that after

committing the crime, he went home, spoke to his stepfather (a pastor), and prayed together. His stepfather then referred Anthony to another woman for more prayer (2:39).

Above, I presented the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme, faith and religion. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the third sub-theme of the main theme, character. This sub-theme is culture and values.

Sub-theme: Culture and values

Culture encompasses "those customary beliefs and values that ethnic, religious, and social groups transmit fairly unchanged from generation to generation" (Guiso et al., 2006 p. 23, 2015). This definition was reiterated by others (Cebula & Rossi, 2021; Diederich et al., 2022). A group may share characteristics and adopt the same culture, including elements such as language, religion, social habits, music, and food. Culture helps shape values and opinions (Cebula & Rossi, 2021; Diederich et al., 2022; Guiso et al., 2006, 2015). Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I present are views on sexual relationships, perception of the Namibian justice system, and opinions on the Windhoek CF.

Views on sexual relationships. The participants' perspectives on sexuality are heavily influenced by culture and religion, with their justifications often rooted in biblical teachings regarding sodomy. Except for Freddy, all participants concur that same-sex intercourse goes against their religious principles, viewing it as sinful and wrong, and they would not participate in such activity.

Freddy is the sole participant who acknowledged being aware of sexual interactions between men outside the facility, even prior to his incarceration (39:68). He is also the only one who admitted to having taken younger inmates as sexual partners in the correctional facility. He explained that when you initially enter the correctional facility, ". . . you get directions. How are things working? Then you say, ne man! It's better I am not being done from behind, not to be always looking behind my head... Let me do that to be independent" (39:69). He further expressed that in his opinion, sex among men in the facility is tantamount to heterosexual sex. He stated, "It is just as good as if you are having a boyfriend outside... You understand? Here at the prison, you have to support a man. Just like when a woman is supported by her man outside there" (39:70). When asked if he was supporting someone currently, he responded, "Yes, I had. Look, I do not want to cover up my bad side." However, he insisted that he stopped having sex with young inmates to avoid getting a transgression in his case notes.

Perception of the Namibian justice system. I explored the participants' opinions on various issues related to policing and justice, such as corruption within the facility. All participants perceive the Namibian justice, safety, and security system negatively. They believe the government fails offenders due to political corruption involving courts, police, and corrections. Most view the court system as biased, consider lawyers as incompetent, and blame the state for most problems they face as inmates.

Ismael holds the Namibian government responsible for gender-based violence against women, particularly within couples. As the excerpt indicates (57:98), he believes the government should take responsibility by teaching women to respect men instead of punishing men with harsher penalties. Many offenders feel they were treated unjustly by the entire system from the moment of their arrest until their incarceration. Several, like Cleophas (15:43) believe their trials were biased and their sentences too long. David also opined that the court was unjust in sentencing him without obtaining the truth from him:

You know I cannot just give myself over like that while nobody has ever asked me what happened that day? And that thing happened because of a mistake. That's why I did not say in the court that I committed the crime according to what the court is accusing me. (25:54)

Similarly, Eliphas and Gerson believe they were sentenced unjustly, accusing the court of unfairness, using corrupt witnesses and fake statements. Gerson repeatedly mentioned being falsely accused and framed (70:27). Hannes perceived it unfair that other offenders, particularly those with petty crimes, are released only to reoffend repeatedly, while Hannes, despite proving that he has changed, is never given such an opportunity:

. . . For the past how many, ten (pause) ten years I've been appealing. That I haven't been getting nothing. They tell me, they tell me my punishment is right. I think they must, (pause) look I won't say the deed that I did is right. I don't say it's good. But I believe, punish a person in such a way that they at least have a chance outside. (52:166)

In addition to the consensus among participants that the justice system is unjust and corrupt, there is a shared belief that inmates enjoyed more privileges in Namibia before independence. This opinion is unanimous, even though only Cleophas had been incarcerated before independence. They believe that before independence, inmates received more toiletries and food, better quality product, had better living conditions, and treatment in the facilities.

According to Ismael, ". . . government doesn't look after the people anymore. Before, it used to look after the people. The "Boers" (Whites) did not sentence people for many years, but they used to look after people" (57:91). Freddy said inmates were treated better before the ORMCS was introduced, ". . . the business changed from Canada system to unit management system" (39:101).

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of perception of the Namibian justice system. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the subtheme opinions on the Windhoek CF.

Opinions on the Windhoek CF. All participants agreed that the Windhoek CF is a dangerous place, and they blamed the Namibian government for the dangers, such as sodomy and violence. They criticised the state for banning "necessities", including cigarettes, condoms, and the right to cook in their cells. Ismael emphasised this point several times:

. . . since tobacco was taken out, the fights have escalated. Even now, recently one was in ICU, just the same, it's just tobacco that causes such things. . . And then another was also stabbed in unit seven . . . Same thing, just tobacco brings that problem. Because our government wants to make things that are not illegal, illegal and cause more problems. (57:81)

Ismael thinks men are getting sick because they are not provided condoms (57:76). Thus, the state is responsible for spreading HIV/AIDS and STIs in the correctional facility. He also expressed that inmates have no choice but to exchange sex for goods:

. . . now that the tobacco has been taken away, it's much more difficult.... So there is the way of selling, if I give you something, then you must of course pay me back, give me something, so let me sleep with you. That's the way, and really, it is simply our law that in itself, through what it does, it causes this problem, deliberately making things more and more difficult. Normal, regular guys who have children and women, even wives outside. Even grown men with families come here and do that. (57:78)

Jacob expressed anger towards the government, blaming their inaction and empty promises for the violence and lack of protection for victimised inmates. He explained:

I asked to see the Commissioner and General, the Commissioner General, about these things. Because the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner General comes, when someone

is being beaten, or something happened, then he comes with a black cloth to come and cover up the things here. He talks these nice things here for the guys that don't really understand the things. The guys that don't understand the undertone. Just as he turns, the same things continue. (65:155)

According to Jacob, correctional officers are aware of many incidents and threats but ignore them and it results in major outbreaks of violence. He cited an example where three offenders threatened each other for a long time. No action was taken by the authorities until they fought, leading to one inmate's death:

They went and threatened each other in front of the Unit Manager how they would stab each other's eyes out. Those guys fought 2010, 2011 until 2012. Until 2012 when that thing happened... If they had been separated, take this man to another prison, take that man to another prison and the other to another prison. But then you just keep the people in one unit. (65:160)

Hannes also mentioned ongoing incidents of sodomy and violence in the Windhoek CF, noting that officers are aware but do nothing. He noted that out of frustration, inmates resort to violence. He described such an incident when he and a few other inmates became frustrated and took matters in their own hands and acted after a violent rape in the facility (52:152).

Hannes also admitted that once, fearing the brutality of inmates, he attempted suicide instead of facing the wrath of the drug dealer he was working for. This illustrates the level of danger within the Windhoek CF, according to Hannes, "Now, later on you don't know what to do, which way to go... Because at that time the prison becomes very small . . ." (52:154). He further illustrated the danger by referring to an incident he witnessed involving a fellow inmate who was unable to hide cannabis during a cell inspection (52:152). The inmate couldn't conceal the contraband because the only way to hide it was in the rectum, and the stash was too large. Eliphas also mentioned such incidents. He also added that if an inmate complains to correctional officers about things that they witnessed other inmates doing prohibited things, they are labeled a "pimper," meaning, a tell-tale. "Here, look if you are not man enough. It will bring you problems. They will make you naughty... They will stab you . . ." (30:138).

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of opinions on the Windhoek CF. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the main theme, personality.

Below, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the sub-themes that form the main theme of personality. The presentation of the results was done in the order presented in Table 5.4. This main theme, as shown in Table 5.4, encompasses three sub-themes of behaviour, cognition, and emotion. The sub-theme of behaviour is addressed first. Under this sub-theme, I present the most prominent behavioural traits.

Main Theme: Personality

Personality is complex and comprises deeply ingrained patterns of emotional and behavioural traits that naturally manifest across various aspects of an individual's mental processes (Bleidorn et al., 2019; Conrad et al., 2013; Nucci, 2018). These traits are generally considered more-or-less consistent and enduring dispositions that manifest in and influence patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

The repeated patterns were noted, and personality traits were inferred from the offender's self-perception, the CMO's perceptions, family members' perceptions, and the information found in official records. This main theme encompasses patterns of thinking, behaviour, and emotions. Behaviour, cognition, and emotion may respond to an external stimulus or trigger, such as an event or comments made by inmates or the CMO, or in response to thoughts. Below, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the sub-themes that form the main theme of personality. The results are presented in the order presented in Table 5.4. The sub-theme of behaviour is addressed first. Under this sub-theme, I present the most prominent behavioural traits: aggressive, antisocial, confrontational, defiant, obedient, impulsive, intimidation, and substance abuse.

Sub-theme: Behaviour

This sub-theme focuses on the offenders' typical behaviour patterns, particularly in relation to others, and refers to the behavioural characteristic of the offender. Thus, the behaviour is observable to others and becomes part of the individual's identity. Personality psychology define behaviour as "... verbal utterances or movements that are potentially available to careful observers using normal sensory processes" (Furr, 2009, p. 438). This definition remains valuable in research (Mills & Sætra, 2022; Uher, 2016; Wilt & Revelle, 2015). Considering various definitions from philosophical, biological, and psychological perspectives, including Furr's (2009) definition, Uher (2016) defined behaviour as "external changes or activities of living organisms that are functionally mediated by other external phenomena in the present moment" (p. 13).

Aggressive. An aggressive trait is defined as a frequent inclination to participate in physical and verbal aggression, a tendency to become easily angered, and a predisposition to harbour hostile beliefs about others in various circumstances (Richardson & Hammock, 2011). Aggression may include overtly aggressive acts with or without weapons, verbal aggression, group aggression such as riots, and more covertly aggressive acts such as passive aggression and instigating fights between others.

I found that most participants exhibited a pattern of aggression. All of them are currently incarcerated for committing crimes that were driven by their aggressive tendencies. Except for David, their histories are marked by a display of aggressive behaviour, primarily relying on aggression to resolve conflicts. Some participants, like Gerson, have fewer instances of aggression in their history, while others, such as Freddy, Brandon, Anthony, Jacob, and Cleophus, have a more extensive history marked by frequent displays of aggression. Brandon admitted, "I was very aggressive growing up. If somebody maybe said something wrongly to me, then I will quickly get angry" (12:16).

Freddy's cousin shared that Freddy's childhood was marked by multiple acts of aggression, including fights during soccer games (37:23). Similar incidents involving childhood aggression were common in the narratives of the other participants. For Jacob, fighting was a means of defending himself and others against bullies, as he was frequently targeted due to his stutter (65:17). Jacob had once seriously injured a man, leading to an attempted murder charge. Additionally, his sister mentioned that Jacob and his ex-girlfriend were frequently involved in physical altercations (68:18). Ismael also had a history of aggression toward his ex-girlfriends, as indicated in his criminal profile. He had committed two cases of assault GBH on a previous ex-girlfriend (not the deceased), using sticks and stones to attack her (56:31).

Many participants acknowledged that their aggressive behaviour was exacerbated when they consumed alcohol. Brandon openly admitted that drinking and fighting were often closely intertwined (12:53). Similar scenarios were described by Eliphas, who explained that alcohol, fighting, girlfriends, and money were frequently interconnected aspects of his life (31:3 & 32:19). This kind of relationship, where alcohol, fighting, women, and money were intertwined, also existed within Jacob's experiences with his girlfriends (65:70). According to Cleophas's cousin, Cleophas has a history of aggressive behaviour, which includes incidents like assaulting his mother, killing his neighbour, and previous convictions of the murder of two people (14:1 – 14:5).

In their Case Notes, there are multiple entries evidencing aggressive displays by inmates like Anthony (5:2 & 5:5) and Freddy's repeated verbal and physical aggression towards officers and fellow inmates (34:6). Hannes admitted to a past characterised by regular fights and aggression but claimed to have changed since becoming a born-again Christian while incarcerated (52:144). According to the CMO, Gerson, Eliphas (27:14), and David are not aggressive. However, Eliphas mentioned that he used to beat up children at school (30:105), and he has previous charges of assault.

Antisocial. Many offenders exhibited past and current behaviour that meets the criteria for antisocial behaviour. These include acts of deviance that defy socially and morally acceptable standards, such as impulsivity, lack of inhibition, defiance of authority, misconduct, and a pro-criminal attitude (APA, 2013; Bacon et al., 2018; Maneiro et al., 2017; Moffitt, 2018; Piotrowska et al., 2015). These acts may involve a range of behaviours, including fighting, lying, stealing, truancy, and even violence towards animals. Many participants recounted instances of fighting with friends, family members, and girlfriends during both their childhood and adulthood. Additionally, they admitted to engaging in theft at home as children, regarding it as a common aspect of childhood behaviour.

Deviance in adolescence, substance abuse, fighting, suspension or expulsion from school, and truancy form part of the behavioural repertoire for Anthony, Brandon, Eliphas, Freddy, Hannes, and Jacob. Brandon recounted instances of sneaking out of the hostel for drinking sprees with friends during grade 8 (12:47), and he also mentioned absconding after his father's death (12:58). Since childhood, Brandon (11:17) socialised with friends who regularly argued and fought amongst themselves and with others. In his childhood, Eliphas frequently engaged in fights (32:6) and stole from home (30:103). Gerson also admitted to stealing from home, justifying his actions by stating that he didn't want to be stingy when others needed something (70:50).

Since childhood, Anthony and his friends have engaged in antisocial activities, such as bullying, stealing, street fights, muggings, robberies, truancy, and running away from home (2:98, 2:99, & 2:105). He further explained that as a group of friends, they sometimes carried weapons and mugged people (2:99). Anthony admitted that this behaviour continued into adulthood. Anthony also jokily admitted to cruelty towards animals, saying, "... yes, those ones, yes, I had mistreated those, I don't like cats. I had beat, kick and all (laugh)" (2:112). Freddy's narrative is similar, as it involves associating with antisocial friends and a history of deviant and antisocial behaviour marked by fighting (37:17), stealing (38:5), and drug abuse. His criminal activity began

at age 12, as indicated in his criminal profile (38:11) and corroborated by his mother (40:14). He was involved in hijackings (39:21), multiple muggings, and he once beat a cat to death with a rake because he disliked cats (39:113).

As a teenager, Hannes also engaged in antisocial behaviour and associated with antisocial friends (52:26), admitting to truancy, theft, housebreaking (52:128), and writing fraudulent cheques. He explained that he would steal machinery and sell it to buy drugs (52:65). Hannes also admitted to stealing "a lot" from his parents (52:106) and engaging in fighting at clubs (52:110). Likewise, Jacob has a history of antisocial behaviour (65:87), including regular fights, assaults, drunk driving, and unruly behaviour. He was questioned by the police for discharging a firearm in a public place after being involved in a fight at a club. He recounted the incident, explaining that he shot his firearm in a chaotic situation to scare people and target a man who had a knife (65:82). As he recounted this event, he appeared to lack an understanding of the wrongfulness of his actions and, instead, seemed to find the situation somewhat amusing.

Confrontational. Confrontational behaviour involves dealing with situations antagonistically, often provocatively, and annoyingly. Confrontational offenders typically initiate conflicts and engage in disputes and fights, even if the issues are unrelated to them. They have a tendency to bring problems to the forefront, which can result in either positive or negative outcomes.

Confrontational behaviour is prominent among the participants, particularly Anthony, Freddy (34:2), and Jacob (65:152). Jacob's sister described him as confrontational, especially when intoxicated (68:6). The CMO explained Jacob's tendency to frequently engage in fights that do not concern him. He also explained that punishment does not deter Jacob from such confrontational behaviour. The CMO mentioned an incident when Jacob was placed in a single cell for 30 days for intervening in a situation unrelated to him (69:10-11). However, Jacob did not admit any wrongdoing, believing he had done nothing wrong.

The CMO also identified Anthony as an instigator of arguments and fights, even with his friends (1:30). This behaviour was also noted in multiple case notes. "At lock up time the offender poured water on the officers, while they were busy mastering the cell, he was also insulting them" (5:1). According to the CMO, Cleophas is confrontational mainly with other inmates, not officers. "Yes, you'll always hear Cleophas did what-what. Cleophas did what, mm but with officer's ha-ha. No, he wouldn't" (17:22).

Defiant. This type of behaviour is characterised by behaviour that forms part of the spectrum identified in youths with Oppositional Defiant Disorder. Recurrent disobedient, negativistic, or hostile behaviour toward authority figures, active defiance of rules, argumentativeness, stubbornness, being easily annoyed, bold resistance, disregard for authority, uncooperativeness, and non-compliance (APA, 2023). According to the CMO's observation, many inmates fit this description of being difficult and problematic. Such offenders often challenge rules, rebel against the status quo, resist instructions, and even smuggle contraband.

Based on his narrative and his Criminal Profile, Anthony has exhibited defiant behaviour since childhood, and such behaviour is also noted repeatedly in his Case Notes (5:3). According to the CMO, Anthony is highly problematic (1:6), initiating fights with correctional officers (1:33), repeatedly defying orders, yet refusing to accept punishment. A specific instance of his defiant behaviour is described as follows:

Anthony was reshuffled to another unit but Anthony refused to go to that specific unit. He ended up removing all the clothes from his body. He was naked (laugh). That day, and the officers tried, tried the officers try to remove him by force. (1:35)

Similarly, Cleophas is viewed as problematic by the CMO (17:3). Cleophas's defiance was evident when he was transferred to the geriatric inmate section and he demanded to return to maximum security. The CMO explained, "He said no, I don't want to stay here, I want to go back to maximum. . . He wanted not to stay with the other old people" (17:3). According to the CMO, Cleophas is old but he ". . . prefer to stay with those hard people; mm rather than the old ones. There he was just terrorising mm; terrorising others" (17:9). The CMO reiterated Jacob's defiant behaviour (69:13) that was recorded multiple times in his Case Notes and mentioned by his sister. According to Jacob's sister, she attempted to address his problematic behaviour. However, "he would always just say, I will fix it, I will make it right, but he never made it right" (68:19).

According to Freddy's mother, Freddy's behaviour was problematic since childhood (40:12). His multiple acts of defiance include breaking the rules, as noted in the Case Notes, "...the offender was found cooking food in the cell with a 'bom' [kettle/pot they manufacture from a battery and wire] Superintendent Silas said the offender said he can do whatever he wants" (34:4). Like Freddy's mother who was aware of his delinquent behaviour, Hannes's parents admitted awareness of his deviant behaviour since childhood. His father mentioned that his son's problematic behaviour led to his placement in a reform school for boys with educational and behavioural problems (51:1). Hannes admitted to being defiant as a child: "From an early age, I

was very, very, even, even if they beat me, I would just sit and look at you... And if I wanted to do something, then I would do it" (65:38).

Obedient. Obedient behaviour is behaviour that complies with direct instructions and rules, often one issued by a person in a position of authority (VandenBos, 2015). This type of behaviour is characterised by compliance with rules without resistance. Instances of obedient behaviour were described infrequently. The CMO mentioned that David does not do anything wrong and does not receive punishment (22:3). He also described Gerson as "very open and honest" (43:9) and said, "he...is a good person, he doesn't give a problem. That's why he doesn't have a negative case note . . . Like when he does something wrong, mmm he can accept" (43:4-5). The CMO characterised Brandon as "...a person who is quiet, you won't have any issue with him. When you talk to him, you will feel like giving him enough attention... He is a person that you can feel pity..." (9:8).

Obedience and adherence to rules were predominantly observed among offenders when their behaviour was geared towards earning rewards, like privileges and the possibility of being reclassified to a lower security unit. For example, Freddy described how he stopped exploiting younger inmates for sexual purposes and started protecting them from being taken advantage of by other inmates. He aimed to exhibit good behaviour in the hope of being transferred from maximum-security unit to a lower-security one. He was eventually moved to unit six and is trying to stay out of trouble to be reclassified to unit five.

. . . you understand... I am going there is nothing that can hold me back. I am not caught with a cell phone; I am not involved with as 'laitie chopping' business; knife or money or any marijuana or what . . . (39:105)

Hannes also concentrates on the incentives he may receive for being obedient (49:3), while Jacob obeys rules when it suits him (61:1). Ismael explained that when he initially arrived in unit seven, he was defiant and often argued; however, he realised it didn't help anything, so he stopped (57:83).

Impulsive. Describes behaviour marked by minimal or lack of forethought, contemplation, or evaluation of the potential outcomes or consequences of an action, especially when it entails risk-taking (VandenBos, 2015). This type of behaviour, the tendency to act without thinking, was prominently exhibited by many participants.

The CMO identified Anthony (9:10), Brandon (9:10), Cleophas (17:11), Freddy (35:6), and Gerson (42:2) as impulsive individuals. Participants like Eliphas (30:109) and Anthony admitted to being impulsive, particularly when angry. Eliphas recognised that impulsivity played a role in his history of committing multiple crimes, including the one for which he was convicted. David's criminal profile mentions impulsive actions during the murder he committed (24:21). However, based on his behaviour in the correctional facility, the CMO did not describe David as impulsive. Freddy's impulsivity is emphasised in his criminal profile (38:24), and this is supported by his mother (40:15). Freddy recounted several instances of impulsivity during his youth and the events leading up to the murder he committed:

I saw a guy running with a big knife which is open. I was also having a knife on me, I then thought, ne let me just close my zip. Then I gave my beer to the man who was standing there next to me. Truly, he did not say something bad to me. Or, he maybe wanted, or the problem was, check maybe the guy will “dotch” [slang for sneak away] from the other side. I was also drunk. So I then check on my side, this “wamboes” do not take, they do not see, you do understand? When he rush by, I then said, take tah! [Showing gesture with hands] stabbing him first this side . . .” (39:18)

Ismael's criminal profile also indicates some impulsive behaviour (56:34). Opportunistic, impulsive actions largely fuelled Hannes's criminal career. According to him, he and his brother initially planned to steal a television and other items from a house for drug money. However, upon discovering a safe, they impulsively decided to stay in the house and wait for the owner (52:5). This impulsive change of plans resulted in the chain of events that led to the murder. Hannes's stepfather corroborated his impulsivity (51:9). Based on interviews and collateral information, Jacob's history shows evidence of impulsivity. The CMO confirmed Jacob's impulsive nature, stating, "... I think because he will do things that he will regret later" (69:15).

Intimidation. Intimidation refers to behaviour that threatens others by using unpleasant consequences to coerce others to comply with a given request or demand (VandenBos, 2015). This trait involves offenders using threats to control others and situations, including threatening their victims, members of the public, police, or correctional officers.

Five participants, Brandon, Eliphas, Freddy, Ismael, and Jacob, displayed prominent intimidating behaviour. Freddy, who has multiple instances of threatening behaviour documented in his Case Notes (34:11), revealed that he frequently resorted to intimidation and threats even before his conviction for murder:

. . . So, I get to the guy, I then saw the man have omukonda [a traditional ovamboe knife] and then I took out my flip knife and said huzit my brother? Then he said 'shikona ngoye', now if someone like a wamboe says 'shikona' to you, it's just as good as him telling you 'you're a pussy', you understand? Then I said, hi, ino ndana nangaye ame andikundipaya ashike, hey, do not play with me; I will just kill you. (39:47)

Anthony (5:3), Ismael (54:3), and Jacob (61:6) also exhibited multiple instances of threatening behaviour towards inmates and correctional officers. Anthony admitted that, as a young man, he regularly harassed, assaulted, and threatened people with weapons when he was part of a group (2:99). Eliphas confessed to threatening his child's mother upon learning that she had sent their children to live with her new boyfriend's family, "I told her if my kids die, at that house, if I, one day get out of prison, I will kill her too . . ." (30:86). According to him, he meant what he said and can follow through. During the period when he was on bail, Brandon made threats towards individuals who were witnesses against him in his murder trial. His criminal profile stated, ". . . the victim came to assist the victim in count 5 and 6, but the offender hit her with a bottle threatening her that he will rather go to jail for a dead person than one who is alive." (11:13).

Substance abuse. The APA (2023) defines substance abuse as a repetitive pattern of compulsive substance use marked by frequent and significant adverse consequences in various domains of life, including social, occupational, legal, or personal areas. These consequences may manifest as frequent absences from work or school, legal issues, and marital or relationship problems. All participants exhibited a pattern of regularly binge drinking and displayed poor insight regarding responsible alcohol consumption. In addition to alcohol, Hannes, Jacob, and Gerson used other substances, such as marijuana, mandrax, ecstasy, and Pattex (type of glue).

Brandon (12:36) would refrain from drinking during the week, even if he had the means to do so, but would engage in excessive drinking on most weekends, especially when he had the financial resources. He also acknowledged a consistent desire to consume all the alcohol available and frequently felt the urge to purchase more. Similar patterns of binge drinking can be seen in the narratives of Anthony, Brandon, Eliphas (30:16), Freddy (38:4), Hannes (52:27), Ismael (57:46), and Jacob (65:72). Gerson admitted to preferring "dagga" (marijuana) over alcohol. Binge drinking and lack of insight are also apparent in Gerson. The following extract illustrates Gerson's response when asked whether he thinks he may have had problems with alcohol:

. . . no, I did really not have [a problem]; I was just afraid to drink because of the way it makes a person feel. But if I have to drink, then I have to drink until it can't get hold of me anymore or it's not making me drunk anymore. That's the only time I then stop. I did really not like drinking alcohol. (70:62)

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of behaviour. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the second sub-theme of the main theme, personality. This sub-theme is cognition, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Cognition

The sub-theme of cognition pertains to the offenders' habitual patterns of thought processing. The APA (2015) dictionary defines cognition as all possible ways of perceiving, conceiving, remembering, logical thinking, making judgments, imagining, and problem-solving. This is demonstrated through how participants understand and interpret different events and aspects in their surroundings, circumstances, and self-expression. Cognition is also mirrored in their self-perception, abilities, self-value, confidence levels, and communication skills. These communication skills encompass language usage, non-verbal signals, processing, evaluating, strategising, and handling various matters. Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I present include antisocial cognitions, paranoia, tribalism and racism, and external locus of control.

Antisocial cognitions. Antisocial cognitions refer to thinking patterns, which pertain to distinctive cognitive styles or sets of beliefs that support and precede criminal actions and other antisocial behaviours (Whited et al., 2015; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017). A prevalent perception based on participants' accounts is that they and many of their friends and family members are willing and capable of engaging in criminal activities if it serves their interests.

Many participants' past experiences involved dangerous and harmful actions, such as fighting and stabbing others and sustaining multiple injuries from fighting. For most participants, crime, alcohol, and drug use were ordinary aspects of life. Thus, this sub-theme was prominent among these participants, including Freddy, Hannes, Cleophas, Jacob, Gerson, and Anthony. Freddy committed numerous crimes as a teenager, including rape, but he did not perceive his actions as wrong. To illustrate such thinking, I provide an excerpt from Freddy's interview:

Researcher: Did you sleep with her or just tried?

Freddy: Before, I have forced her . . .

Researcher: Before you slept with her but that day?

Freddy: Before we had many times, us guys we use to take turns and we, you know how the girls. . . that it was never rape. . .

Researcher: Before you slept with her, but that day?

Freddy: That day, the mother got me while raping her in the house.

Researcher: Oh. Okay, okay?

Freddy: That is how it has come up to be rape.

Researcher: Uh

Freddy: According to what she said.

Researcher: Uh

Freddy: That I wanted to sleep with her. . . (39:13)

Freddy casually recounted numerous past transgressions, treating them as ordinary behaviours. He mentioned engaging in activities such as breaking into places, stealing items for resale, and indulging in alcohol and smoking "dagga" (marijuana) (39:18-21). Similarly, Hannes's narrative gives the impression that crime was ordinary in his daily life (52:65). As inferred from the excerpt, "Yes, that was the first time that I stabbed, uhm, no, no, that was the second time I got stabbed" (65:88); Jacob's conversation also suggests that crime was part of his lifestyle. Such incidents of fighting and encounters with the police occurred multiple times over the years. His narrative creates the impression that crime is inevitable and acceptable if one can avoid long-term sentences.

For several participants like Freddy, criminogenic thought processes and behaviour persisted after incarceration (39:80). He mentioned candidly that he did whatever was necessary to survive following his arrest, detention, and incarceration. This included engaging in illegal activities to make money and keeping a laitie for sexual purposes. This illustrates how Freddy's criminal mindset remained unchanged. His choice to abstain from certain illegal activities, such as sexual involvement in the correctional facility, is driven by self-preservation motives (aiming for reclassification) rather than genuine respect for rules or moral values. Hannes also admitted that following his arrest, detention, and imprisonment for a long time, he continued in the same manner. As a result, Hannes accrued multiple new charges (52:138) in the correctional facility. He explained:

While still awaiting trial. Yes, waiting trial was still the same. Drugs in front, drugs behind. Went on in my life like that. Uhm, 2005 that I got sentenced. I started smuggling from prison, and through smuggling, I got money. And with my money, I bought drugs and

things, and sold drugs in prison. To people. Like that is (pause), was going on with my life (pause). Until 2009 . . . (52:142)

Grandiosity. APA (2023) defines grandiosity as when a person has an exaggerated sense of their greatness, importance, or ability. This trait pertains to offenders who demonstrate inflated, pretentious, and exaggerated thinking patterns and beliefs about themselves. It includes offenders who consider themselves endowed with exceptional talents, intelligence, attractiveness, and irresistibility. Some offenders exhibited condescending, self-righteous attitudes. Their sense of self-importance is showy and extravagantly overstated. Grandiosity was a prominent trait evidenced in the narratives and records of many, including Anthony (2), Eliphas (30), Freddy (39), Hannes (52), Jacob (65), and Gerson (70).

Anthony and Eliphas believe they possess an indescribable, special quality that attracts people to them, whether as friends or romantic interests. Anthony is convinced of his irresistibility to women. He believes that he can have any woman he desires. According to him, a woman he cheated on his girlfriend with "believed that it is the Lord, who had given me to her" (20:67). Jacob stated that other inmates regard him as a wise "french" (65:173). French is a term used by inmates to describe an intelligent, educated person within the facility. He asserted that he is of royal blood (65:49) as the son of a Nama chief and takes great pride in himself. He also believes his upbringing was superior, more disciplined, and better educated than most inmates (65:176). Jacob views himself as a saviour who always helps others (65:136). He is surprised that he ended up in his current situation because he never thought he was capable of murder. The CMO confirmed that Jacob thinks he is more intelligent than most people and frequently challenges others, including officers (69:2).

Eliphas displayed excessive confidence and expressed exaggerated beliefs about his abilities. His RNR assessment revealed that he believed there was nothing he could improve about himself because he is perfect (31:22). He was confident that he had lots to offer inmates because his legal knowledge was superior to the extent that he felt the need to offer advice to his lawyer (30:43). He also held the belief that most individuals, including the arresting officers, had a favourable opinion of him and treated him like a friend (30:49). According to Eliphas, the correctional staff were eagerly anticipating his reclassification so he can teach in the workshop because he is more skilled than other inmates (30:62). He claimed that even officers who typically treat inmates like dogs have never mistreated him (30:141).

Freddy also exhibited grandiosity regarding his abilities as a soccer player and his notoriety (39:88 and 39:89). He stated that no one in the facility could harm him because of his notoriety and charm. As a result, for as long as he has been incarcerated, nobody has ever injured or harmed him. Gerson firmly held the belief that he possesses clairvoyant abilities and has the gift of healing (70:48). He also believes that God had revealed to him that he would live to the age of 143 (70:86). In his view, his family has always been apprehensive of him because of his unique gifts. He explained:

My trust is in the Lord. I don't have any fear that's why Werna and Boeta were terribly afraid of me because when I dream, every time it was the truth. I can even sit and think something about you, it is always the truth, that's what happens . . . (70:79)

According to Gerson, when he thinks of something, it has a tendency to manifest (70:48). He asserted that he possesses the ability to touch afflicted individuals and heal their wounds and ailments solely through his touch.

Like my colleagues, even the police, if there is someone who is giving them a tough time... then they put him in my cell. I don't know how I get people to calm down, even if you have pain somewhere or your leg had to be amputated, if I touch you; your leg will never be amputated. I don't know what it is . . . (70:82)

Paranoid. Being paranoid relates to exhibiting extreme distrust or suspicion (VandenBos, 2015). Paranoid thoughts may manifest as suspicions or concerns regarding others' motives, resulting in hostility, complaints, or demands. This trait characterised participants who were highly suspicious and mistrustful towards others. They firmly believed that people harboured envy and jealousy toward them, often suspecting that others were conspiring against them and feeling threatened, even without concrete evidence. These participants commonly held the perception of being framed or falsely accused.

Both Eliphas and Gerson firmly believed they were framed. Gerson's deep-rooted suspicion extends to family, friends, police, correctional officers, lawyers, and the overall system, which is evident in his account of events (70:27). This passage highlights Gerson's belief that there were conspiracies against him:

It is only a person who envies him who is plotting and dragging... his name into the mud. And it is exactly the same reason why I am here in prison today. They have even taken me and locked me up while I am innocent. (70:16)

Tribalism and racism: Racism refers to a type of bias that presupposes individuals within racial categories possess unique traits, leading to the belief that certain racial groups are inherently inferior (VandenBos, 2015). Racism typically involves harbouring negative emotions toward group members, embracing negative stereotypes, and engaging in racial discrimination against individuals, with some instances escalating to acts of violence. Some participants harbour such emotions and beliefs about specific tribes. This trait concerns offenders with prejudiced beliefs about specific ethnic groups and tribes. This is yet another common trait among participants.

The narratives of many participants revealed prejudiced and judgmental attitudes. For instance, Freddy repeatedly used derogatory language when referring to individuals from the Ovambo ethnic group (39:18 & 39:47). His account of his criminal history revealed that even when he committed terrible acts like assaulting people, he asserted that he selectively targeted specific ethnic groups. His bias was deeply rooted in his thought patterns. Freddy recounted, "Truly, I was stabbing people, but I had not stabbed those guys who are my tribe like Damaras, Namas, Coloureds but I was stabbing the 'Wamboe' guys" (39:25). Similar sentiments are apparent in the narratives of other participants, such as Gerson's prejudiced and negative opinion about Black lawyers. "I said on the day we were sentenced that I do not want a Black judge, and if I have to appeal, I don't want a Black lawyer too because it's just "konkel" [bribe] thing" (70:27). Ismael also grew up with ingrained racist and judgmental perceptions of White superiority and the apartheid system. As a result, without personal experience or evidence, he is convinced that correctional facilities were better during the "time of the 'Boers'" (57:90).

According to Jacob, he was raised in an environment and attended a school where racism was prevalent. He frequently used derogatory language towards other ethnic groups. However, he also shared incidents of experiencing prejudice and racist treatment himself (65:22). Cleophas's criminal profile (20:10) reveals that he does not get along with people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. According to the CMO, Cleophas expressed his hatred for white people after an altercation with a White inmate (17:23). The CMO expressed that Cleophas "likes to discriminate" (17:4). The CMO also explained, and Cleophas' criminal profile corroborates that he experienced racism and torture at the hands of Whites and Damaras prior to independence.

External locus of control. According to APA (2023), people with an external locus of control tend to be reactive to external circumstances and perceive their life outcomes as arising from factors out of their control. Many participants cope by attributing their situations to external

factors beyond their control, such as luck, fate, injustice, bias, or other people's actions. By employing an external locus of control, they believe that things happen to them or are done to them. Thus, they may absolve themselves from responsibility and accountability. They may even blame the victims, search for divine answers, and see themselves as victims.

Brandon attributes his loss of self-control to his uncles, citing their abusive behaviour towards him and their wives, their lack of support for his mother, and their frequent mockery of him (12:6). He turned to God for answers as he said, "Why has the Lord permitted it?" (12:66). David claimed that he faced problems because "other people look for arguments and trouble self" (25:47). Freddy's criminal profile indicated his feelings of sadness over spending his youth in prison, and he holds his mother responsible for contributing to his circumstances (41:26).

Cleophas attributes his actions to the devil, stating, "It's the work of the devil, I am the kind of person who can't do these things that had happened on those days" (15:21). Rationalising his circumstances, Hannes explained that because of his faith he trusts that God must have had a reason for "letting this happen to him" and that it happened to change him for the better (52:140). Eliphas tries to make sense of his actions by saying God has a reason for everything. He also expressed that the victim is happy in heaven, and there is no reason to feel sorrow for them (29:27). Eliphas (30:56) and Gerson also referred to the devil and witchcraft in their narratives to explain events, including their crimes. Gerson stated, "We are blocked somewhere, and we are not getting anywhere" due to witchcraft (70:31).

Ismael blamed the Namibian government (57:90) and NCS (57:59) for not being as effective as the previous White government. In his opinion, poor governance and inadequate services contribute to increased gang activity and sodomy in correctional facilities. Ismael also blamed the state for the rising rate of GBV because the state does not teach women how to respect their husbands (57:98). Ismael's opinion of the causes of GBV that happens between intimate partners is that "It is mostly the women who cause these things" (57:98). Similarly, Hannes agreed that the government and the devil are responsible for sodomy and many issues in the facility (52:122). Jacob also blamed women, and specifically his girlfriend (the victim), for behaving disrespectfully, undermining him, and threatening him (65:101). He also accused the arresting police officers of being drunk when he was at fault and bumped a car while driving under the influence (65:126).

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of cognitions. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the third sub-theme of the main theme, personality. This sub-theme is emotions, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Emotions

The sub-theme of emotions focuses on the offenders' typical emotional responses and recurring patterns of intense emotions that influence their actions, particularly in their relationships with others. According to APA (2015), emotion is an intricate response pattern encompassing experiential, behavioural, and physiological components. It represents an individual's effort to cope with a matter or event with personal significance. The precise nature of the emotion, such as fear or shame, is influenced by the specific importance of the event. Emotion generally includes a sense of feeling but distinguishes itself from mere feeling by its overt or implicit connection with the external world (VandenBos, 2015). Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I present are anger, abandonment, disrespect, helplessness, and resentment.

Anger. Anger is an emotion characterised by tension and hostility arising from frustration, real or imagined injury by another, or perceived injustice (VandenBos, 2015). Anger represents a negative emotional state often associated with hostile thoughts, physiological arousal, and maladaptive behaviours. It usually arises in response to the unwanted actions of another person perceived as disrespectful, demeaning, threatening, or neglectful. The key elements are the participants' recognition of their own anger, their reactions to this emotion, and their methods of expressing and handling it.

Anger is a prevalent emotion among the participants. Most frequently experience anger but struggle to express and manage it in a safe manner. They lack the skills to handle conflict non-violently, reacting with verbal and physical aggression instead. As illustrated in Anthony and Brandon's case notes, the CMO mentioned that both have short tempers and are easily angered, resorting to arguments and fights to cope with anger and frustration (9:3). Cleophas's criminal profile describes him as having "anger, a violent temper, aggressive behaviour, as well as uncontrollable emotions" (20:21).

Hannes recounted how years of built-up anger led him to plan the murder of his abusive stepfather (52:98). Jacob's criminal profile includes an incident where he became extremely angry, lost control, and assaulted someone (64:6 & 65). This incident is one of many such instances. Jacob mentioned that he is becoming increasingly angry again, stating, "I am not talking

with some wardens. I don't even complain. I am just here. Because I am scared. There is so much aggression and anger in me that I am scared it will play out bad" (65:155).

Abandonment. A prevalent emotion among the participants is a feeling of abandonment, encompassing feelings of being rejected and betrayed. They all share a sense of abandonment, primarily experiencing neglect, disregard, and being overlooked by family, friends, lawyers, correctional staff, as well as other individuals, including government officials. David's words conveyed his emotions of abandonment:

We loved each other. (pause) Since the time I came to prison, everything changed between me and one of my brothers, the one who followed me. He doesn't like me anymore, there is no relationship and compassion. I am feeling very bad because I finished school first, then I made sure by taking care of him and helping him to finish his school. Now that he is educated and employed, he forgets about the good deeds I had done for him. Now that I am in prison, he does not even bother to pay me a simple visit and talk to me as well. Even now as I am talking to you, my tears just want to run because this thing makes me cry at times. (25:28)

Freddy spoke bitterly about the numerous years he endured behind bars, recounting the prolonged and challenging experiences without anyone to depend on (reference: 39:39). Jacob (reference: 65:59) shared his profound feelings of hurt, betrayal, and abandonment by the woman he believed he would marry.

"I had the same problem while I am here, I am not alone... There are more than five of us, five guys that are sharing with me, sharing my girlfriend. That is sleeping behind my back with that girl. If I am not there. If I am drunk and if I am at work. So also two of my cousins, two of them." (65:68)

Disrespect. Most participants shared their experiences of feeling demeaned, exploited, undermined, and insulted. According to Jacob, in addition to being abandoned when his girlfriend cheated, he recounted numerous occasions when he felt disrespected and undermined (65:55). This feeling of being disrespected also played a role in the murder he committed. When he confronted his girlfriend (the victim) about her wet tights (suspecting that she had sex with someone else), her response further provoked him:

Ya, you know mos, a woman leaks, she said. I then said to her, I am not your peer. I am older than you. Do not come and tell me that nonsense! She even told me that day, Jacob, I do not only sleep with you. (65:90)

Like Jacob, David experienced disrespect from the victim after discovering messages on her phone (24:9). Anthony's crime was also driven by feeling disrespected and undermined, not only by his girlfriend but also by the men she was seeing (2:19). Brandon similarly felt disrespected by his two uncles, the victims (12:6). Ismael's mother explained that his girlfriend and her mother repeatedly disrespected him (58:18). Ismael mentioned previous girlfriends who had cheated on him and expressed his belief that women who cheat on men are being disrespectful. He made a comparison between these women and the ideal, respectful women from earlier times, such as his mother (57:98).

Helplessness. Helplessness was apparent among offenders who felt powerless due to a lack of options or an inability to alter their circumstances. This sense of helplessness often led to feelings of frustration and anger for most participants, while others experienced sadness and depression. Additionally, helplessness was prevalent among participants with physical or other limitations that compelled them to depend on others for assistance.

According to the CMO, David was helpless because of his illiteracy, language barrier, and dependence on others for communication (22:15). Hannes felt helpless when he witnessed his stepfather abuse his mother and brother, "My little brother's father is the one that abused us a lot. If my mom helped us, then he'd hit my mom with his fist. He beat us a lot" (52:98). Ismael also expressed a sense of helplessness regarding the frequent unfairness and lack of control that inmates experience. One example Ismael mentioned involves unfair treatment in relation to case notes:

. . . there is nothing that you can say or do, because even if they beat you, there is nothing you can do to defend yourself. If you do, they can just write a negative case note and you are wrong? (57:86)

Resentment. Resentment was observed among participants who displayed intense feelings of disappointment, hurt, anger, and bitterness due to perceiving injustice and being mistreated by friends, family, or the system. In certain circumstances, this resentment might escalate to resembling hatred.

A DYNAMIC EXPLORATION OF OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF VIOLENT CRIMES

Brandon has harboured long-standing resentment and anger towards his uncles for many years. He recounted the final, fateful confrontation with them:

My two uncles came to stop us. Yeah, you young boy, you do not want to hear! You are very stubborn! They said that to me. Then I said to them. Yeah, you are already every day abusing my aunties, and you come to talk again in my stories. Then this is what Jason, one uncle of mine, said. You are just a young boy, we will just beat you up now. Then I said to him. I have noticed it since my childhood when you are always drunk you always beat my aunts and me. That is what I said to them. They then said, 'yeah we will again beat you now. You are just a small child in front of us. (12:6)

Based on his criminal Profile and the CMO's perception, Cleophas has harboured resentment and anger towards Afrikaans and Damara people since before Namibia's independence. Cleophas' records indicate that after Cleophas bit a White inmate, he explained, "I hate those White man because in those days they use to dominate us here in Namibia" (17:23). Jacob expressed deep-seated bitterness towards the correctional system, which he believes fails to rehabilitate and support inmates (65:106). Freddy's cousin mentioned that Freddy tended to build resentment and hold grudges (37:28). Freddy reflected on the 24 arduous years he spent in prison without anyone to rely on:

"Okay yes but just now (hand gesture) you know that I will make on the first December, 24 years in prison You understand. I have indeed a life sentence. So look (hand gestures) I was, like, when I had begun with my punishment. Like struggling in prison. People it is not easy thing in prison. It is easy to say 24 years, 23 years what I had finished already in prison. I did not have that, I did not think so far to say, yong! . . . (39:39)

Hannes also discussed the length of his sentence and the lack of a bail opportunity with bitterness:

I wouldn't have all these many years. (long pause) Man. (Long pause) Uhmm, if spoken in human terms, 50... 50 years that I have to do. And uhh, (long pause) The day that if I leave this prison, I think in my file, I think it states 2032, 2035 around there. (52:48)

The previously discussed points represent the primary components that led to the emergence of the sub-theme related to emotions. Now, I will present the most pertinent codes extracted from the data, which collectively contribute to the overarching theme of socioeconomic

profile. This main theme, as depicted in Table 5.4, encompasses three sub-themes: education, employment, and finances.

Main Theme: Socioeconomic Profile

This main theme encompasses the offenders' educational history, attitudes towards education, current academic pursuits, financial history, ability to sustain themselves or rely on family, as well as their employment history and attitudes towards work. The sub-theme of education is addressed first. Under this sub-theme, I present the most prominent aspects, including Illiteracy, the maximum education level, and the school dropout reasons.

Sub-theme: Education

This sub-theme examines the offenders' educational history, current educational pursuits, and attitudes toward education. Under this sub-theme, I present the most prominent aspects impacting education. These include Illiteracy, the maximum education level, and school dropout reasons.

Illiteracy. David is the only participant who is illiterate, lacking the ability to read or write, with a minimal English vocabulary. Ismael is fluent in his mother tongue, Damara-Nama, and Afrikaans; he can read and write but has a limited English vocabulary. The other participants have a limited level of education.

Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) and literacy programme. Brandon's RNR assessment revealed his preference for training in the workshop over studying. During his interview, Brandon mentioned enrolling in NAMCOL for grade 10. However, he expressed his intent to discontinue and begin training in the building division (13:12). He also showed interest in the literacy programme. Freddy participated in the literacy programme, but it is worth noting that his interest in it developed after more than 20 years of incarceration. David's RNR assessment indicated his desire to join the literacy programme. However, he had concerns about trust due to past experiences with inmates who had written applications for him (26:14).

Maximum grade: Primary school. These five participants only attended primary school. However, there were noteworthy discrepancies in their educational backgrounds. Cleophas left school in standard 5 (grade 7) in the 1960s to seek better opportunities in an urban area, as mentioned in his criminal profile (20:33). His RNR assessment, however, states that he left school in standard 7 (grade 9) in 1967 for the same reason (21:17). David attended school until grade 4 (26:13). Freddy claimed to have attended Sub-A and Sub-B (grades 1 and 2) (39:26). However, his

mother stated that he attended school until standard 3 (grade 5) (40:4). Ismael left school in standard 5 (grade 7) (57:42). Gerson dropped out of primary school at or before the age of 13, possibly in grade 7 (70:76).

Maximum grade: High school. Although five participants attended high school, only three reached grade 10 and only one completed grade 12. Hannes (52:56), Anthony (3:23), and Brandon dropped out of school in grade 10. Eliphas attended school until standard 7 (grade 9), as indicated in his Criminal Profile (31:9).

Maximum grade: Tertiary. Jacob is the only participant in this group who completed high school and obtained a tertiary qualification. He finished grade 12, attended a vocational training college, and earned certification as an electrician. Additionally, he received operator training during his employment at a mine. He also attended various short training courses in different areas (64:13). Eliphas, on the other hand, obtained a certificate as an electrician, even though he did not finish grade 12. His RNR assessment indicates that he registered at a vocational training college and obtained a diploma in Electricity and Refrigeration (31:10).

School dropout reasons: Bullying. According to David, "I was very obedient at school but the teachers were name calling me. That's why I had decided to drop out as I was not understanding, and I couldn't take it anymore" (25:34). Hannes also cited bullying and peer pressure as reasons for dropping out (52:115). According to Ismael, he disliked school because he was subjected to teasing due to a medical condition affecting his eyes. His mother confirmed this, saying, "Yes, he used to get teased because of his eyes. The one eye is almost always closed, and the kids used to tease him" (58:6).

School dropout reasons: Job hunting. According to David, besides being bullied, he tried his best at school, but eventually, he felt he was wasting his time and decided to drop out to seek employment. (25:33). He began working as a cattle herder (24:16). Cleophas (21:17) and Gerson (45:22) also dropped out of school to look for jobs. Eliphas (30:100), David, Gerson, and Cleophas (15:24) mentioned they started working at the age of 12 and 13 years. Gerson elaborated:

I dropped out of school. Because my mom was, that time, alone and so on . . . Yes, then I looked for a job and, I, then I found and came myself to Boeta, that time I was still a small kid..., I was approximately 12 or 13 or 14 years old, I think I was 13. (70:76)

School dropout reasons: Truancy and antisocial behaviour. This was a common reason for several participants, including Anthony, Eliphas, Freddy, and Hannes. Anthony's criminal

profile mentioned that he failed and dropped out of grade 10 due to lack of focus on school activities and involvement in antisocial activities, such as smoking marijuana, drinking alcohol, and having multiple sexual relationships (3:23). Hannes revealed that he was suspended after being caught sniffing Pattex at school (52:56). Although the suspension was temporary, he refused to return to school, citing peer pressure, bullying, drug abuse, and selling drugs at school as reasons (52:56). Eliphas stated that he left school because he did not want to attend school far from his mother (30:114). However, his criminal profile indicates he left due to impregnating a girl (31:9). Freddy (40:5) also attributed his dropping out of school to alcohol and drugs.

School dropout reasons: Medical reasons. In addition to bullying, Ismael felt compelled to leave school due to medical problems. His Criminal Profile indicated that he "dropped out of school in 1996 due to eye problems as he was continuously having eye problems, he could not see or read properly due to allergy, and this discouraged him to continue with education (56:25 & 57:43).

In the preceding section, I outlined the key elements that led to the sub-theme of education. Now, I will present the most pertinent codes extracted from the data, which form the basis for the second sub-theme within the overarching theme of socioeconomic profile. This sub-theme pertains to employment, as illustrated in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Employment

This sub-theme examines the offenders' employment history, current work pursuits, their interest in working in the correctional facility, and their attitudes toward employment before incarceration and within the correctional facility. The two prominent aspects that I presented include permanent employment, and temporary employment.

Permanent employment. Jacob, the sole participant who completed high school and obtained a tertiary qualification, was also the only one employed in a permanent position for a specific company before his incarceration. Consequently, he received a fixed salary and benefits, formally contributed to social security, and paid taxes. Jacob's employment journey included various odd jobs for a few months before he attended the vocational training centre. After acquiring the qualification, he began as an intern and later secured permanent employment. He worked at a mine for four years (67:9).

Eliphas, who did not finish high school but earned a diploma from a vocational training centre, has a diverse employment history, from formal to self-employment. His criminal profile provides details about his employment history.

He worked at . . . Refrigeration for three years and from then he worked at . . . Electric for six years. He then opened up his own company called . . . that focus on electricity, construction and refrigerators from 2001 up to date. The offender was also running a kindergarten from 2005 up to date. In 2007, the offender opened up a bar called, . . . Bar, which was operational from 2003 to 2016. (31:6)

Temporary employment. The majority of participants did not have long-term, permanent employment and were engaged in unskilled labour, taking on odd jobs across different industries like farming, catering, and construction. For instance, Anthony mentioned that he lacked formal training and had only worked at two establishments, serving as a waiter at a fast-food restaurant and in the kitchen at a hotel. He added, "Before that I did here and there painting work. I was very much used to working for myself" (2:77). Brandon, David, and Gerson worked as farm labourers. Cleophas held various positions, ". . . as a general worker in Windhoek in 1967, in . . . Hotels, in a mine as a waiter and later as a farm worker and lastly as a handyman at a construction company in Hardap Region" (20:34). Apart from occasional odd jobs assisting relatives, Freddy never had the opportunity for formal employment because he was incarcerated shortly after discovering his first potential job as a fisherman. According to Freddy, "Actually, I cannot say I was a Fisherman because I had went out two, three trips, 40 days, 40 days. Thereafter, I worked odd jobs. Paint, plumbing, those things. What I had seen from my uncles, you understand" (39:41).

Above, I presented the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of employment. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated into the third sub-theme of the main theme, the socioeconomic profile. This sub-theme is finances, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Finances

This sub-theme delves into the participants' financial history, current circumstances, and attitudes and emotions related to finances. This may involve working in the facility workshops, completing odd jobs and favours for other offenders and officers in exchange for money, or engaging in illegal activities such as selling drugs to generate income. Under this sub-theme, I present two factors: financial history and current finances.

Financial history: Low-income earners. Most participants were low-income earners, primarily due to their limited education and lack of skills. They typically worked in unskilled positions, often on short-term or temporary contracts, categorising them as low-income individuals. Gerson, David, Cleophas, and Brandon earned low wages working as farm labourers. Brandon said, monthly, “I was earning 800 rand, . . . from there I have to buy my own food. It was not a lot. . . At the fields I was actually earning 500 rand every second Friday” (12:23). Occasionally, he was unemployed and relied on his family. Gerson took on various odd jobs for his uncle, who reportedly engaged him in unlawful activities, including poaching (45:23). Gerson's criminal profile stated:

The offender only secured farm work jobs before he was incarcerated, he first worked at the Good Hope Farm at the age of 17 years, doing fencing work then he turned 18 and was promoted to the foreman post. He then went to work at Boeta's Farm, where he was raised and there, he was a bartender and a handyman at the farm. (47:9)

Brandon, Hannes, and Freddy were arrested at a young age, which led to a lack of substantial employment history. They engaged in sporadic odd jobs but generally did not have significant responsibilities in their lives. Hannes, for instance, primarily worked as a security guard and confessed that his underlying intention whenever he began a new job was to seek opportunities for theft. He stated, “... the first thing my eyes were looking for... What is there that I can steal at work. So that I could go and sell it, to buy drugs and things. That was my first idea” (52:27). Hannes further elaborated, “if I worked longer than 6 months, then it was very long” (52:66).

Financial history: Low-income to middle-income earners. Jacob is the sole participant with a stable middle-income earnings history from his enduring employment at a mine. His financial background involves supporting his three biological daughters and, initially, his ex-fiance, the mother of two of his daughters. Before his arrest, he also financially supported his girlfriend (the victim) and her daughter.

Eliphas had fluctuating income levels over the years, as he worked for various companies with varying wages. Additionally, he delved into several small business endeavours, including owning a bar and an electrical firm. Throughout his working life, Eliphas consistently supported his mother and other family members. He explained:

More or less I earned about 30,000. But if I get a big tender... Then it's not that money because you have to buy everything. I always sold those tenders to the bigger companies. Then I would get small tenders. Like 35,000. Then I would pay my people... When I finish paying my people, then I go home with 15,000 or 13,000. (30:59)

Likewise, Ismael was self-employed and occasionally accepted odd jobs. He mentioned that his income was "... enough to feed them, feed my mom, my children and so. Mm, 10,000 and so..." (57:13). His criminal profile provided additional insight into his employment history:

. . . he explained that firstly he was just on the family farm assisting with maintenance of the farm and surviving on livestock. Years later he joined one of his uncles who was doing mechanic and plumbing work in Windhoek where he worked for a year and earned an income of N\$3,500 per month. He went back to the farm since there was no one capable of maintaining the farm . . . (59:12)

Current finances. At the time of the interviews, the participants' current financial status revealed that most were facing financial difficulties. They lacked a means of income and relied on their family members for financial support to purchase essentials such as food, toiletries, and clothing, in addition to the supplies provided by the correctional facility.

In the maximum-security unit, inmates are not privileged to work in the workshops, but they may do odd jobs in the unit. Several offenders, like Gerson, do not have a supportive family. Thus, Gerson resorted to doing odd jobs and favours for other offenders and correctional officers in return for items he needs. Sometimes he would get payment. The CMO explained that Gerson had good relationships with inmates and officers, ". . . and he is also assisting to amend their trousers, anything, even to shave them, cut their hair... He was even so blessed to fix like tables, whatever . . ." (43:5). Likewise, David worked as cleaner and served food in the maximum-security unit (22:2).

David explained that he relied on government support because his family had lost interest in him and was no longer providing assistance (26:11 & 26:1). Hannes, on the other hand, received support from his family but also worked as an office cleaner and distributed food in the maximum-security unit. However, after being transferred to medium-security, he ceased working and focused on his church responsibilities as a pastor (52:72).

Jacob, Eliphas, and Ismael received financial support from their families. Although Cleophas's family (17:26) and Brandon's family did not visit them, they sent money for support. In

contrast, Freddy denied receiving financial assistance from anyone. However, his mother mentioned that she would send him a small amount of money whenever she could (40:31). Freddy claimed to be self-reliant and said that he also supported his mother from within the correctional facility, though he did not disclose the source of his income (39:79).

Main Theme: Lifestyle and Health

This theme delved into the participants' lifestyle choices, overall health, and behaviours affecting their well-being. It encompassed a wide range of activities, considering past and current positive and harmful habits that influenced their physical and mental health. The theme also explored the concerns that preoccupied the participants' minds and how they consciously managed their health.

Below, I provide the most relevant aspects extracted from the data that culminated in the sub-themes that form the main theme of Lifestyle and Health. I present the results following the order shown in Table 5.4: experiences and concerns, physical and mental health, and substance use patterns. Thus, I address the sub-theme of experiences and concerns first.

Sub-theme: Experiences and concerns

This sub-theme provides insight into the participants' minds, exploring their concerns, perceptions, and the issues occupying their thoughts. It encompassed a range of topics, including their lives in the correctional facility, their lives after release, their health, and their families. It also addressed their opinions on various matters, such as the criminal justice system, their sentences, and the correctional staff. Under this sub-theme, I present the most prominent aspects, which were anger management, corruption and unfair treatment, and gangs in Windhoek CF.

Anger management. Controlling their anger and preventing themselves from losing their temper was a recurring challenge for most participants. It highlighted their struggle with anger management and conflict resolution in a calm manner.

Brandon also acknowledged his difficulty in managing anger and recognised that he needed more support (13:8). In his interview, Jacob shared that he continued to struggle with his temper and required support in anger management. He was also worried about his stepdaughter's welfare, and the lack of support from authorities in this regard caused him significant anger. He was concerned about his anger building up and worried about what might

happen if he lost his temper (65:145). Jacob's criminal profile revealed that he admitted to struggling with anger management:

. . . anger problems, which made him aggressive towards others. He said that anger was affecting him in many ways because he was always fighting with friends and beating up his children whenever they did something wrong. (67:21)

According to his RNR report, Ismael also requested help with anger management (57:27 & 59:35). He explained that he is slow to anger, but he loses control over his actions when he becomes extremely angry. Although this loss of control occurred less frequently in the facility than before his incarceration, he was concerned because it also happened in the facility (57:35). Ismael further mentioned that the ban on cigarettes and insufficient supplies like food, personal hygiene products and condoms were significant sources of anger among inmates.

Corruption and unfair treatment. According to most participants, corruption is pervasive in the Namibian justice system, and the correctional officers are incompetent. Hannes asserts that correctional officers only sit in their offices and do not perform their duties (52:156). Freddy opines that most officers are incompetent and unqualified because they are "political appointees" (39:39).

Most participants believed that the environment at Windhoek CF is exacerbated by corruption. Corruption leads to widespread unfair treatment during arrests, within the court system, and in the correctional facility. For example, Freddy explained that unfair treatment made even simple tasks, such as writing a letter and delivering it to the Ombudsman, extremely challenging (39:92). Gerson, Freddy, Ismael, and Jacob also expressed concerns about unfair treatment, including being threatened and assaulted in the Windhoek CF. For instance, Gerson complained that ". . . the prison's people do not work according to the law, and you can't say anything? Most of their work they are doing is outside the law. They are beating . . ." (70:83). Anthony also mentioned that inmates were regularly assaulted by officers (2:114). Jacob also expressed that correctional officers continued to assault inmates, but the officials looked the other way (65:148). Jacob's statement demonstrated his sentiments about corruption:

. . . Deputy Commissioner General comes, when someone is being beaten or something happened then he comes with a black cloth to come and cover up the things here. He talks these nice things here for the guys that don't really understand the things. . . Just as

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he turns the same things continue. So he goes around, going to all the prisons. And these things are just covered up and the process just continues . . . (65:155)

Ismael expressed his opinion on the Namibian justice system, including court procedures and the correctional system. In his opinion, instead of rehabilitation, the Windhoek CF causes more harm:

. . . it teaches you nothing, it just makes you more confused and it only teaches you to be more deviant. Mmm, I learn a lot of things, I hear a lot of things. How you should steal and hide things to get away with it and I learn a lot. (57:58)

Hannes explained how this happened:

You see that's if you, they sit at night together. They sit and talk to each other. What this one did, what his crime is, now you who has a small crime. Let me say, you are sitting with a house break-in case. And I tell that guy what I did in my life, the crime that I committed. And my crime is like this. If I lie at night, my crime is at that point where I want to, refer it back (pause) What would I have done? The time I was in the eighties. What would I have done? Firstly, I would have left the car at home. I would have taken the fuel and burned the house, so that there is no evidence left. (52:169)

When asked if such thoughts ever cross his mind, Hannes admitted that it had crossed his mind and he answered, "I would never have driven with the vehicle" (52:169).

Ismael also admitted that he learned many things in the Windhoek CF and that the negative environment also impacted him:

When I was outside, I didn't do or know any of those things. When I came here, now I do dishonest things. Here I learned, maybe you are going to the hospital then you can even put illegal stuff in, uh, places that we would not mention, um, what should I say, in the anus. To put things in there to hide to bring in. Those dishonest things, those things you learn here. (57:63)

Freddy (39:69) agreed that the environment at Windhoek CF teaches inmates more criminal behaviour. According to him, young offenders serve sentences for minor crimes together with seasoned criminals and learn more advanced criminal activities (39:69). He opined that inmates

have no choice but to pay attention and learn these skills to remain safe in the correctional facility. Jacob added to this concern, using an example of a specific offender that he observed:

He came for two, and got into a fight at B section. For three years. Then he was taken to unit seven, for three years there. To just there, at the B section, single cell. He sits there at the single cell and they control the "mannetje" (little man) and they scare the mannetjie at unit seven. Take the mannetjie to unit two where they can work and get busy where he can learn. Now, they take him to unit seven. They just leave him there, he is, he is just worse, and now he goes, no remission, no parole, because he doesn't get parole. So, I think it was for housebreaking... Yes, after serving half of the sentence he qualifies for parole, yes, now that young mannetjie will go out, out of maximum and, now he will go out of maximum worse as from how he came in . . . (65:154)

Gangs in Windhoek CF. Contrary to the CMOs and literature's denial of gangs as a concern in the Windhoek CF, all participants expressed their concerns about gangs within the facility. They also claimed that rampant corruption leads to correctional officers joining gangs at the Windhoek CF. Some officers are reportedly part of inmate gangs, while others may not directly participate in gangs but contribute to bringing contraband into the facility. Freddy noted that certain inmates pay correctional officers to smuggle contraband, such as marijuana, into the facility. Freddy mentioned, "There are wardens, who are smuggling things like dagga. Every day they will bring dagga in. Those are guys who are on the prisoner's side" (39:76).

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of experiences and concerns. Next, I provide the most relevant aspects extracted from the data that culminated in the second sub-theme of the main theme, lifestyle and health. This sub-theme is physical and mental health, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Physical and mental health

This sub-theme pertains to the offenders' past and current overall health, encompassing their mental and physical well-being. It considers all the aspects that affect their health, including previous and current diagnoses and treatments. Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I present are psychological disorders, abuse and trauma, chronic medical conditions.

Psychological disorders. Out of the ten participants, both Gerson and Hannes (70:25) have received diagnoses of depression in the past. They received counselling and medication after attempting suicide. Hannes made two suicide attempts, one before his incarceration and

another while he was incarcerated. He described the second suicide attempt, which occurred after he had committed the crime and was ambushed by the police as he tried to flee. Hannes recounted:

Ja. I took out the weapon and loaded it and put it against my head (pause) and pulled the trigger. (Long pause) You see, there were the bullet is supposed to come out (pause) The bullet just went to sit, and it didn't. So I took the weapon and I threw the weapon. Into the people's yard that were standing there. (52:36)

Jacob discussed instances in which he experienced perceptual disturbances while he was under the influence of alcohol. He explained:

Because if I am drunk, then I would start thinking things and if I thought of the things that were happening then I would get disturbing thoughts. (pause) While I am sitting like that, I would get the smell of blood. (pause) Such things would come. (65:177)

Abuse and trauma. Freddy's cousin stated that Freddy was a victim of physical violence. According to her, his mother's multiple boyfriends targeted Freddy, and he was also neglected by his mother during his childhood (37:12). Freddy and his mother corroborated this statement. Gerson mentioned that he had experienced beatings from his grandfather that scarred him. He also narrated how his parents used to beat him (70:56), and in his opinion, they were abusive. Hannes suffered physical abuse from his stepfather from a young age and witnessed his mother being abused, as illustrated in the following extract:

If my mom helped us, then he'd hit my mom with his fist. He beat us a lot. He would just in a fit take my mom out to the farm, because they were three brothers, then they would ride on the tractor, that time my mom was pregnant. (pause) Then they would make her run in front of the tractor. And hit her (pause) With belts . . . (52:95)

Cleophas's criminal profile reveals that he experienced traumatic events. Trauma is a distressing encounter that leads to substantial fear, helplessness, dissociation, confusion, or other disruptive emotions of such intensity that they leave a lasting adverse impact on a person's attitudes, behaviour, and functioning (VandenBos, 2015). He described his experiences before independence in Windhoek, where he encountered people from various backgrounds, leading to a significant change in his life. According to him, he faced bullying, torture and physical abuse from the Boers and Damara-Nama people. He witnessed many of his friends being killed by Boers and Damara-Nama people with knives or sticks, leading to his dislike of these groups. As a result,

he began carrying a knife for protection. Cleophas' Criminal Profile stated, "The Boers used to come to the place where he stayed in Katutura Compound and torture them for nothing, the Damara-Nama people were fighting and stabbing Wamboes with knives as well as stealing their properties" (20:35)

Eliphas's criminal profile also mentioned a traumatic childhood experience he had before independence. In 1985-86, while in grade 9, he was enlisted into the South African army as a soldier. After training, he was forced to witness the torture of older adults in northern villages and observed killings. Although he never killed anyone himself, he was made to assault the elderly physically. Eliphas described this as a traumatic event, but he no longer seems bothered by these experiences, explaining that he got through everything through prayer (9:24). Anthony is the only participant who experienced sexual abuse when he was a young boy. According to him, an aunt who was looking after him would touch him and play with his penis.

Chronic medical conditions. Most participants do not have chronic illnesses. Only Brandon (13:12), Eliphas, and Ismael mentioned that they were receiving treatment for hypertension that was diagnosed after their incarceration. Eliphas and Ismael also had additional eye problems. Ismael was receiving treatment for allergies.

These main aspects culminated in the sub-theme of physical and mental health. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that formed the third sub-theme of the main theme, lifestyle and health. This sub-theme is substance use patterns, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Substance use patterns

This sub-theme focuses on the participants' historical and present patterns of alcohol and substance use and abuse. It encompasses their insights and opinions regarding drug and alcohol consumption and problematic usage patterns. Additionally, this sub-theme highlights past and current behavioural patterns that may have stemmed from the influence of substance use. Among the participants, alcohol and substance misuse was notably prevalent. Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I present are substance use initiated and binge drinking and lack of insight.

Substance use initiated: High school/Teenager. According to Anthony's Criminal Profile, his failure in grade 10 was due to his behaviour, which included alcohol and cannabis abuse (3:23). He also confirmed this in his interview (2:104). Hannes's Criminal Profile (50:15), corroborated by his father's recollection (51:6) and by his own account (52:60), also revealed that

he began using alcohol and other substances, including mandrax, marijuana, and Pattex during high school. Hannes said, "I was 16 years old. That time I was uhm, (pause), standard six (grade 8). Ja, I just got into . . . School" (52:60).

According to Ismael's mother, he only began drinking as an adult after high school (58:13). However, it's worth noting that he likely started drinking during his teenage years, as his history indicates that he dropped out of school in grade 9. In contrast, Ismael's sister held a completely different perspective of her brother:

Haha (no), that guy was not even about going out and things, going out and drinking and stuff is not something I knew a lot about him. I didn't see him do those things. No, he wasn't even really a drinker, really. Drugs are not even something I ever heard about him, so until today, I still ask myself what happened in him that day. I ask myself that question. (60:7)

Substance use initiated: Primary school/Preteen. Jacob and Freddy began drinking and using other substances during primary school. Jacob shared that he was around eight or nine years when he started drinking and tried mandrax for the first time (65:36). This is illustrated in the dialogue below:

Researcher: You were eight, nine years old, and came down by your sister sitting in the river with her boyfriend?

Jacob: Like that I went and messed up everything there, I "sommer" took "klip" (mandrax) also . . .

Researcher: Yoh, at that, were already that naughty that time?

Jacob: Mm, . . . no I didn't want anybody, and . . . didn't want that mannetjie and I "sommer" (just) show then I don't get scared.

Researcher: You don't get scared.

Jacob: . . . of a person, even if you are big or small. And I took klip behind the house where my sister them were. And then I asked, are you also sitting here?

Researcher: Her also. Uhh

Jacob: And then she went to go get my dad.

Researcher: Uhh

Jacob: And I told her I will . . . I will get my father . . .

Researcher: And so obviously if you get your dad, then it's a problem?

Jacob: Then it's a problem. And like that they were trying to "pie" (convince) me and the red wine was also there, and I was, I sit and drink . . .

Researcher: She was also drinking?

Jacob: Hmm, mm. She is not drinking.

Researcher: Oh, he drinks.

Jacob: He drinks. He was sitting there with maybe like three, four bottles. It was New Year's Eve. We were a big squad, my cousins and brothers, they were all there drinking. So they were being nice, and like that, they made me taste that wine. And then it was nice, and then I drank, I drank, and later I sommer took a bottle for me. (65:36)

David also mentioned that he was eight or nine years old when he began drinking. He narrated, "Yah! I can't remember exactly when, those years my mother was selling Liebenstein . . . It was during that time and I was very small. (pause) Let's say nine, seven around there" (25:36). Likewise, Freddy also started drinking (39:26) and smoking marijuana (39:116) at a very young age. His mother confirmed this, saying that she sold home-brewed alcohol called Jabula, and Freddy would steal and drink it (40:22).

Binge drinking and lack of insight. A significant observation among all participants is their shared culture of binge drinking. Brandon mentioned that he would drink whenever he had money (12:36). Besides binge drinking, most participants also displayed a poor understanding of alcohol's impact on their behaviour, and they lacked insight into responsible alcohol consumption. For example, Eliphas would hide and drink alcohol at work: "Yeah, putting aside the Tussenberg, the bottle . . . behind the door. The two litres had already finished. Yeah, so, we were not allowed to drink on the site . . . So, nobody should see the bottle" (30:23).

Based on his account, Jacob stopped drinking for a while. However, while narrating events that occurred during the time he was not consuming alcohol, he mentioned that he only drank a six-pack of cider. He explained, ". . . and I said I didn't start drinking, now and then I would take an Esprit and . . ." (65:74). He laughed and shrugged when it was pointed out that drinking Esprit meant he was consuming alcohol, as Esprit is an alcoholic beverage. This indicative of his lack of insight.

Similarly, due to his lack of insight, Anthony insisted that the amount of alcohol he consumed on the day he attempted to murder his girlfriend was "not that much." Although he drank many bottles of beer and consumed whiskey. The following dialogue from Anthony's interview illustrates this:

Anthony: A bit drunk, yes (pause)

Researcher: A bit or a lot?

Anthony: No I only had just, let me say drank couple of bottles beer and a wine bottle.

Researcher: Uhm? One, two, three? How many?

Anthony: Eight bottles beer, and then a wine bottle.

Researcher: Mmm-mm. Eight beers?

Anthony: Yes.

Researcher: Big beers?

Anthony: Ha-ha (no)

Researcher: Small ones?

Anthony: Mmm.

Researcher: Is it not a lot

Anthony? Is it a lot? [he laughs]

Researcher: I think it is a lot, eight beers and also a bottle of wine, or a whole wine?

Anthony: The whole bottle of wine, let me say Bols [smiling].

Researcher: Is it wine? It's, but Bols, is it not whiskey or what is that? Bols is then a whiskey (2:51).

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of substance use patterns. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the main theme, criminal profile and impact on the family.

Main Theme: Criminal Profile and Impact on the Family

This main theme encompasses the offender's history of criminal behaviour, including the current offence. It covers previous charges, convictions, time spent in holding cells, past incarcerations, and offences and charges. The involvement of accomplices in previous and current offences and the circumstances surrounding these crimes are also crucial. The participants' thoughts and emotions regarding their criminal behaviour are also considered.

Below, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the sub-themes that form the main theme of criminal profile and impact on family. The results are presented in the order presented in Table 5.4. The sub-theme of context of current offence is addressed first.

Sub-theme: Context of current offence

This sub-theme explores various aspects of the current crime, including the participants' recollections of events, their admission or denial of guilt, emotional responses, and other reactions related to the offence. It also sheds light on the social aspects of the crime, such as the involvement of accomplices or substances that may have influenced the offenders' actions. This theme provides valuable insights into the participants' perspectives on their crimes and the discrepancies between their narratives and the officially documented versions of events.

Under this sub-theme, I present the most prominent aspects: attempt to evade arrest, conscious intent to harm victim, denial of guilt, contradictory accounts, impulse or premeditated crime, victim-offender relationships and crime type, substance use and criminal behaviour.

Attempt to evade arrest. Anthony, David, Freddy, Gerson, Hannes, and Ismael tried to avoid arrest in various ways. Gerson was only arrested several years after the crime had occurred. In Anthony's interview, he recounted, ". . . I wanted to run, you understand and jump the fence. . . the guy then loaded his gun, and then said you just have to stand. The lady was having the cuffs . . . I was then handcuffed . . ." (2:43). Freddy also confessed to attempting to flee from the police, as documented in his criminal profile: "... When the police arrived, it was one officer then when the officer orders him to stand, he tries to run away, but the police officer shoots him in the leg and arrests him" (38:8).

Hannes and his accomplice attempted to dispose of the gun and left the victim's body and the vehicle used in the crime at the scene. They initially planned to flee to South Africa but were apprehended en route to the border. In David's case, his criminal profile indicates that he brought the victim to their residence where the incident occurred, then went to a friend's house. He spent the night there and travelled to Windhoek the following day. It was only after speaking with relatives in Windhoek and realising the gravity of his actions that he decided to turn himself in to the police (24:10). According to Ismael's criminal profile, he fled to his father's house and was arrested the day following the crime (56:15).

Conscious intent to harm the victim. Several offenders acknowledged their intention to harm their victims. In the interview, Anthony mentioned, "Why must they gang up on me?... Yes, the one who came out and gang up, that's the one I wanted to hurt more." When asked why he wanted to hurt someone, especially with a panga, he replied, "I don't know, I was maybe very much angry" (2:23). Brandon also confessed his intention to cause harm. He explained that he got the idea to grab a knife while on his way home and admitted being fully aware of his actions:

In that moment I just said, Beat me, and I ran into the house. I went to get a hunting knife. Then when I came up to Irvin, it's when I only started stabbing him. When I finished stabbing Irvin, I then said, Where is that man who had told Irvin that he must beat me? Then I, I left the knife, that big knife in Irvin. Then I went to get sheep scissors. In my mother's house. I then was chasing Jason with those sheep scissors. I then lunged at him and started stabbing him. He died. (12:8)

When asked if he intended to kill or injure the uncle, he responded, "I only wanted to injure him. That is all that was in my thoughts" (12:12). Freddy admitted that he could commit a severe offence without hesitation, stating, "Truly, if I had come closer, I would have stabbed him" (39:52).

Denial of guilt. Among the ten participants, eight admitted to committing the crime. Anthony confessed to attacking his girlfriend and two other men with a panga, intending to harm them, but denied the sexual assault allegations (3:12). Eliphas and Gerson both vehemently denied committing the crimes for which they have been convicted. Eliphas's criminal profile shows that he denies the murder charge despite DNA evidence proving his guilt. "The offender entirely denies committing both offences..., he stated in the interview that the blood found on his clothes were his own, as he suffered from a bloody nose, even though DNA tests showed that it was the victim's" (29:17).

Gerson's criminal profile indicates that both he and his co-accused denied the allegations against them: "... none of the accused person has shown the slightest degree of remorse for what they have done. Each of them persisted in saying that they did not kill the deceased persons despite overwhelming evidence accused against them" (45:6).

Contradictory accounts. Some offenders provided contradicting statements about their memories of the events. Anthony claimed that he intended to hurt the two men and remembered attacking them with the panga. He also mentioned that his girlfriend tried to stop him by pulling him. However, he later stated that his mind went blank, and he didn't realise what he was doing. This short extract highlighted his contradictory statements:

Anthony: Yeh, I then turned around with the piece of panga. And I don't know what happened.

Researcher: Uhm. When she pulled you?

Anthony: That's, what she said in court. That I hacked her on the neck and arm. When I turned it was the only time I realised that I hacked her in the head. (2:28)

Additionally, in his interview, Anthony claimed he didn't drink too much and wasn't too drunk (2:51). However, Anthony's stepfather recounted that Anthony told him he had consumed too much alcohol and blacked out. This is his father's statement:

I asked him what happened, and he said, he, he used a bit of alcohol, and he used a bit of alcohol, and he didn't know what was going on. He had apparently drunk, and drunk, and then he had apparently drunk too much and then he had, uhm, black out apparently. That's what, that's what. I mean he, he, I was disappointed, he drank and then his head, something went wrong and then (pause) then he says after that he doesn't know what he did. (6:10)

During his interview, David refused to discuss the crime. He claimed that he had no memory of the incident. As the CMO explained, "He is saying he can give you all his information about how he grew up and was born. And as for the case, he can't. He has forgotten already" (25:1). Gerson's also steadfastly denied committing the crimes for which he was convicted. His account and his Criminal Profile underscore his claim that he has no recollection of the events on the night of the crime, but he maintains his denial of any wrongdoing, despite initially recalling a different location. His criminal profile stated:

The offender then went to drop his other friends and sister; and the three, went to Boeta's farm where the offender and Frans lived to continue drinking alcohol at the farm. The offender states that, they drank up until 12 AM at that certain bar, and they had decided to go to . . . village, which is 20km from . . . , to go buy cannabis. They then bought dagga and ecstasy pill. He adds that he fell asleep and when he woke up, all he could remember is smoking dagga and the pill with the two victims in the car in . . . but did not understand why he was at a different farm, situated at about 65km away from . . . at . . . farm near . . . and was alone in the car. (45:11)

Impulse or premeditated crime. Hannes and his accomplice had premeditated the burglary, but the subsequent murder was not planned. In Eliphas's case, the rape he was convicted of might have been premeditated, possibly leading to an impulsive murder, although he denies guilt. Anthony's sexual assault might also have been premeditated, while the attempted murder appeared to be fuelled by anger and impulse. On the other hand, the crimes committed

by Brandon, Cleophas, David, Freddy, Gerson, Ismael, and Jacob were driven by emotions and impulsive reactions in the heat of the moment.

Victim-offender relationships and crime type. Anthony, Cleophas, David, Ismael, and Jacob were involved in conflicts and jealousy within their romantic relationships, which ultimately led to crimes against their girlfriends. Anthony was convicted of attempted murder, while the others were convicted of murder. In Brandon's case, his victims were family members, and the incident arose from long-standing resentment and anger that escalated during an argument. Gerson's victims were acquaintances, and the conflict may have been related to drug issues. In contrast, the victims of Eliphas, Hannes, and Freddy were strangers with varying motives: Freddy acted impulsively, Hannes planned a robbery, and Eliphas committed rape before the murder.

Among the ten participants, only Gerson and Hannes had accomplices in committing their crimes, while the remaining eight acted alone. Sharp objects were used by eight out of the ten participants to inflict fatal wounds. Cleophas, David, Eliphas, Freddy, Ismael, and Jacob used knives, Anthony used a panga, and Brandon wielded a hunting knife and shears. Hannes's victim was shot with a firearm, while Gerson was convicted of throwing his victims into a well while they were still alive.

Substance use and criminal behaviour. Most participants were under the influence of substances, primarily alcohol, when they committed their crimes. For example, Brandon admitted that he was intoxicated when he attacked his uncles (12:90) while they were drinking together. Similarly, Freddy committed his crime while he was out clubbing with friends and consuming alcohol excessively throughout the day.

Cleophas (21:13), David (24:7), Eliphas (30:26), and Jacob (65:74) all committed their crimes after returning from places where they had been drinking. In his interview, Eliphas even speculated that if he had not been drinking that day, he might not be facing his current problems (30:151). Gerson's criminal profile revealed that he used alcohol, marijuana, and ecstasy on the day of the offence (45:11). Likewise, Hannes consumed alcohol, cannabis, and mandrax on the day he committed his crime before and after the incident. He recounted:

From there on we went to a club, to . . . Ja. There we went to sit and we drank and (pause) while we were sitting and drinking I took this friend of mine, who also used pills and things, so I took him and with him, uhhm, went to . . . and there we went to buy pills and weed, and uhhm, (pause) went to the river and smoked. (52:26)

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of context of current offence. Next, I provide the most relevant codes extracted from the data that culminated in the second sub-theme of the main theme, criminal profile and impact on family. This sub-theme is criminal history, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Criminal history

This sub-theme provides insight into the past criminal activities of the offenders. It encompasses previous charges, detention, convictions and sentences, and all relevant aspects related to these crimes.

At the time of committing the crimes, Brandon and David had no prior criminal records, charges, or convictions. However, while Brandon was on bail for his murder charge, he threatened individuals, resulting in convictions for attempted murder and assault related to those incidents (11:4). On the other hand, several participants had previous convictions, including Anthony, who had a prior assault conviction (3:13), and Cleophas, who had multiple convictions such as murder, attempted murder, and assault, as outlined in his criminal profile.

Cleophas's criminal profile indicates two previous convictions: one in 1983 for culpable homicide, where he beat a victim with a "knop kerie" (walking stick) (20:28), and another in 1997 for murder, involving the stabbing to death of another person (20:9). Although no official documents were available for Eliphas, he indicated previous assault charges (29:19) and a conviction for theft during his interview. Hannes was detained multiple times for theft and possession of illicit substances, but he was convicted as a first-time offender at sentencing (50:10).

Eliphas (32:19), Cleophas, Ismael, and Jacob all had criminal records that included previous charges for assaulting their girlfriends. Ismael had two prior assault convictions involving ex-girlfriends (56:20) and had been detained on suspicion of theft (57:52). Freddy's criminal history began at age 12 in 1983, escalating from petty crime to theft, assault, robbery, rape, attempted murder, and murder. Freddy had also offended multiple times while on bail.

Jacob had no criminal record at the time of sentencing but had an outstanding charge for possession of marijuana (64:10), a charge of assault, and an attempted murder that he was convicted of at the same time as the current murder (64:5). Gerson had outstanding fraud charges (45:18) but no previous convictions. However, he had been implicated in theft multiple times before (70:73).

Many participants had unreported criminal offences. For example, Cleophas's first offence, violently assaulting his mother, was never reported (14:2). Freddy also had numerous unreported offences and multiple charges that did not result in convictions (38:11). Anthony, Gerson, Hannes, and Jacob also mentioned having multiple unreported offences. Jacob's previous encounters with the law involved discharging a firearm in public, bumping a police officer's car while intoxicated (65:126), and being disrespectful and disobedient to police officers. He was known to have fought with the victim and a previous girlfriend multiple times.

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme of criminal history. Next, I provide the most relevant aspects extracted from the data that culminated in the third sub-theme of the main theme, criminal profile and impact on family. This sub-theme is impact on the family, as shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-theme: Impact on family

This theme encompasses the significant others' thoughts on their past relationships with the offenders, their current relationships, their views on what shaped the offenders, and whether they believe the offenders have changed. Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I present are short tempered, ambivalence, external locus of control, and shock and disbelief.

Short tempered. Many participants, including Brandon, Anthony, Jacob, Cleophas, Ismael, and Freddy, have documented instances of short tempers and anger issues in their family accounts and official records. Cleophas's cousin described him as a good person, but one who tended to get angry quickly. Although Cleophas is married, he had a girlfriend in Windhoek while his wife and children lived in the North. Similarly, the CMO characterised Brandon as quick to anger.

Ambivalence. Ambivalence is defined by APA (2015) as the coexistence of conflicting emotions and attitudes, such as experiencing both pleasure and discomfort or displaying both friendliness and hostility toward the same person, object, event, or situation.

What was notable is the discrepancies between the significant others' memories of the participants as "very good" people and their actual behaviour. Notably, the participants' mothers insisted that their sons were good, and they were shocked by the crimes. In contrast to Freddy's criminal profile, which evidenced multiple crimes at a young age, his mother stated, ". . . he was a child that is everywhere. He would be seen everywhere, but he was never seen fighting, he was not someone of fighting. He was never into fighting and he was never one to even start arguments" (40:16).

Eliphas's niece was shocked to hear about the crime he was accused of, saying, "Yes, he still always tells us that he didn't do it. Yes, we believe him because we do not know him as that type of person" (33:14). Hannes's father was devastated. He said, "No, I was shocked. I did not think that they would... I did think they would..., I knew they would get caught for something like drugs or stealing or something, but not for murder" (51:8). Hannes's mother expressed similar sentiments:

. . . it was a major shock, because I had ever even considered. Never thought that they would ever do something like that. Look, I just can't understand it. Look at they used to get up to nonsense yes, but to go this far. I just, I don't get it. (53:19)

External locus of control. Many of the participants' mothers struggled to accept that their sons had committed such horrific crimes. They found it difficult to believe that their sons had chosen to engage in such terrible actions. They searched for external explanations and reasons to make sense of how and why these events had happened to their sons instead of focusing on their sons' actions.

These mothers grappled with self-blame and attempted to find understanding through faith and religion, often blaming the devil and other people for the negative outcomes. Freddy's mother stated, ". . . that is the thing that even hurts most that he was such a good kid and that my child should have had this happen to him" (40:28). She elaborated further:

And then it started now with the police, and so it then started that Freddy's life got out of hand, and to tell you the honest truth, I even, uhm, I asked someone at some stage now what is going on with my child now that my child should be out of hand like this because Freddy was a lovely child from his early years. And the, one of the big, . . . Islamic man that was here those years, he said, "mam your child probably took something in that causes this". He said maybe my son took in some bat poison. "Bat poison is what your son ingested, and he is doing it because of that". He said my son is not doing what he is doing to be seen, he does it without knowing what he is doing. (40:14)

Hannes's mother also attempted to make sense of his behaviour by attributing it to the abuse he experienced as a child. She stated, ". . . this was before, before this marriage started, there was a mark that was left on them" (53:3). Similarly, Ismael's mother sought to understand the situation by blaming her son's girlfriend and her mother for constantly stressing Ismael, until he snapped. She expressed:

Mmm, he told me. (pause) He has a girlfriend. We used to even call each other, me and that girl. But maybe that girl and her mother were maybe both like that, uhm, they go on money. They sell each other. Like that . . . So then even me, I used to think, ai, what did my son get himself into? Why did he get this woman? I used to think. (58:18)

Shock and disbelief. All significant others expressed shock and disbelief upon learning of the participants' crimes. Jacob's sister was left confused and struggled to comprehend her brother's actions. Her disbelief is evidenced by the statement she mentioned:

I don't really want to know how you started with this thing. Because I know it is not you. Mmm, mm, it's not you. You have become an abnormal person. That I can and will never understand. Because it is not right. You are not right anymore, you are not the brother that I know. (68:16)

Similarly, Ismael's sister was shocked, and her disbelief is evidenced by the questions she mentioned asking herself:

. . . when that thing happened, I kept asking myself, what could have possibly happened. I was even thinking that I do not believe that that day he had been drunk or had been on drugs. That's just what I think. Until today I ask myself that. Oh, a lot, a lot, it really affected us a lot, that thing. Because the only thing I keep asking myself is. I know him as someone who doesn't drink, doesn't smoke or use drugs, really, so what could have made him do something like that. Is what I ask myself? (60:8)

Anthony's mother also expressed her shock and disbelief:

When I heard that, uhm, I was mos, I was this side, I was in . . . (pause) uhm, then I couldn't, then I could believe. Until now, I still don't believe. Ahh, because I raised him, I can't believe, until now, I don't believe (pause) ahh, it was a big shock, like even when I look at the papers from the doctors. The papers are very clean, there is no evidence that show like that. But he took it so I don't know" "He just told me, he just told me that he did something like that. (4:19)

Cleophas's family members were also extremely shocked, particularly because he had multiple murder convictions. His cousin expressed shock and wondered how this could have happened. His cousin mentioned, "Yoh, it was a shock, because now, he killed three people now" (14:6).

A DYNAMIC EXPLORATION OF OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF VIOLENT CRIMES

The lives of most significant others were irrevocably changed for the worse, including Anthony's mother. She explains how she lost the support of people due to the incident:

When this happened, my family left me. It's just me that was there and my sister's children. Even I had to bury my sister alone with Anthony, that time he was still not in prison, even then my sister's daughter also died with 11 years. Then I had to go, just with my sister's children and my husband. So my family just left me like that, when this thing happened. Even when Anthony was not even in the prison yet. (4:31)

Hannes's father also described the irrevocable impact their son's crime had on their lives. According to him, it felt as though it was a conviction and life sentence for him and his wife:

Yes, you, you become a recluse, uhm, you are outside but you are closed off. You are actually also in a prison. You actually also just stay at home. You know, you, you, you feel ashamed about the things and you, uhm, (pause) although you know it is not your fault, but (pause) You can't do anything about it, but . . . (51:11)

According to him, the impact of Hannes's crime can still be felt two decades later:

That, the things, like now as we are getting older, everybody is asking and everyone is talking about their grandchildren and how nice it is that the grandchildren can come visit and stuff, and we don't have such things. So it is a constant reminder, and it is tough. You, you, you retreat, you pull back and avoid such things. It hurts to a certain extent. (pause) Yes, of course, you will always have that, until our ends we will always have that. (51:12)

In addition to the shock, Ismael's mother was devastated because when her son was incarcerated, she lost her livelihood. She explained:

Ya, I was very shocked. That guy, he was someone who would really look after me. He would take care of me. If he got twenty rand, he would give me ten rand. When he worked there on the "rock" (mountain), I would eat from him, he would feed me, clothe me, take care of me. Uh, I didn't expect this. . . (58:14)

Jacob's mother also shared the impact her son's crime had on her and her husband: "Oh, the father was very sad. (pause) We were both sad, but mostly, it really hurt the father and it

affected him mostly, affected him a lot" (66:15). Jacob also expressed how he believed his crime impacted his family, particularly his stepdaughter, the daughter of the victim. He said:

And that, look the problem for me was.... What I feel, what I think, look I also evaluate myself. What I see, what I think, here I need attention. And after that I want that for my children. The kids, because it has an effect on me. That child's school work, when I was still in the south, it was fine. But when I got here the year after her school work started to get bad. So after that, the tests she wrote this year, it was very good. She got 19/20... But exam time there is a B, E, U, F. (65: 144)

These were the main aspects that culminated in the sub-theme, impact on the family, under the main theme of criminal profile and impact. Under this sub-theme, the main aspects I have presented were quick to get angry, ambivalence, external locus of control, shock and disbelief.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I reported the findings derived from this qualitative design using a descriptive thematic analysis. I reported six main themes, each with its three sub-themes. Under each sub-theme, findings were presented using quotes from the interviews of the participants, the significant others, and the CMO. The results presented included data depicting the participants' experiences, factors contributing to their criminal behaviour, and identities. In Chapter six, I discuss the findings of this study.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This qualitative study examined the offenders in the Windhoek CF, maximum-security unit who have committed violent crimes. This chapter deliberates the findings and their implications and discusses them in the context of literature. I also state the study's limitations and make recommendations for future studies.

Overview of the Chapter

This qualitative study examined the offenders in the Windhoek CJ, maximum-security unit who have committed violent crimes. This chapter deliberates the findings and their implications and discusses them in the context of literature. I first provide a brief overview of the study before delving into the findings. I also state the study's limitations and make recommendations for future studies.

Brief Overview of the Study

This study emerged in response to the rising violent crime rates in Namibia, which persist despite the courts' imposition of harsh, long-term sentences and efforts by the NCS to rehabilitate offenders. It appears that these measures alone are insufficient deterrents.

The introductory chapter provided the background and discussed the main aim, objectives, and research questions. Driven by a desire to understand the individuals who commit violent crimes, the primary aim of this study was to explore the factors that impact and influence these perpetrators by delving into their histories, circumstances, experiences, relationships, and personalities. The hope was that with a better understanding of offenders, better ways might be devised to address social ills and approach the rehabilitation of offenders. To achieve the study's objectives of investigating the offenders' self-perceived personalities and examining their relationships and experiences that affect their behaviour, I remained focused on addressing four research questions.

- How do offenders perceive their own personalities?
- What kinds of relationships have offenders had in the past, and have in the present?
- In what ways have offenders affected the lives of their significant others?
- How have offenders' life experiences influenced their behaviour?

In the second chapter, I conducted a literature review on the causes and contributing factors of criminal behaviour. Chapter Three provided a discussion of the theoretical framework, the bioecological theory, emphasising how various systems influence human development and behaviour.

Aggression and violence involve individuals in different contexts, each associated with specific risk factors (Hagenbeek et al., 2016, 2018; Wrangham, 2018). The WHO utilised the ecological model to comprehend the multifaceted nature of violence and conceptualise interpersonal violence. Interpersonal violence is the outcome of interactions among numerous factors at four equally important and influential levels: individual (microsystem), personal (mesosystem), community (exosystem), and societal (macrosystem) (WHO, 2002, 2014). While the WHO refers to the ecological model, their multiple references to the impact of biological factors on the individual suggest that they use the bioecological perspective, an evolved version of the general ecological model.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model evolved into bioecological theory, encompassing the Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) model. I needed to understand the factors that impacted these offenders' behaviour and identities, and the bioecological theory provides a valuable conceptual framework. In the PPCT model, the ongoing and evolving relationships and exchanges between an individual and their environment are referred to as proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Hébert et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2015; Poppa et al., 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Sheng, 2023). These interactions can become more intricate and dynamic over time as a person navigates and adapts to their surroundings and can influence behaviour, including criminal behaviour. Figure 6.1 is a brief illustration of the bioecological model adapted from the WHO's depiction of the ecological model and Bronfenbrenner's P-P-C-T model.

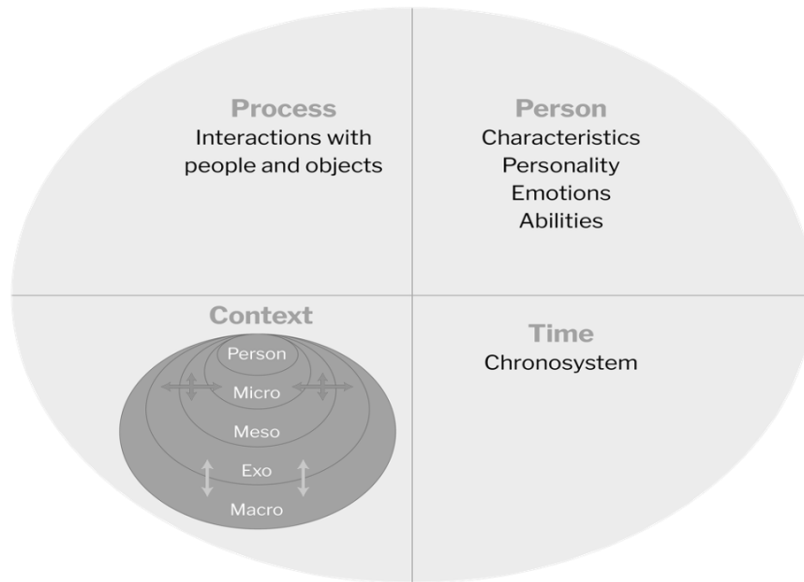


Figure 6.1
Bioecological model

Throughout the research, I ensured ethical conduct by adhering to the required procedures, obtaining the necessary permissions, and prioritising the protection of participants. The figure below outlines this extensive and meticulous research process.

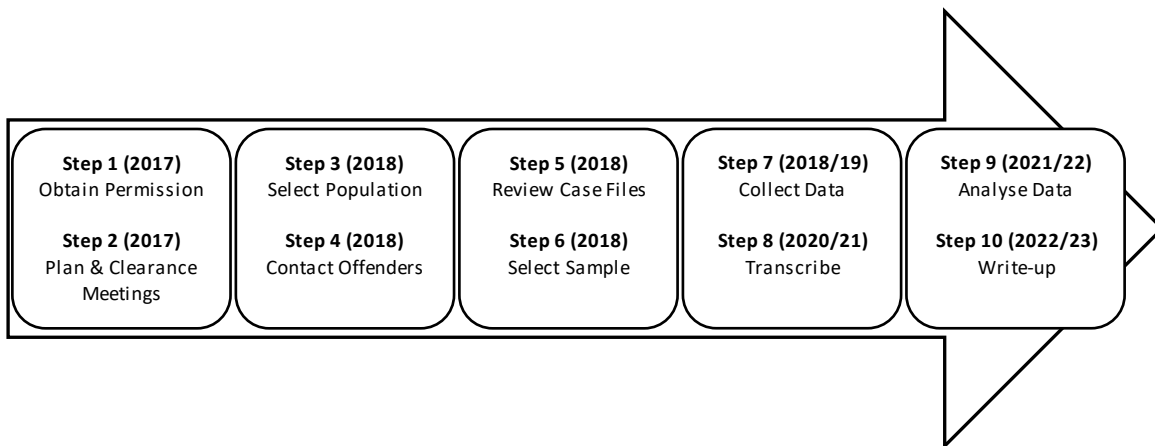


Figure 6.2
Research process

I employed a qualitative research design to pursue an in-depth understanding of perpetrators of violent crimes. Ten inmates from the Windhoek CF, selected through purposive sampling, participated in the study. I examined perceptions within a descriptive and explanatory thematic framework. This approach gave me insight into the factors influencing and impacting their decisions to commit violent crimes.

A semi-structured interview schedule guided the interviews with participants, their significant others, and the CMO. This interview schedule was adapted from the SAPS sex offender questionnaire (Appendix H). Chapter Four clearly explains the methodology and procedures I followed in this study. Figure 6.3 depicts Braun and Clarke's (2006, p. 87) six-phase method of TA, which I followed to analyse the data in this study.

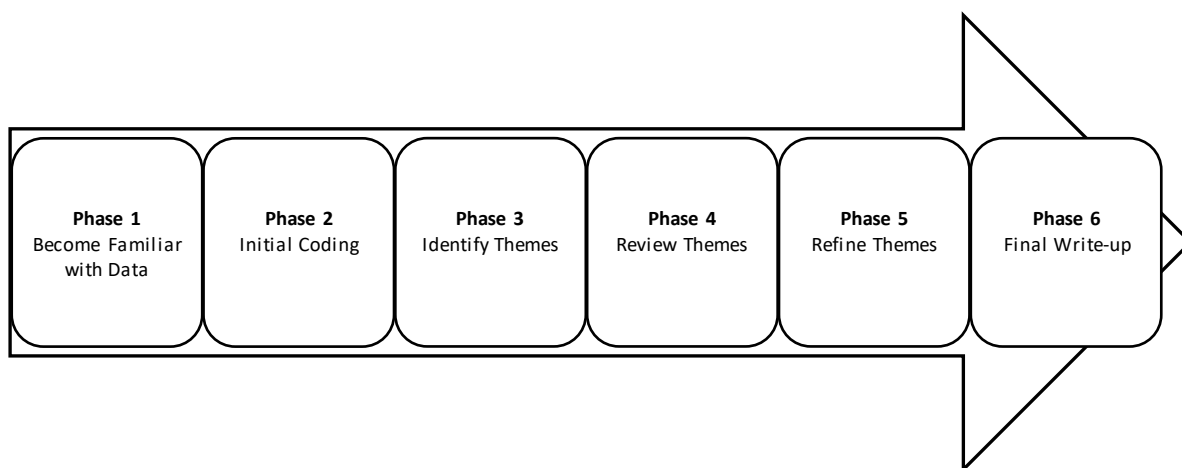


Figure 6.3
Six-phase TA

Cope (2014) emphasizes the importance of researchers describing their involvement and observational methods to ensure a dependable study. For dependability, the research process should be logical, explicit, and reproducible, with a detailed audit trail recommended (Baillie, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017; Stacey, 2019; Anderson et al., 2007). During this research, diligent records of all stages and decisions were maintained, involving a reflexive journal and detailed memos. Data was organised and analysed using ATLAS.ti 8, facilitating the storage of transcripts, recording the coding process, creating thematic maps, and formulation of final interpretations. This thorough documentation enhanced the study's trustworthiness.

In this study, to ensure transferability, I included detailed information about the research context, participants, and procedures, following the guidance of Levitt et al. (2013) and Anderson et al. (2007). Cope (2014) suggests that confirmability can be achieved by providing clear, detailed descriptions and supporting quotes from the data. Confirmability rests on establishing credibility, transferability, and dependability (Baillie, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017; Anderson et al., 2007). Detailed data descriptions and participant quotes were used to bolster confirmability. Authenticity was ensured through diligent data collection and maintenance of audit trails documenting participants' experiences. Additionally, I actively engaged with the data, verified all transcriptions, and maintained a comprehensive paper trail.

This study holds significant value for the Namibian context. The results contribute to the limited empirical knowledge base on perpetrators of violent crime in Namibia, which is helpful for researchers. It offers an in-depth descriptive and explanatory account of the personalities of offenders responsible for violent crimes. This unique perspective may enhance efforts to curb crime in Namibia by providing valuable information for professionals in Namibia's Justice, Safety and Security, and Health sectors, including NAMPOL, NCS, and the Court.

Six main themes emerged from the data analysis, and three sub-themes support each main theme. Chapter Five provided a detailed explanation of the results. Figure 6.4 presents these six main themes and their corresponding sub-themes.

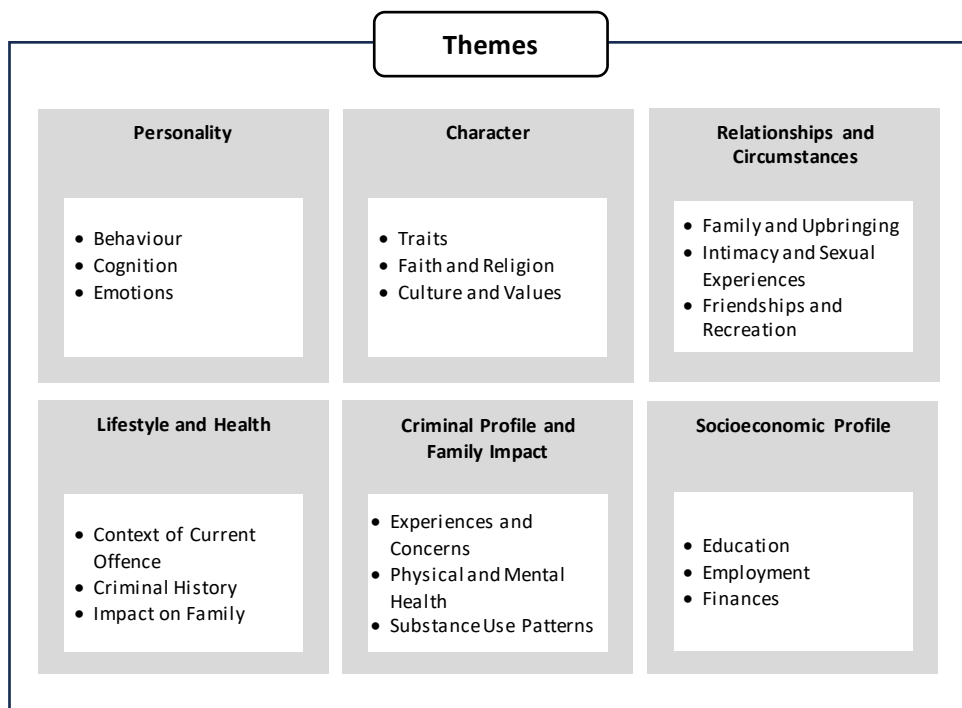


Figure 6.4
Themes and sub-themes

Brief observations

In Chapter One, I mentioned that my interest in the criminal mind and criminal behaviour emerged from personal tragedy. As I immersed myself in the data, I remained acutely aware of my personal, cultural, and historical biases. While searching for themes and analysing the data, I engaged in numerous discussions with colleagues from both academic and professional fields. I strived to remain true to what the data revealed and continuously checked my biases.

Initially, the only apparent similarity between the participants was that they were all non-White males who had committed markedly violent crimes. Nine were Black, and one was Coloured. One participant was a pensioner. These participants did not share a family, town, or school and had never known or met each other before sharing the same unit in the correctional facility. As I immersed myself in the data, interviewing, transcribing, and analysing, it became apparent that despite the participants' diverse backgrounds, their reasoning, approaching, managing, and responding to challenges were similar. I also realised that a similar value system shaped their worldviews and opinions. Additionally, it was evident that their significant others also processed the crimes committed by their loved ones and the impact on the family similarly. Another notable commonality was the participants' low level of education. These initial observations were crucial.

Overview of discussion

The diversity of the participants' backgrounds and the commonalities observed indicated that a combination of genetic and environmental factors most likely impacted the participants' criminal behaviour. Therefore, it was fitting to use a theoretical framework that examines the components of the offenders' environment that impact their development. Using heuristic models in research, such as Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecology of human development theory, is valuable in helping researchers to understand complex human problems (Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Scarpa & Trickett, 2022; Xia et al., 2019). Heuristic approaches enable the thorough examination of individuals by exploring how various factors, including family, neighbourhood, community, culture, and religion, influence the individual (Xia et al., 2019).

Influential components for these participants were immediate family, extended family, friendships, neighbourhood, school, religion, culture, the workplace, national policies, and laws. These components align with the environments that constitute the ecological systems described by Bronfenbrenner (1977) in the ecology theory of human development. These ecological systems include the people the offender interacts with, the environments in which they were born, raised, and lived, and elements in their environments. An individual's development is influenced by multiple aspects within the social settings they reside in or frequent as a participant, with the nature and degree of interaction between these settings being a vital precept of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory of human development (Liu et al., 2013; Logan et al., 2016; Padurariu et al., 2016).

Summary of the P-P-C-T model

According to Bronfenbrenner (1977; 1994), five nested environments make up the systems in which human beings exist. These systems include the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. Over time, the ecology of human development evolved into the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). The assertions are that human behaviour is reciprocally influenced by proximal processes between the individual's genetic disposition and environmental forces and the proximal processes between the individual, objects, and symbols in the environment (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa et al., 2022; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017).

The P-P-C-T model identifies four key components influencing human development through dynamic interactive relationships between individuals and their environment. 'Process' refers to these interactions, 'person' to the individual's characteristics, 'context' to the various environmental systems, and 'time' to the temporal dimension of development (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). The proximal processes between the individual, their environment and the quality of these relationships are essential influences. Person characteristics, context dimension, and time dimension all affect the direction and power of proximal processes and ultimately influence the developing individual (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa et al., 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Yubero et al., 2017).

Positive environmental circumstances may support the development of proximal processes. Turbulent circumstances, instability, and chaos in the individual's environment, such as family, schools, friends, and neighbourhood, may hinder the development of proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa et al., 2020; Yubero et al., 2017). The time dimension considers the continuity in ongoing episodes of proximal process, periodic episodes across wider time intervals, such as days and weeks. Time also encompasses how societal changes and events within and across generations affect proximal processes, human development outcomes, and how these processes affect events and society (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007).

Causes of violent crime

The causes of violent crime are multifaceted and can be understood by examining the factors identified by the P-P-C-T model. This model highlights the complex interplay of individual,

social, and environmental factors that contribute to the development and manifestation of violent behaviour (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Erickson et al., 2018; Huang et al., 2015; Sheng, 2020, 2023; Vass & Haj-Yahia, 2023; WHO, 2020). In addition, it is crucial to consider protective factors that can prevent violent crime. Protective factors refer to factors that protect young people from potential aggressive and delinquent behaviour even when they face multiple factors that place them at risk of developing such behaviour (Dick, Craig, et al., 2019; Farrington, Loeber, et al., 2012; Hall et al., 2012; Hall, 2012; Lösel & Farrington, 2012; Walters, 2020).

Layout of the Discussion

Throughout the research process, I kept the essential assertions and fundamental principles of the bioecological theory at the forefront (Tudge et al., 2016). I explored all four principal components of the P-P-C-T model in the participants' microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems. I deliberated on the impact the proximal processes embedded in each system had on the participants.

The historical and current context of Namibia and how this context influenced and continues to impact the offenders were considered throughout the discussion and formed the vantage point for the discussion. I discussed the microsystems and mesosystems, constituted by the family and the immediate environment in which the offenders exist. After that, I discussed the offenders' exosystems and macrosystems, largely constituted by cultural, religious, and institutional systems, and how these systems influence the offenders and their families. I formulated the identities constructed by the offenders and their significant others while remaining conscious of how proximal processes, their environmental systems, and time contributed to these identities.

The figure below illustrates the offenders' ecosystem and how it impacts and contributes to their identity formation. The results are discussed within the context depicted in Figure 6.5.

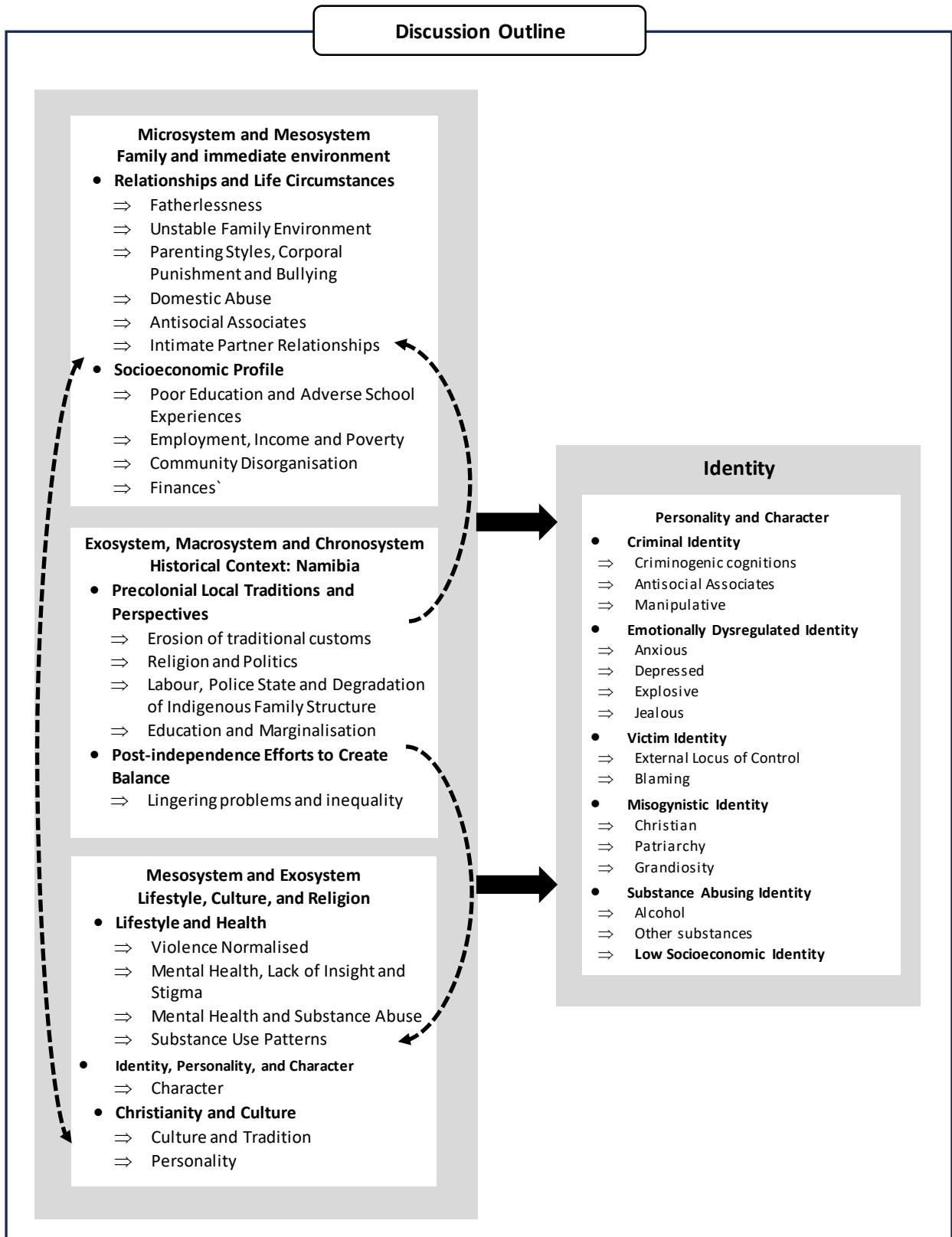


Figure 6.5
Outline of discussion

Offender Identity Formation: P-P-T-C Model

The participants were selected from the offenders in the maximum-security unit in Windhoek CF, which houses male offenders. Thus, there were no female offenders among the participants. The date of birth and the age of the offenders in 1990, when Namibia gained its independence, is significant. This provided insight into the participants' personal experiences of living in Namibia as Blacks and Coloureds during the apartheid era. Nine participants were Black, one was Coloured, and all were born before 1990. The participants' pseudonyms, birth year, age in 1990, hometown or region, and highest grade completed are presented in the table below.

Table 6.1

Offenders' demographics in 1990

Offender	Date of birth	Age in 1990	Rural or Urban	Region	Parents' income	Grade
Anthony	1986	6	Windhoek (city)	Khomas	Mother (unskilled)	10
Brandon	1987	3	Karasburg (farm)	South Karas	Farmers	10
Cleophas	1951	39	Ongandjera (village)	Omusati	Farmers	7 (St. 5)
David	1981	9	Orongo (village)	Omusati	Farmers	6 (st. 4)
Eliphas	1974	16	Otjiwarongo (town)	Otjzondjupa	Farmers	6 (st. 4)
Freddy	1971	19	Walvis Bay (town)	Erongo	Mother (Domestic)	5 (st. 3)
Gerson	1982	8	Stampriet (farm)	Hardap	Farmers	7 (st. 5)
Hannes	1975	15	Walvis Bay (town)	Erongo	Stepfather (railway)	10
			Otavi (town)	Otjzondjupa	Mother (unskilled)	
			Oshakati (Towns)	Oshana		
Ismael	1985	5	Uis & Okombahe (village & farm)	Erongo	Farmer	7 (St. 5)
Jacob	1975	15	Tses (village & farm)	Karas	Farmers	VTC

The Impact of Colonial and Apartheid Regimes on Violent Crime in Namibia

Historical context: Namibia (Macrosystem and Chronosystem)

The macrosystem encompasses the overarching institutional patterns of a culture or subculture, such as the economic, social, educational, legal, and political systems, which give rise to the concrete manifestations of microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; 1994; Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

As I stated in Chapter One, Namibia's historical circumstances of colonialism and apartheid resulted in significant inequality that persists among its people. The historical context includes the political milieu, national policies, institutions, culture, religion, and the opportunities and services available or restricted from people. This historical context, current context and proximal processes impacted the offenders' early development and subsequently influenced their

decisions and actions. The colonial and apartheid regimes in Namibia serve as examples of how historical events within the chronosystem can shape the development of violent crime. The oppressive policies and social divisions established during these periods have had lasting impacts on Namibian society, contributing to poverty, inequality, and social dislocation (Katjavivi, 1988; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Melber, 2003; Nampala, 2020; State University, n.d.-b). In turn, these factors have influenced the prevalence of violent crime in the country.

The enduring impact of colonial violence and social marginalisation in the criminal justice systems of South Africa and Namibia underscores the need to examine the connections between historical and intergenerational trauma and criminal behaviour. Both countries have faced long histories of colonial oppression and racial discrimination, creating profound and lasting trauma among indigenous populations (Adonis, 2016; Fourie & Benjamin, 2019; Nesiiah, 2019; Swartbooi, 2019). In South Africa and in Namibia, apartheid's legacy of institutionalised racism and state violence has deeply affected the Black communities, while in Namibia, colonisation by Germany and apartheid rule by South Africa have left significant scars on groups like the Herero and Nama people (Nesiiah, 2019; Swartbooi, 2019).

These historical and socioeconomic disparities and trauma caused by the historic experiences of apartheid have created environments ripe for violence and criminal behaviour, where trauma from past injustices influences current challenges (Adonis, 2016). Additionally, limited access to education, employment, and mental health services exacerbates these vulnerabilities, pushes people more towards criminality.

The offenders who participated in this study have been directly impacted through personal experiences and indirectly by their parents' experiences. Several crucial factors are discussed in the historical and current context. These factors encompass pre-colonial traditions of native Namibians, the impact of colonialism and apartheid, the erosion of traditional customs, land expropriation, income and wealth inequality, labour and the establishment of a police state, religion and the political system, education and marginalisation, and the post-independence landscape of Namibia (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Melber, 2003; Muurman, 2017; Namhila & Hillebrecht, 2023; Nampala, 2020; State University, n.d.-b).

Precolonial local traditions and perspectives

In pre-colonial Namibia, in the traditional communities, duties and expectations were delineated along gender lines. Women cared for children and domestic tasks, while men took charge of fields and livestock (Brasche, 2003; Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1989).

Customarily, men married at an older age and chose younger brides, who were viewed as more appealing (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1988). Humility, innocence, dutifulness, and subservience were valued and endorsed traits in brides, and men sought wives who exhibited these characteristics. Men were expected to maintain a homestead, provide for the family, and protect their wives and children. The norm was for men to be warriors, strong leaders, wealthy and able to care for multiple wives and children. Often, these patriarchal societies marginalised women, and these gender dynamics also existed in sexual relations (Alweendo et al., 2018; Brasche, 2003; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015; LAC, 2016; WHO, 2018).

Literature confirms that these patriarchal perspectives, culturally and societally influenced expectations remain widespread and may lead to viewing women as objects and contribute to gender-based violence (Alweendo et al., 2018; Brasche, 2003; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Indongo & Pazvakawambwa, 2015; Kaundjua et al., 2014; Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), 2016; Shilongo, 2011; Sinha et al., 2017). During the drafting of the Married Persons' Equality Bill in Namibia, the parliamentary debate caused a major uproar and conflicting emotions among parliamentarians and the nation (Becker, 2010; Shilongo, 2011). It required lengthy, highly controversial discussions in Namibian politics and society. That debate and gender equality debates in Africa reveal that most Namibians and Africans continually use African tradition and Christianity to defend the status quo of gender inequality (Becker, 2010; Cotton & Diala, 2018; Indongo & Pazvakawambwa, 2015; Shilongo, 2011). African tradition and Christianity were used to justify that men and women could never be equal and to maintain the inherent belief of male superiority and female inferiority. Often, such narratives remain even among the youth in Namibia (Becker, 2010; Kaundjua et al., 2014).

These prevalent gender dynamics and expectations of women to be subservient were also evident in the narratives of participants and their significant others. The excerpt from Ismael's narrative illustrates his beliefs and expectations regarding the roles of men and women:

. . . like cases like, if I talk about me... If a guy gets up and finds a strange woman in the field, rapes her and kills her, it's different. But when it happens that in the confines of a relationship where two people were in a relationship and kill each other, it is mostly the women who cause these things. Like if I look at it, my father had many women. He had many women and has children in many women. But all those women knew about each other. My mother them all knew about each other, but there was nothing about, . . . there was nothing

about jealousy . . . and the women of that time were like, if my man does that I will also do that. There was nothing like that. So, the women of that time used to respect their men and live under the man . . . so, the man, as the anchor of the house, he was respected. She respected him. But now women, when the man goes out the front door, she goes out the back door. . . So that thing, women, women should maybe be taught that thing very intensely, I think, that's what I think. Mmm, so that they stay with one man and respect him. Now there is no respect. Yes, and that is a big problem and it's from that that causes the killing, that's what causes it. (57:98)

Ismael blamed women for men's violence towards women, attributing it to their disrespect and refusal to accept men's infidelity. This perspective is shared by participants like Jacob, Anthony, and Eliphas, who expect women to be obedient and faithful while considering male infidelity as normal and acceptable.

Below, I discuss the cultural and customary changes that took place historically and impacted the traditional Namibian communities.

Erosion of traditional norms. Indigenous Namibians' traditional customs and social structures were based on kinship, with communal land ownership crucial in wealth and subsistence. This social structure was disrupted when Europeans introduced firearms trading, transforming local trade into a power struggle, which led to antagonistic relationships between Europeans, local leaders, and communities (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1989). This resulted in increased raiding, harsh taxes, inequality, and impoverishment of indigenous societies (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Nampala, 2020; Werner, 1993).

Upon gaining control, the Germans turned land and labour into commodities for wealth management (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017). This shift introduced a class structure and an ethnic-based classification of people and wealth, which persists in modern Namibia through derogatory views, tribalism, and racism among individuals. These antagonistic beliefs are deeply ingrained and pervasive in Namibian culture, as evidenced in the narratives of most participants. Most participants made derogatory and tribalist statements, often making racist remarks. There was a pervasive display of antipathy and disdain among the participants based on tribe and ethnicity.

For example, the CMO mentioned that Cleophas "likes to discriminate" (17:4) and recounted an incident in which Cleophas expressed his hatred for White people after biting an inmate (17:23). The participants also repeatedly mentioned the ethnicity of other offenders and the importance of "sticking together", highlighting nepotism and tribalism. The historical classification and divisiveness among groups persist in an antagonistic manner, as shown by Freddy's statement, "Truly, I was stabbing people, but I had not stabbed those guys who are my tribe like Damaras, Namas, Coloureds but I was stabbing the "Wamboe guys" (39:25). Hannes questioned how Damaras could commit heinous acts against each other, illustrating a sense of separation among ethnic groups.

Moreover, there is a prevalent belief in White superiority, with participants often mentioning that White people are better than Black people at most things. Participants like Ismael and Gerson are convinced that the apartheid government excelled at everything, including caring for inmates. Ismael is convinced, without personal experience or evidence, that correctional facilities were better during the "time of the Boers" (57:90). These pervasive beliefs are also influenced by the prevailing faith and religion-based values in Namibia.

Next, I discuss the influence of religion and the political history exerted on the participants below.

Religion and politics. Pre-colonial Namibia was marked by ethnic-centred religions, with each group holding its own beliefs and practices, valuing land, rain, and livestock. Rituals of thanksgiving and healing were performed, acknowledging a supreme God, the role of ancestors, and the power of good and evil spirits (Mbambo, 2000; Podolecka & White, 2021). When German and Finnish missionaries arrived, many community members converted to Christianity, attracted by European power, clothes, work, education, and civilisation (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Mbambo, 2000; Muurman, 2017). This led to the subversion of older institutions such as matrilineal kinship, polygamy, and kingship.

Duncan (1991) noted that the church reflected and justified societal divisions based on biblical principles, considered the 'will of God'. Religion was used to justify apartheid, and churches were divided and built around racial identity. The apartheid regime exploited the church, traditional leaders, and African culture's respect for elders and authority to provide migrant workers for its economy (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Likuwa and Shiweda, 2017; Podolecka & White, 2021). African traditional religion was labelled as paganism, heathenism,

primitive barbarism, and superstition and was banned, and most churches were built around racial identity and apartheid (Duncan, 1991; Mbambo, 1992; Podolecka & White; 2021).

Christianity enforced an all-or-nothing doctrine, compelling converts to denounce their customary spiritual beliefs and practices (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Cotton & Diala, 2018; Likuwa and Shiweda, 2017; Muurman, 2017; Podolecka & White, 2021). Church leadership and the omnipotent Calvinist God preached by Christian doctrine became synonymous with the authoritarian, White supremacist state, making religion a tool for enforcing obedience, fear, and control. This master-slave, obey-or-be-punished relationship of power and fear was passed down through generations. Many young people converted to Christianity out of obedience to their elders. Others converted solely to be accepted by the community, being viewed as good, not pagan. As a result, converts often hid many of their cultural customary practices. Today, most Namibians identify as Christians, yet cultural practices such as polygamy and visiting traditional healers continue, albeit secretly (Brasche, 2003; Cotton & Diala, 2018; Muurman, 2017; Podolecka & White, 2021).

This culture of secrecy has given rise to a tendency to conceal actions and shift responsibility, effectively evading accountability. For instance, several participants referred to themselves as Christians, and their significant others also referred to them as devout Christians, but their behaviour and personal accounts revealed friendships, behaviour and lifestyles associated with criminality. For instance, Anthony's parents said he was a good Christian who actively participated in the church community and was a choir member. Yet his adherence to Christian principles was inconsistent in most aspects of his life, based on Anthony's account. This is equally evident in Gerson, who referred to himself as a faithful Christian with the gift of healing.

Patriarchy had a significant influence on and reinforced societal masculinity ideals, even through religious texts like the Christian Bible (Baloyi, 2014; Modise & Wood, 2016). Conservative Christians trust the biblical perspectives of God as the Father. The Christian God as a male figure and the trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are considered sacred and divine. Traditionalist Christians believe God created men as the heads and women as subordinate to men (Dogo, 2014; Sikweyiya et al., 2020; Sumerau et al., 2015; H. J. Wood, 2019). Furthermore, biblically, different responsibilities are assigned to men and women, which forms part of the factors that ensured the rise of patriarchy (Kaundjua et al., 2014; Sikweyiya et al., 2020; H. J. Wood, 2019). Also, there are idioms and sayings found within various indigenous groups that, unfortunately, normalise the idea of male superiority and female submission and normalise wife-beating within African

marriages (Baloyi, 2014; Blaydes, 2015; Sikweyiya et al., 2020; H. J. Wood, 2019). As mentioned in numerous studies, these patriarchal beliefs remain ingrained in the culture of African societies, including Namibia (Brasche, 2003; Cotton & Diala, 2021; Dogo, 2014; Muurman, 2017; Podolecka & White; 2021; Sikweyiya et al., 2020; Sumerau et al., 2015; H. J. Wood, 2019). This is also evidenced by the opinions expressed by the participants, such as Ismael (57:98), regarding his opinion of women and the causes of GBV.

The fundamental principle of Christianity revolves around the concept of sin and forgiveness. According to Christian theology, sin, a perceived wrong, is a transgression of divine law against God and separates man from God (Brodar et al., 2015; Fincham & May, 2021b, 2021a). Forgiveness is the process by which God grants pardon for sins, allowing individuals to be reconciled with Him and experience spiritual renewal, it involves acknowledging and forgiving others and confessing personal sins (Brodar et al., 2015; Buju & Jugrin, 2021; Fincham & May, 2021b; Słowikowski, 2020; Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013). There is forgiveness from God, forgiveness by the victim and self-forgiveness (Brodar et al., 2015; Słowikowski, 2020; Woodyatt and Wenzel, 2013). There exists a distinction between “pseudo self-forgiveness” and “genuine self-forgiveness” which involves genuine self-forgiveness and efforts to change and “pseudo self-forgiveness”, which involves defensive processing of failures, denial of bad behaviour, and justifying of transgressions (Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013).

The belief that all humans are inherently sinful and need forgiveness can shape individuals' self-concept and behaviour, potentially influencing criminal activity (Hood, 2013). Recognising one's sinful nature, the need for forgiveness, and practising forgiveness for transgressions can lead to the development of humility and empathy in individuals (Buju & Jugrin, 2021; Fincham & May, 2021b, 2021a). This self-awareness can foster a sense of responsibility for one's actions and promote moral and ethical behaviour, decreasing criminogenic cognitions and behaviour. Furthermore, the experience of forgiveness, whether divine or interpersonal, can positively impact mental health by reducing negative emotions such as guilt, shame, and anger (Fehr et al., 2011; Fincham & May, 2021b; Krause, 2017). However, an excessive focus on sinfulness can also negatively affect an individual's self-esteem and self-worth (Hood, 2013). In some cases, this may result in feelings of guilt or shame, potentially leading to self-destructive behaviours and potentially criminal activity (Blagden et al., 2020; Brodar et al., 2015; Buju & Jugrin, 2021; Fincham & May, 2021b, 2021a; Moore et al., 2016; Tracy et al., 2007). Religion can be utilised to rationalise and justify offending behaviour, which may have criminogenic properties

and cognitive distortions that normalise criminal behaviour (Knabb et al., 2012; Topalli et al., 2012).

Allport and Ross (1967), as quoted in Marcinechová and Záhorcová (2020), classified religious motivation into two categories, extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation views religion as a self-serving tool, where religious engagement is driven by pragmatic or utilitarian objectives and self-interest. In contrast, intrinsic motivation regards religion as a valuable end, worth pursuing, independent of any other potential benefits. This concept of motivation links with the concept of locus of control, originally proposed by Rotter (1966). Locus of control refers to the extent to which individuals perceive events in their lives as the result of their actions or external factors beyond their control. An external locus of control, like extrinsic motivation, is characterised by the belief that one's life is primarily determined by external factors such as fate, chance, or powerful others (Felson & Kreager, 2015; Rotter, 1966). Individuals with an external locus of control typically respond reactively to external situations and believe that the outcomes in their lives result from factors beyond their influence (VandenBos, 2015). This perception can have significant implications for criminal behaviour, particularly when combined with the Christian principles of sin and forgiveness.

Individuals with a high external locus of control may be more likely to engage in criminal activities because they perceive that their actions are not entirely within their control, and they may feel less responsible for the consequences of their behaviour (Felson & Kreager, 2015). In this context of sin and forgiveness, these individuals may rely more heavily on divine intervention, believing that their transgressions are part of a predetermined plan and that a higher power will ultimately grant forgiveness. Moreover, the concept of forgiveness within Christianity might further reinforce an external locus of control, as individuals may attribute their ability to change or overcome sinful behaviour to divine grace rather than personal effort (Nelissen & Zeelenberg, 2009). This reliance on external forces for forgiveness and change could potentially undermine an individual's sense of personal agency and accountability, exacerbating the likelihood of criminal behaviour. Sin is seen as the work of the devil and the weak flesh, forgiveness is sought and seen as a means of redemption, and once the sinner is absolved from sin, this clean slate provides an opportunity to sin once again.

This phenomenon was evident in the narratives of some of the participants. The devil became the scapegoat for transgressions. Unseen evil forces like demons and the devil were blamed for the participants' crimes, while God was credited and thanked for good things. Hannes

mentioned that it is God's will for him to be incarcerated so that he may fulfil his purpose of being used in the facility. Brandon believes God permitted this to happen. Eliphas' statement that the victim is in heaven like his deceased child also exemplified this phenomenon. Furthermore, David and Cleophas mentioned that they believed they could not have done the crimes and attributed their behaviour to the devil.

As I explained above, culture, faith, and religion, particularly Christianity, are essential to the Namibian context. Hence, it was a significant part of the participants' and their significant others' narratives. Thus, it impacted their collective and individual value system and identity. In the subsequent section, I discuss the impact of colonialism on the traditional family structure and customs of the indigenous Namibians.

Labour, police state, and degradation of indigenous family structure. During the colonial rule of the Germans and the South African Apartheid state in Namibia, as mentioned in Chapter One, the expropriation of land for White settlers required a significant workforce of Black labourers. This led to the development of a migrant labour system that supplied cheap, Black labourers, primarily composed of men from the Ovambo ethnic group. The Police Zones and Pass laws were implemented to control the movements of Black people. Pass refers to the permit carried by Black individuals as proof of their legitimate right to be in the Police Zones (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Katjavivi, 1975; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Siiskonen, 1994). Police Zones were areas established in the early 20th century by the German colonial rulers and continued by the apartheid administration to maintain effective police control (O'Callaghan, 1977; Zollman, 2011). These Police Zones covered approximately 60% of the territory and were where European settlers owned land. The only parts not part of the Police Zones were the northern periphery of the country, parts of the Kalahari and the Namib desert. Smaller indigenous groups such as the Hereros and the Damaras still lived in these areas, but the largest group in the north, Ovambo, lived outside of the police zones.

Whites were prohibited from entering the north, and the indigenous groups of the north were only allowed to enter the Police Zone when they had a Pass card identifying them and showing permission to work there for a specified time (O'Callaghan, 1977; Zollmann, 2011). As a result, masses of Black men migrated to work in various industries, while women primarily became domestic servants for Whites (Katjavivi, 1988; State University, n.d.-a). Two participants had first-hand experience of these circumstances. Cleophas was a migrant labourer who endured inhumane conditions, deprivation of freedom, and emotional and physical abuse. Eliphas was

forced to inflict harm on people and witnessed torture in the South-West African army in which he was enlisted. Corporal punishment was frequently used, especially for migrant workers, and violence and brutality were common (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Moore et al., 2021).

The slave-master dynamic during this era and the violation of human rights left Black Namibians feeling frustrated, angry, and defenceless. Contract labourers spent their downtime and meagre wages on alcohol, and a disturbing rise in alcohol abuse in the northern region was documented (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Siiskonen, 1994). The increased use of alcohol could likely have been a coping mechanism for the increased powerlessness and difficult circumstances. Migrant workers had no other means of relaxation, were oppressed, and had no emotional outlet or support. Alcohol abuse became ingrained in the culture and persisted across generations (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Siiskonen, 1994). Recent research shows that Namibian and South African men admit to using alcohol to relax and as a coping mechanism, although they know alcohol fuels aggressive acts by inhibiting their judgement (FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015). Alcohol abuse is consistently linked to the degradation of society, GBV, abuse, trauma, and crime (Ndjibu et al., 2017, 2018; Shikongo, 2017; UNDOC, 2019).

The brutality of the migrant labour system led to the deaths of an unknown number of men, leaving women as single parents (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017). The women who were not widowed were still left alone as men were away due to their migrant labour contracts. Thus, women raising children alone became normalised in Black communities. Without formal education or work opportunities, many women resorted to selling home-brewed alcohol to support their families (Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Niikondo, 2010; Siiskonen, 1994). Alcohol abuse increased, not only among the migrant labourers but also in the rural areas as alcohol outlets called “cuca-shops” increased (Siiskonen, 1994).

Extended separations between spouses and the circumstances of the imposed migrant labour system that eroded moral values also contributed to extramarital affairs and single-mother households. Migrant workers impregnated women in police zones during their contracts and then abandoned them upon returning home, further damaging indigenous families and societal and cultural norms. Labour migration led to social and economic challenges and many lasting repercussions on families that extended beyond the end of the contract labour system and independence (Niikondo, 2010). After Namibia gained independence and the migrant labour system ended, the men started bringing their families to the small single quarters where they lived and worked (Niikondo, 2010). This led to significant overcrowding of the single quarters,

increased shack dwellings, poverty, and significant social and health concerns. The policies of the colonial system adversely impacted the Namibian people, relationships and family.

As evidenced by the results of this study, similarly, most participants and their significant others reported a history of binge drinking and increased aggression when intoxicated. Alcohol use and abuse also remain significant aspects of downtime and entertainment, as it was for migrant workers. Emotional regulation and anger management challenges among participants were also prevalent and may have contributed to tension, aggression, and violence. Single-mother households, a long-lasting consequence of the migrant labour system, contribute to poverty and are linked to crime, school dropouts, and low education (Amato, 2005; Niikondo, 2010; OPHI, 2018; UNICEF, 2021).

Broken homes led to children growing up without role models. Remnants of this impact on Black society in Namibia remain evident. Six men in this study grew up without fathers, and David's mother and Freddy's mother sold alcohol at home to supplement their income. Extramarital relationships, absent fathers, and alcohol abuse became commonplace, with most participants, Jacob, Ismael, Gerson, Anthony, and Eliphas, having multiple children by different women. The other participants also admit to having multiple relationships at the same time, thus normalising infidelity.

Evidenced by the factors I discussed above; the participants were influenced by their upbringing and family history. I continue the discussion by looking at the macrosystem and chronosystem, how the history of marginalisation potentially impacted Namibians as a nation and how this may have impacted the group of men who participated in this study.

Education and marginalisation. Education is a crucial factor in understanding violent crime. Low educational achievement has been linked to a higher likelihood of engaging in criminal behaviour, whereas improved education has been shown to decrease violence and homicide rates within communities (UNDOC, 2019). Poor educational experiences can hinder the development of prosocial skills and contribute to frustration and alienation, increasing the likelihood of violent behaviour. In the PPCT model, education can be considered a part of the microsystem, as it represents the direct environment in which individuals spend a significant amount of time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Eriksson et al., 2018; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Poppa et al., 2022; Yubero et al., 2017). Hence, historical factors that influence society can have both indirect and direct effects on individuals.

In the early 20th century, the church initiated basic education for native populations. Initially, they were only taught German and the Bible and later, a basic four-year education was introduced for Black children (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Education Encyclopaedia, n.d. a; Katjavivi, 1989; O'Callaghan, 1977). In Chapter One, I explain that Bantu education indoctrinated Blacks to accept their inferior status. Factors such as unaffordable school fees, large classes, lack of teachers, inadequately trained teachers, corporal punishment, verbal abuse, Afrikaans as a medium of education, and limited subject choices hampered the education, career options, and advancement of native populations (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977; State University, n.d.-a).

After independence, English became the national language despite being spoken by only about 7.0% of the population and being the mother tongue of just 0.8% (Education Encyclopaedia, n.d. b; Frydman, 2011). Black children, already disadvantaged and lagging academically due to apartheid, were required to study in another foreign language. The South African syllabus was replaced by the Cambridge Local International GCSE syllabus in 1994, but addressing other challenges, such as under-qualified teachers, poor discipline in schools, and inadequate resources, took much longer, especially in rural areas (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002).

The systematic, institutionalised oppression in the education system was a powerful means of controlling and subduing Black Namibians (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015; Reshad, 2021; World Bank, 2023). The remnants of this oppression remain evident today and will take several generations to heal. As the literature suggests, impoverished communities, mainly in rural areas in Namibia, encounter significant challenges related to education (Howell & Elliott, 2018; International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2015; Keeley et al., 2017; Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2014).

The participants in this study have been affected by the education system in Namibia, both before and after independence. Most of them hail from impoverished rural areas. Seven participants initiated their education before independence in schools where Afrikaans was the primary medium of instruction, and they faced ongoing challenges during and after the transition to independence. The consequences of Bantu education and the difficulties associated with the transition had an impact on them and their parents throughout this period. Apart from one participant, all are more proficient in Afrikaans than in English.

Recognising the profound impact of educational challenges on both the nation and the participants, it is important to acknowledge the substantial efforts made by the Namibian

government to enhance the education system following independence. These efforts led to significant improvements, including increased access to education, as I detailed in Chapter One. In the subsequent section, I highlight the changes the Namibian government made, the challenges that remain, and how these continue to impact Namibia as a nation and particularly, these participants.

Post-independence: Efforts to create balance

Lingering problems and inequality. As explained in Chapter One, since independence, the Namibian government's efforts to promote equality and redistribute wealth included the introduction of the National Equitable Economic Empowerment Framework (NEEEF). NEEEF aimed to enact policies and programmes to advance previously disadvantaged people and ensure a balanced redistribution of wealth and resources (Melber, 2021; Mundia et al., 2021; Office of the Prime Minister, 2023). The strategies were designed to promote equal representation of individuals from all racial and gender backgrounds in the workforce, with a particular emphasis on advancing opportunities for previously disadvantaged individuals at the management level. Additionally, the focus was on enhancing the skills of these groups to improve their employability and to encourage entrepreneurship as a means of driving economic advancement. NEEEF also concentrated on creating favourable conditions for the establishment of new businesses, providing development funding, investing in local communities to support their growth, and implementing initiatives aimed at stimulating local economies (Melber, 2021; Mundia et al., 2021; NEEEF, 2018; OPM, 2023).

After multiple reviews and amendments, NEEEF was endorsed by the cabinet in 2020 but still awaits cabinet approval (Bertelsmann, 2022; World Bank Group, 2021). However, numerous small businesses had already experienced positive outcomes from the NEEEF policies, and property transactions were effectively regulated, largely adhering to established standards. Nevertheless, NEEEF encountered both successes and bottlenecks, including the emergence of a new Black elite who used NEEEF for corrupt purposes to further their personal interests. This corruption effectively sustained the skewed income distribution in Namibia, resulting in a persistently high level of inequality, even though the demographic composition of the wealthy minority shifted from White to Black (Bertelsmann, 2022; Melber, 2021; National Planning Commission (NPC), 2020; World Bank, 2023).

In addition to the rise of the Black elite, several other problems that cause bottlenecks at the grassroots level exist (Matengu et al., 2022; Mundia et al., 2021). Feedback from critiques and

the public opinions reported in local news since independence is the perception that only certain communities have benefitted from the community investment aspect of NEEEF (Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), 2016; New Era, 2016c). Bottlenecks include a lack of specific policy measures to guide promoting grassroots innovation and the lack of technology in SMEs to invest in marketing strategies to boost their businesses (IPPR, 2016; Matengu et al., 2022; Mundia et al., 2021; New Era, 2016c). Small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs often lack essential skills, such as bookkeeping and proposal writing. This deficiency in skills, coupled with limited opportunities for skills training, hinders their ability to access resources such as capital for financing. Consequently, previously disadvantaged individuals frequently face challenges in securing the capital required to initiate their own businesses or acquire ownership shares in existing enterprises (IPPR, 2016; Matengu et al., 2022; Mundia et al., 2021; New Era, 2016c).

NEEEF (2023) reports that most businesses in Namibia fall into two categories: foreign-owned companies operating through franchises or partnerships in Namibia and locally owned businesses that regrettably exhibit 100% non-compliance with any existing Affirmative Action Compliance regulations. Despite the efforts of NEEF, the economic situation currently in Namibia is such that 95% of the socioeconomic power still primarily belongs to 5% of the previously advantaged Namibian population (NEEEF, 2023). Consequently, these challenges persist and, unfortunately, impact a wide cross-section of Namibians, including the participants of this study.

Furthermore, inequality in Namibia persists partly due to land reform focusing solely on redistribution without addressing the wealth accumulated by White settlers on land expropriated before independence (Lenggenhager et al., 2021). Consequently, independent Namibia continues to exhibit a substantial gap between the rich and poor, with one of the highest inequality rates globally (Brasche, 2003; NPC, 2020; UNICEF, 2021; World Bank, 2023). According to UNICEF (2021), most people in Namibia work in low-productivity sectors such as agriculture, forestry, and fishing. Consequently, poverty and inequality reduction rates are slow, with a 33.4% unemployment rate in 2018, primarily concentrated in rural areas (UNICEF, 2021).

Aligned with these statistics, most of the men in this study worked in the agriculture industry, historically plagued by unemployment. Demographic groups particularly vulnerable to poverty in Namibia include female-headed households, less educated individuals, larger families, children, the elderly, and subsistence farming labourers (NSA, 2018; UNICEF, 2021). All the participants in this study belong to these categories and have experienced the impacts of poverty. They have mentioned periods of unemployment, lack of skills, inadequate education, and low

income in their narratives. Additionally, six participants were brought up in single-parent, female-headed households under challenging economic conditions, with most of them receiving support from elderly grandparents who also lived in poverty.

Poverty has consistently been associated with adverse socioeconomic conditions, the breakdown of families and communities, a rise in violent crime, increased alcohol abuse, and mental health issues. Living in impoverished conditions often amplifies frustration and hopelessness, which may lead to heightened levels of aggression (Blair et al., 2019; de Courson & Nettle, 2021; Frank et al., 2019; Kauari & Kaundjua, 2015; LAC, 2016; Mitonga et al., 2017; UNDP, 2022). Disadvantaged neighbourhoods typically lack resources and opportunities for their residents, which can contribute to the development of criminal behaviour. In the context of the P-C-T model, poverty can be considered an exosystem factor, as it indirectly affects individuals through the environments in which they live. The historical aspects of Namibia have played a role in placing these participants in disadvantaged and impoverished positions.

De Courson and Nettle (2021) conducted research to understand why high inequality and deprivation can lead to a threshold of desperation, resulting in high crime rates and low societal trust. They found that individuals near the desperation threshold tend to engage in exploitative behaviours. Moreover, those who have crossed this threshold continue to engage in such exploitative actions, even when there is a high probability of severe punishment for their actions (de Courson & Nettle, 2021; World Bank, 2019). Violence can stem from adverse socioeconomic and environmental circumstances that threaten survival, economic hardship, structural inequalities, environmental deterioration, and deficiencies in governance (de Courson & Nettle, 2021; Evans & Kelikume, 2019; World Bank Group, 2021).

According to de Courson and Nettle (2021), in populations with significant resource inequality, a rapid evolution of low trust and zero cooperation occurs. This means that desperate individuals tend to exploit others, while non-desperate individuals avoid interaction altogether. Other research has also shown a positive correlation between crime rates and inequality. This correlation indicates that higher inequality increases crime rates, even when controlling for other factors influencing crime. Additionally, both income inequality and the unemployment rate have been found to increase the crime rate (Anser et al., 2020; de Courson & Nettle, 2021; Evans & Kelikume, 2019; Haque & Muniruzzaman, 2020; Howell & Elliott, 2018; International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2015; Keeley, 2015; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015; World Bank Group, 2021).

Likewise, the experience of economic hardship during upbringing and exposure to adverse circumstances within the community and family may explain the recurring criminal behaviour seen in the criminal records of several participants, including Cleophas, Anthony, and Freddy. These individuals continued to engage in criminal activities, putting themselves at risk of incarceration. Particularly, Freddy's criminal record revealed a pattern of repeat offences, even in the face of the risk of punishment. Anthony, Jacob, and Gerson also had multiple law violations, showing that they were not deterred by the potential for punishment and incarceration.

After examining the historical context of the Namibian nation and its impact on the participants and their parents from a macrosystem and chronosystem perspective, I delved into how the immediate environments and proximal processes within the microsystem and mesosystem have affected the participants.

Family and Immediate Environment (Microsystem and Mesosystem)

The bioecological theory emphasises the interrelatedness of individual development within various environmental systems. The microsystem encompasses the most immediate environmental context, it contains the individual and their immediate environment, such as parents and home, including family, peers, school, and neighbourhood (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Crawford, 2020; Eriksson et al., 2018; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). Data analysis uncovered several themes highlighting the influence of family and immediate environment on the participants' identity formation and behaviour. These themes are relationships and life circumstances, socioeconomic profile, and lifestyle and health. I discuss these themes in this order by detailing the most impactful aspects of each theme. I also refer to the main research questions addressed by these themes.

The most prominent, impactful factors under relationships and life circumstances which are fatherlessness and instability in the family environment are addressed first. Growing up in a household without a father or a male role model or being exposed to negative male role models or harmful factors such as domestic violence or abuse may adversely impact children (Ashari, 2017; Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Buschlen et al., 2018; Cheruvalath & Tripathi, 2015; Espelage, 2014; Mills-Koonce et al., 2016; Robinson & Searcy, 2017; St. John & Tarullo, 2020; Zvara et al., 2020).

Relationships and life circumstances

This theme is particularly relevant in examining the participants' family backgrounds, primary environments and lifestyles, key relationships, personal experiences, and proximal processes. Furthermore, it explores how these factors influenced the offenders and shaped their identities. The theme encompasses the offenders' relationships with family, friends, and intimate partners, as well as their living environments and experiences. It aims to answer three sub-questions:

- What kinds of relationships have offenders had in the past, and have in the present?
- In what ways have offenders affected the lives of their significant others?
- How have offenders' life experiences influenced their behaviour?

Fatherlessness. Historical context in Namibia suggests that the phenomena of migrant labour and displacement of families played a significant role in shaping family structures (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Katjavivi, 1988; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Siiskonen, 1994). The absence of a father figure is a common issue in Namibia, often attributed to migrant labour and family displacement. Family plays a crucial role in an individual's development and adverse events that disrupt family may contribute to the likelihood of violent behaviour (Hay et al., 2014; Niv et al., 2013; Simmons et al., 2018; Tien et al., 2020; van Hazebroek et al., 2019; Waltes et al., 2016). The participants' backgrounds reveal several similarities, most notably that most grew up in single-parent households. Six participants, Anthony, Eliphas, Freddy, Gerson, Hannes, and Ismael were raised by single mothers, most with support from one or both grandparents. One participant, David was raised by an uncle.

Fatherlessness adversely impacts well-being. The consequence of men leaving their homes to work in police zones resulted in broken families, fatherless children, and female-headed households and increased alcohol abuse (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Katjavivi, 1988; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Siiskonen, 1994). This phenomenon continues to impact Namibian families.

The normalisation of men leaving their homes and migrating to urban areas for work resulted in increased congestion in informal settlements like the single quarters in Windhoek (Niikondo, 2010). Overcrowding contributed to various social and health problems, including unemployment and poverty. David, Cleophas, and Eliphas migrated to Windhoek in search of employment. Cleophas left his wife and children to remain in the north, and he worked as a migrant labourer in Windhoek, living in the single quarters. Cleophas's history fits that of the

typical pattern for migrant labourers as he also remained married while engaging in extramarital relationships in the places where he worked.

Single-mother-headed households in Namibia, particularly in rural areas, are more susceptible to poverty (UNICEF, 2021). Most participants grew up in low-income, rural households.

Fatherless children may also face academic disadvantages. Research indicates that the absence of fathers from the household and co-residence with grandparents is associated with adverse outcomes for children, including lower academic attainment and an increased likelihood of dropping out of school (Buschlen et al., 2018; Radl et al., 2017). Freddy and Gerson were both raised by single parents who also relied on grandparents and helped look after grandparents. Freddy often had to take care of his grandmother, who required palliative care.

Consistent with existing literature, these participants faced social, behavioural, and emotional challenges that often resulted in them dropping out of school prematurely. All of those raised by single parents exhibited low academic attainment. David, Ismael, and Freddy left school during primary education, while Gerson and Elphas progressed to high school but did not advance beyond grade 9. Anthony and Hannes reached grade 10 but did not complete it, primarily due to behavioural issues. Notably, Jacob, who was raised in a household with both parents as a married couple, is the only one among the participants who completed grade 12. Brandon, also raised by a married couple, reached grade 10 but failed to complete it, mainly due to adverse home conditions. Cleophas did not attend high school because he experienced Bantu education under the apartheid state.

Growing up without both parents in the home may also have detrimental, lasting negative imprints on children, including anger, fear, aggression, depression, and despair (Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Buschlen et al., 2018). The boys may become confused and not fit in well in school and society, identifying with peers from similar circumstances (Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Robinson & Searcy, 2017). This places them at high risk of associating with delinquent peers.

All the participants in this study, including those with stepfathers, expressed a desire for a male role model and a need to connect with a male figure, especially their biological fathers. For instance, Hannes longed for his biological father, even though he also valued his relationship with his stepfather. Anthony and Elphas, who did not have close relationships with their biological

fathers due to not being raised by them, still felt a connection to their fathers through the stories and information they had heard about them. The absence of male role models had a significant impact on the lives of these participants.

Emotional stability may have been impacted, and their capacity for emotional expression and well-being may also have been impacted by growing up without a male role model. This may have a negative effect on a young boy's development and his understanding of self and identity (Ashari, 2017; Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Buschlen et al., 2018; Cheruvalath & Tripathi, 2015; Robinson & Searcy, 2017). Negative emotionality and at-risk behavioural tendencies are also associated with boys who grow up without male role models. As reiterated, another critical aspect affected by fatherlessness is social behaviour. Thus, boys may turn to negative male role models in their communities or peers, perpetuating harmful behaviours and attitudes towards masculinity. Namibia's cultural beliefs and societal norms can worsen the effects of fatherlessness and single-mother households by reinforcing male dominance and unequal power dynamics in relationships.

In Namibian society, traditional gender norms reinforce gender inequality by rewarding masculine behaviour and devaluing feminine behaviour, resulting in a power imbalance between genders. These norms are linked to masculinity, suggesting that it is seen as an inherent aspect of male behaviour, often associated with aggression and violence. Consequently, these norms play a significant role in the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) in Namibia. (Alweendo et al., 2018; Ambunda & de Klerk, 2008; Davoodi et al., 2019; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; Sinha, 2017; van Anders et al., 2022). As fatherless children, these participants, in their search for male role models may have been influenced by these prevalent societal gender norms.

Parenting is a role ideally shared between two parties and the loss of one parent's role, fathering or mothering, causes inequality to the child psychologically in areas such as affection, emotion, and behaviour (Ashari, 2017; Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Buschlen et al., 2018; Gunn, n.d.). The absence of a father also impacts a male child's ability to form and maintain healthy relationships, especially with intimate partners. Boys growing up without a father may have difficulty understanding the dynamics of healthy relationships, leading to issues such as infidelity, domestic violence, and emotional instability. Without a father figure, male children may be more likely to suffer depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, engage in risky behaviours, such as substance abuse, criminal activities, and aggressive conduct (Ashari, 2017; Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Buschlen et al., 2018; Gunn, n.d.; McLanahan et al., 2013; Radl et al., 2017). As evidenced by the

relationship history of these participants, none of them were able to maintain successful intimate relationships.

Most participants expressed mixed feelings about their fathers' lifestyles and the examples they provided them. They expressed that the examples provided by their fathers were not good, yet they followed these examples as the example of masculinity. These men know that their fathers' traits are negative yet insist they are alike. These factors may be linked to genetic predispositions, their association with similar peers, and the environment they had been exposed to. Generally, it appears that these men's impressions of being male involve being explosive, aggressive, unavailable, and abusing alcohol. I elaborate further on this factor below.

Genetic predisposition and environmental factors. The impact of father figures, whether present or absent, was noteworthy among the participants. As I mentioned above, several participants identified with their fathers and stressed their similarities with their fathers. This was also evident with participants who had never met or had a relationship with their biological fathers. The similarities between offenders and their fathers were not only mentioned by the participants themselves but also by their significant others. This increases the likelihood that some similarities may be attributed to genetics.

Genetics play a significant role in predisposing certain individuals towards criminality because aggressive antisocial behaviour has high heritability (Beaver, 2009; Carroll et al., 2021; C. J. Ferguson & Niv et al., 2013; Tuvblad et al., 2014, 2016, 2017). Studies suggest that genetics can account for up to 50% of the variation in criminal behaviour, and over 50% of psychopathic behaviour is attributed to genetics and less environmental (C. J. Ferguson & Beaver, 2009; Niv et al., 2013; Tuvblad et al., 2014, 2016, 2017). Inheriting the stable, heritable trait of antisocial behaviour leaves a child more likely to develop this behaviour once the environmental circumstances are conducive to perpetuating the development of antisocial behaviour (Gard et al., 2019). Facing adversity, such as poverty or a difficult upbringing, in combination with a genetic predisposition, can predict a range of antisocial behaviours. This predisposition may manifest as outward actions like delinquency, inward behaviours like depression, challenges in forming peer relationships, involvement in criminal activities, and acts of violence and aggression (Gard et al., 2019; Hay et al., 2014; Tien et al., 2020; van Hazebroek et al., 2019; Waltes et al., 2016).

Family plays a critical role in an individual's development and can contribute to the likelihood of violent behaviour. Anthony met his stepfather, a good role model, when he was already an adult. His biological father did not raise him, nor did they have a relationship. Yet,

Anthony mentioned that he is "a player" and drinks "a little bit too much" (2:83), just like his biological father. Brandon's father was an alcoholic, aggressive, and physically abusive, and violent. Brandon said that when he drinks, he does not want to stop drinking, and he becomes aggressive and violent like his father when intoxicated. He admitted that alcohol negatively impacted his relationships (12:38).

For example, Hannes' mother mentioned that his behaviour was exactly like the behaviour of his abusive stepfather (53:6). She was married to Hannes' younger brother's father, an abusive drug addict, before marrying her current husband when Hannes was approximately six. She believes that the abuse and adverse living circumstances early in his development impacted Hannes. Hannes's mother and stepfather assert that Hannes's character is exactly like his abusive stepfather, her ex-husband. However, Hannes' mother also mentioned that before her first marriage, when she was with Hannes' biological father, her life had also been very difficult, and she left him because he was also abusive. Thus, Hannes' biological father was also an addict and abusive, prone to aggression and violence. Therefore, Hannes' behaviour may be attributed to an interplay of genetics, early exposure to violent behaviour and trauma induced by abuse (by his biological father and first stepfather), and modelled substance abuse. His current stepfather arrived when he was six, and his intervention may have mitigated other potential negative outcomes, but not all.

Hannes's aggressive and delinquent behaviour could also be linked to a motor vehicle accident he was involved in during primary school. He suffered head trauma, and this may have potentially led to a traumatic brain injury (TBI), that may have impacted his behaviour. This was never formally investigated, and a link between his trauma, conduct problems and drug addiction was never established. However, there is a likelihood that it may have impacted him. His stepfather asserted that he may have been affected and Hannes also mentioned that apart from missing many months in school due to rehabilitation, he could never fully adapt after the motor vehicle accident.

Some individuals could develop behavioural disorders during adulthood due to a TBI sustained during childhood. The severity of these behavioural issues tends to be more pronounced if the injury occurred during childhood. The initial TBI can damage brain regions responsible for emotion regulation and impulse control, leading to reduced self-control, increased aggression, and impulsivity. Impairments in brain regions can be related to decision-making and social skills. These impairments in decision-making and emotional control can contribute to

problematic behaviours, including aggression and antisocial conduct (Ferguson et al., 2012; Li & Liu, 2012; Padurariu et al., 2016; Ray & Richardson, 2017).

When examining the other participants, it's conceivable that they could have inherited genetic predispositions from their parents and been influenced by their environment. For instance, Eliphas mentioned that his father had 27 children, and he liked women just as much as his father, and he had 19 children. Eliphas served in the South West African army and witnessed traumatising atrocities, exposing him to violence and trauma. Cleophas is married but has been involved in numerous extramarital relationships. He, too, experienced significant violence and trauma as a migrant labourer before Namibia's independence.

The literature explains that aggressive and violent behaviour is influenced and perpetuated by a combination of personal predispositions and situational factors. When raised in environments with minimal supervision and exposure to violence, children who are genetically predisposed to aggressive behaviour may develop and reinforce habitual aggression over time, ultimately making it part of their normal behavioural repertoire (Allen & Anderson, 2017a,b; Huesmann, 2017; Huesmann et al., 2016; Kamaluddin et al., 2015; Padurariu, 2016; Qadeer et al., 2021; Van de Giessen, 2014; Wrangham, 2018). Habitual aggression during childhood can serve as an indicator of such behaviour later in life.

Having looked at the impact of the absence of a father figure or role male model on the participants and the impact of the genetics on the participants' identity and their behaviour, it is essential to further explore the context of their environments, primary relationships, and lifestyles when attempting to understand their actions. The immediate family environment and the relationship between the developing individual and their primary caregivers form part of the microsystem and are instrumental in influencing the developing individual's character, personality, and behaviour (Eriksson et al., 2018; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Merçon-Vargas et al., 2020; Navarro & Tudge, 2023; Poppa et al., 2022; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017; Yubero et al., 2017). Next, I look at the impact of the immediate family environment and crucial relationships.

Unstable family environment. Instability in the participants' home environments is a common finding among participants. Most grew up in a household where conditions such as financial difficulty, alcohol abuse, neglect, verbal abuse, bullying, corporal punishment, pro-criminal behaviour, substance abuse, and domestic violence were normalised.

The bioecological model emphasises the significance of proximal processes, the interaction of the individual with people and with objects and symbols, in shaping their character and personality and impacting their behaviour (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Crawford, 2020; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa, 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Existing in primary settings such as the home, family relationships, school, peer groups and neighbourhoods where turbulent conditions and instability such as a lack of structure, abuse, fear, anxiety, and uncertainty prevails interferes with the ability to form and maintain healthy relationships and healthy lifestyles (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Espelage, 2015; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Ultimately, chaos leads to a lack of safety and security and to instability, which adversely impacts behaviour and may lead to adverse outcomes, including criminality.

Factors contributing to aggression and antisocial behaviour vary among individuals and are influenced by environmental factors like parenting styles and peer influences. Both parental styles and behaviours impact a child's antisocial behaviour, just as the child's genetically influenced psychopathic personality style and subsequent antisocial behaviour can affect parenting styles (Carroll et al., 2021; Niv et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016; Simmons et al., 2017; Qadeer et al., 2021; Veroude et al., 2016). Padurariu et al. (2016) also suggested that males tend to have a natural predisposition toward higher levels of aggression than females.

Based on the findings, most participants grew up in environments significantly filled with chaos. Unstable family environments impacted these participants beyond their childhood years. The conditions within their family when they were children hold importance because they shaped how they relate to important people as adults. This influence was primarily determined by their primary caregivers' parenting styles, communication, and behaviours. Other environments the participants frequented during their childhood, such as extended family, peer groups, school, and neighbourhoods, are also significant.

Parenting styles, corporal punishment and bullying. Research-linked parenting styles, such as authoritarian or permissive, to increased aggression and delinquency as a reciprocal impact exists between parental style, children's behaviour, and potential antisocial outcomes (Pinquart, 2017; Niv et al., 2013; Simmons et al., 2017). Environmental circumstances like peer influences and neighbourhood factors also influence the development of aggression, violence, and antisocial behaviour (Carroll et al., 2021; Padurariu et al., 2016; Qadeer et al., 2021; Veroude et al. 2016). The bioecological development model also acknowledges genetic, environmental, and interactive processes that affect individuals' development. These systems and processes,

directly and indirectly, influence development and behaviour (Bell, 2018; Defoe, 2021; Espelage, 2014; Strauss-Hughes et al., 2019).

According to UNICEF (2014), corporal punishment, in homes and schools, is the most common form of violence against children, often including physical acts like kicking, slapping, shaking, pushing, punching, hitting and burning, not simply spanking. It is harmful and may lead to absenteeism, fear, developing antisocial behaviour, negative attitudes towards education, high drop-out rates, a decline in self-esteem, feelings of revenge, violence, and potential criminal acts (Gierse-Arsten, 2020; Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), 2019; Makhasane & Chikoko, 2016; Mthanti & Mncube, 2014; UNICEF, 2014). Although harsh, physical punishment is a global phenomenon, research indicates that it is most prevalent in developing countries, including Namibia, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, and Tanzania, regardless of mounting evidence of its detrimental impact on the children (Afro Barometer, 2023; Lansford & Deater-Deckard, 2012; LAC, 2019; Makhasane & Chikoko, 2016; Moyo et al., 2014; Ogando Portela & Pells, 2015; Ohofa & Ogidan, 2020). An American study also revealed that Black parents, more frequently than White and Latino parents, use physical punishment (Patton et al., 2014).

During the colonial era, corporal punishment was legally enforced as an acceptable sentence for Black individuals. The state regularly used corporal punishment for those who broke the law, such as vagrancy laws (Moore et al., 2016). Freddy, for example, has a long history of offending since he was 12, ranging from petty crime to theft, assault, robbery, and attempted rape. On multiple occasions, he received corporal punishment as a sentence. Cleophas, who was a migrant worker, also attests to the brutality of the apartheid state, which subjected him to beatings and torture (20:35).

In Namibia, corporal punishment is unconstitutional, yet it remains common (Alweendo et al., 2018; Sloth-Nielsen, 2019). Corporal punishment is part of the religious and African perspective of raising children and justified by misconstrued religion, biblical principles, and texts such as "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die" (Proverbs 23:13, King James Version) (Chaney et al., 2016). Jacob's father used the biblical text "Spare the Rod, Spoil the Child" to justify corporal punishment. Jacob explained how his father beat all the children even when only one sibling made a mistake (65:27-37).

Corporal punishment conveys the message that violence is acceptable and effective, and being subjected to corporal punishment as a child may result in an individual resorting to violence

to resolve conflicts as an adult. Adults who experienced repeated physical punishment as children may also be more inclined to resort to violence and abusive behaviour toward their partners or children. Consequently, corporal punishment also influences and contributes to GBV (Alweendo et al., 2018; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; LAC, 2019; Makhasane & Chikoko, 2016; Moyo et al., 2014; Ogando Portela & Pells, 2015). Eliphas, Freddy, Gerson, and Jacob all shared that corporal punishment was a normal part of their upbringing, and their stories included experiences of extreme beatings that left lasting scars. For instance, Freddy recounted an incident where his mother injured his arm and Gerson's grandfather left a mark on him. Gerson also described how his mother and father used to beat him together (70:56), and Ismael recounted how even the most menial transgressions were disciplined by physical beatings.

Bullying and corporal punishment can cause feelings of helplessness in a child, which may result in anger, aggression, and resentment. The reinforcement of bullying and corporal punishment at school and home may have contributed to aggression in adulthood among these participants. The literature identifies aggression as an inherent human behaviour that allows individuals to deal with stressful events (J. R. Blair, 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016; Warburton & Anderson, 2015). However, uncontrolled and exaggerated aggression may become pathological, characterised by conduct disorders, callous, unemotional traits, and psychopathy (Asherson & Cormand, 2016; R. J. R. Blair, 2018; Palumbo et al., 2018; Veroude et al., 2016).

Genetic predispositions in variations, when paired with negative environmental influences such as chronic stress and traumas during critical stages of development, can contribute to the development of long-lasting aggression and psychiatric conditions in adulthood, potentially leading to social, moral, and legal implications (Ling et al., 2019; Palumbo, 2018; Raine, 2019a). In addition to experiencing corporal punishment, most participants, like David, Freddy, Ismael, David, Hannes, and Jacob, also experienced bullying at school. Jacob, Freddy, and Gerson were also bullied at home. Like corporal punishment, bullying normalises violence. As boys, these participants did not receive any respite or protection from the emotional and physical bullying they endured. They were compelled to toughen up and fend for themselves. It's highly conceivable that these adverse childhood experiences had a significant impact on them.

This study's findings align with research suggesting that several participants may have inherited a genetic predisposition to aggression, possibly from their fathers, given the significant similarities referenced with their fathers. This predisposition may have been influenced by environmental factors such as bullying and corporal punishment. These experiences could have

heightened the participants' susceptibility to aggression and potentially contributed to their involvement in violent crime.

Additionally, most participants used alcohol as a coping mechanism and ultimately abused alcohol. Literature indicates that alcohol abuse and domestic violence are linked (DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015; Kathena & Sheefeni, 2017; LAC, 2012, 2013, 2016; Martin, 2020; Mazorodze, 2020; Roche et al., 2015; UNFPA, 2020; WHO, 2014). Many participants' narratives reveal that they had witnessed domestic abuse and were also victims of such abuse. Below, I discuss the impact of these experiences on the participants.

Domestic abuse. Research suggests that children who grow up in households with domestic violence, parental substance abuse, or neglect will most likely engage in substance abuse and violent behaviour later in life (De Souza & Crepaldi, 2019; FLON, 2018; Frank et al., 2019; Hasheela et al., 2020; Kauari et al., 2015; LAC, 2016; Mitonga et al., 2017; Njibu et al., 2017; Shikongo et al., 2017). In contrast, stable and supportive family environments can serve as protective factors against violent crime (Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2016; Farrington, Loeber, et al., 2012; Farrington, Friedrich Lösel, et al., 2012).

As I mentioned earlier, significant adverse effects are experienced by growing up without a father. However, research also indicates that a present but abusive father in an unstable, chaotic family environment also has adverse impacts that may lead to substance abuse and criminal violence, including GBV (FLON, 2018; Njibu et al., 2017; Shikongo et al., 2017). The adverse effects of growing up in this chaotic environment with turbulent circumstances, such as domestic abuse and alcohol abuse, are elucidated in the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Such environments may impact the developing individual's character and personality, may adversely influence their behaviour, and potentially lead to conduct problems and callous-unemotional behaviour (Mills-Koonce et al., 2020; St. John & Tarullo, 2020).

Furthermore, research on the developmental trajectory of delinquent and antisocial behaviour in young people reveals that key contributing factors are antisocial peers, unemployment, low socioeconomic status of parents, particularly poverty, and instability in the home environment, caused by factors such as substance abuse and domestic violence (Caleb et al., 2019; Ikediashi & Akande, 2015; Oluufemi Oyeyemi et al., 2019; Piotrowska et al., 2015b; Trinidad, 2021). The literature reports that domestic violence, like corporal punishment, may normalise violence as a conflict resolution tool and may result in the individual having high-

conflict relationships filled with aggression, violence, and potential criminal consequences (Alweendo et al., 2018; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; LAC, 2019; Makhasane & Chikoko, 2016; UNICEF, 2014). Brandon's account highlights the significant influence of his father on his family and his own life. He shared how he and his family experienced physical assault from his father, and he recognised the resemblance between his drinking and aggressive behaviours and those of his father. This aligns with the literature, suggesting that growing up in such a tumultuous environment had detrimental effects on Brandon's personality and character, subsequently influencing his decisions and behaviour. Furthermore, it's possible that Brandon may have inherited a predisposition to substance abuse and aggressive behaviour from his father based on the evidence in the literature (Hay et al., 2014; Tien et al., 2020; van Hazebroek et al., 2019; Waltes et al., 2016).

Similarly, Hannes also witnessed domestic abuse and experienced abuse as a child. He also grew up in adverse circumstances, experienced abuse at a very young age, was involved in a motor vehicle accident that potentially caused a TBI, associated with delinquent peers, and started using substances at a very young age. These adverse environmental factors may have influenced his behavioural outcome. The same narrative is true for several other participants. Freddy grew up in a chaotic, unsupervised environment, associated with delinquent peers, exhibited such behaviour, and started drinking alcohol before age 12. Similarly, Anthony's friendships potentially influenced his behaviour and subsequent criminality.

Having explained the impact of adverse circumstances and events in the immediate family, I examine the participants' peer groups and the impact these associations may have had on their behaviour.

Antisocial associates. Antisocial tendencies encompass impulsivity, a lack of empathy, lack of remorse, aggressive behaviour, and potential presence of severe violence (Johnson, 2019; Jurjako et al., 2019; Newbury-Helps et al., 2017). Research indicates that antisocial behaviour, aggressivity, and violent behaviour are influenced by hormones and neurobiological factors (Carlisi et al., 2020; Carré & Archer, 2018; Coccaro et al., 2015; Geniole et al., 2019; Horn et al., 2014; Padurariu et al., 2016; Pinna, 2018; Reddy et al., 2018).

Research also highlights that adolescents often partake in group socialisation, which has a substantial impact on their attitudes and social behaviours. Peer relationships, therefore, hold considerable sway over adolescent aggressive behaviour. Within group dynamics, activities like truancy, theft, and bullying may manifest, and peer pressure can lead individuals to engage in

aggressive behaviours (Bell, 2018; DelGiudice, 2018; Liu et al., 2013). Further research emphasises that elements including affiliating with delinquent peers, vulnerability to peer pressures, joblessness, parental socioeconomic status, and the quality of the home environment all exert significant influences on the development of adolescent delinquency and antisocial behaviour (Caleb et al., 2019; Ikediashi & Akande, 2015; Oluufemi Oyeyemi et al., 2019; Piotrowska et al., 2015b; Trinidad, 2021). Therefore, the onset of antisocial behaviour can be accounted for by an interplay of both environmental and genetic factors (Eme, 2020; Gard et al., 2019; Moffitt, 2018).

As suggested by the developmental trajectory of antisocial behaviour, juveniles that engage in antisocial behaviour only during adolescence are categorised as the adolescence-limited antisocial type. Others who continue with antisocial behaviour and whose delinquent behaviour may graduate into increasingly aggressive and later violent behaviour and criminal behaviour are categorised as the life-course persistent (LCP) antisocial type (Caspi & Moffitt, 2006; Moffitt, 1993, 2006, 2018; NCPC, 2012). The LCP type offender starts with less severe deviant activities early in childhood, later offending and more severe crimes (Caspi & Moffitt, 2006; Moffitt, 1993, 2006). The LCP type of individual might bite, hit, and throw tantrums as a toddler. They may move to truancy, shoplifting, and misuse of substances during adolescence. They may graduate to armed robbery and rape in early adulthood and possibly escalate to more violent crimes such as murder later in life. Based on his narrative, his case files and the narratives of the significant others, this is the path of several participants, particularly Freddy's offending behaviour. Anthony's history also indicates increasingly problematic behavioural patterns and associations.

Research into the developmental trajectory of criminal behaviour further suggests that antisocial behaviour in certain youth may be attributed to social influences such as motivation, mimicry, and reinforcement (Caspi et al., 1996; Caspi & Moffitt, 2006; Moffitt, 1993, 2006, 2018; NCPC, 2012). Mimicry refers to the tendency of youths to mimic the antisocial behaviour of a group of peers aiming to gain desirable resources such as status, power, privilege, and acceptance. Reinforcement refers to the negative consequences of delinquent and antisocial behaviour that reinforce the feeling of independence and conquering challenges. All the participants attest to peer influence as a contributing factor to problematic behaviour because of associating with friends and associates with delinquent behaviour.

The dynamics of mimicry and reinforcement were plausibly at play in Anthony's life. He described how most men he encountered in the police cells were friends and acquaintances from

the neighbourhood he grew up in (2:63). Thus, he grew up in a neighbourhood where he was regularly associating with persons with antisocial behaviour and pro-criminal attitudes. Friendships such as those described by Anthony, with friends who engaged in such activities as bullying, stealing, street fights, muggings, carrying weapons like knives, truancy, and running away from home (2:98 & 2:99 & 2:105) create circumstances that are conducive for pro-criminal attitudes, cognitions, and behaviour. Similarly, Freddy had limited supervision during his youth and left school early, subsequently aligning himself with delinquent peers. This narrative is shared by Freddy, his mother, and his cousin.

Jacob's childhood narrative includes drinking and drug use as early as 12 with his brothers and sisters. Hannes also had peer influences in school with drug use. He narrated being forced to buy and sell drugs while he lived in the hostel. He felt pressure to use drugs on the school premises. Similarly, Gerson narrated his experiences of being pressured by his uncle and aunt to commit criminal offences. His uncle was incarcerated when Gerson was arrested for the murder. Following through on pro-criminal activity such as drug use, truancy, and theft forced by peers and family would be rewarded with acceptance, status, and monetary gain and confidence, which acted as reinforcement, fostering pro-criminal cognitions (Caspi & Moffitt, 2006; Moffitt, 1993).

Criminogenic cognition refers to characteristic cognitive styles or belief systems that precede criminal activity and other antisocial behaviour and are a significant indicator of the likelihood of someone engaging in criminal activity (Andrews & Bonta, 2016; Whited, 2015; Zeigler-Hill, 2017). Criminal activity, particularly repeated habitual offending, is preceded by attitudes, social influence, and criminogenic cognitions (Međedović, 2017; Whited et al., 2015; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017). As a result of their criminogenic cognitions, these participants developed pro-criminal attitudes that led them to endorse, encourage, and participate in criminal behaviours. They were not dissuaded by the prospect of punishment or by previous punishment. The more they indulged in such pro-criminal thought processes, their likelihood of engaging in criminal activities increased. Once they started engaging in criminal activity, the gains reinforced the pro-criminal cognitions and behaviour. Consequently, they committed crimes like theft because the immediate gain and reward outweighed the potential consequence of incarceration.

This is evident in the narratives of most participants, including Freddy, Hannes, Gerson, Cleophas, Eliphas, Jacob, and Anthony. Jacob engaged in fights, drove under the influence of alcohol, lied to the police, and faced several charges of assault and discharging a firearm in public spaces. For several offenders, like Cleophas and Freddy, previous convictions and incarceration

did not dissuade them from repeating offences. For others, such as Gerson, Jacob, Hannes, and Eliphas, previous detentions, warnings, and fines failed to deter them from engaging in criminal activity.

Anthony, Freddy, Gerson, Jacob, and Hannes all began associating with delinquent peers at an early age and experimented with drugs. Freddy, Hannes, and Gerson openly admitted to stealing and engaging in illegal activities as a means of earning. Eliphas and many others mentioned that their social circles revolved around alcohol abuse. The evidence of their drug use and repeated delinquent behaviour, with little concern for others or the law as long as they avoided punishment, suggests that the thought patterns of these participants were criminogenic, conducive to criminal behaviour.

Protective factors against antisocial outcomes for youths are such personal or social characteristics that predict a low probability of a negative outcome, even in adverse circumstances entail prosocial peers, having opportunities to learn, school engagement, competence and confidence academically and socially, parental supervision, and positive reinforcement (Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2016, 2019; Farrington, Friedrich Lösel, et al., 2012; Fontaine et al., 2016; Hall, 2012; Kabiru et al., 2014; Lösel & Farrington, 2012). The participants' narratives clearly indicated that social discord, bullying, corporal punishment, and domestic violence were prevalent in their childhood environments. These adverse circumstances provided opportunities for the development of criminogenic cognitions, antisocial friendships, and pro-criminal behaviour. As a result, there were few protective factors available to mitigate these negative influences.

Having explained the impact of peer groups and the impact these associations may have had on the participants' behaviour, below, I discuss the participants' intimate relationships and their perspectives on relationships.

Intimate partner relationships. All the participants identify as heterosexual and view heterosexuality as the norm. They form their opinions based on cultural and biblical viewpoints. Most of them consider male infidelity as normal, believing that men have a natural tendency to be unfaithful, which they find acceptable. Equally, they expect women to be submissive and faithful. This perspective may be rooted in the patriarchal aspects of their religion and culture.

In Africa, gender roles and perspectives are influenced by African tradition and Christianity. These beliefs emphasise male dominance and family unity, with men as household

leaders and women as submissive. Misinterpretation or exaggeration of these beliefs may normalise practices that marginalise women, justify and perpetuate traditional gender roles which view men and women as unequal, perpetuating gender inequality and the oppression of women (Ahinkorah et al., 2028; Becker, 2023, Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; Melber, 2014; Sinha et al., 2017; Tamale 2014; UN, 2008).

Furthermore, about 80-90% of Namibians are Christians, and this contributes to the conservative norms regarding gender, sexual relations, and marriage. There is an interconnectedness between sexism, racism, and other social injustices, like homophobia which may ultimately contribute to violence (Alweendo et al., 2018; Davoodi et al., 2019; Namhila & Hillebrecht, 2022; Namupala & Mushaandja, 2020; van Anders et al., 2022). Research has shown a link between religious affiliation, mainly the dogmatic beliefs in Christianity and other religions promoting gender inequality and IPV (Ahinkorah et al., 2018; Becker, 2010; LAC, 2016; Olayanju et al., 2013; Tamale, 2014; X. Wang et al., 2016).

Moreover, in Namibia, like the larger African context, high unemployment rates, alcohol abuse, and gender discrimination primarily driven by traditional patriarchal and religious norms, fuelled by several factors such as inequality, patriarchy, unemployment, and traditional and religious societal and gender ideologies contribute significantly to the prevalence of IPV and GBV (Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Kefas, 2019; Njibu et al., 2017; Olayanju et al., 2013; Tamale, 2014; UNFPA, 2020; WHO, 2014). Furthermore, emotions such as jealousy, self-esteem, possessiveness, power, and control are among Namibia's leading causes of violence (Njibu et al., 2017; Shikongo et al., 2017). Research with male perpetrators of IPV in Namibia indicates that they are ill-equipped to manage emotions like anger and frustration, struggle with communication skills, and find help-seeking daunting due to fears, doubts, and the scarcity of available support resources (FLON, 2018). While they acknowledge the importance of honesty, trust, faithfulness, respect, mutual decision-making, and commitment in a relationship, their conservative and prejudiced views on traditional gender roles create conflicts and support the idea that violence in a relationship can be justified by circumstances like infidelity, disrespect, or financial dependency. Their unwavering beliefs and expectations can trigger emotions such as anger, frustration, and suspicion when these expectations aren't met, ultimately leading to violent behaviours (FLON, 2018).

The participants' relationships with women may also suffer due to the absence of male role models. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, growing up without a father has a significant emotional impact on a male child. This increases their risk of developing emotional issues,

negatively affecting their social behaviour and raising the likelihood of substance abuse, criminal activities, and aggression. Consequently, their capacity to establish and sustain healthy intimate relationships, particularly with partners, is impaired. They might struggle to grasp healthy relationship dynamics, which can result in infidelity, domestic violence, and emotional instability (Ashari, 2017; Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Buschlen et al., 2018; McLanahan et al., 2013; Radl et al., 2017). This can be further exacerbated by cultural beliefs and societal norms in Namibia, which may perpetuate male dominance and unequal power dynamics in relationships.

The narratives of most participants are indicative of such dogmatic perspectives on gender roles. The most prominent illustration is the statement by Ismael, who expressed his firm belief that men are the heads of the household and women must remain submissive, respect men, and turn a blind eye to male infidelity (57:98). Notably, five participants, Jacob, Ismael, David, and Cleophas, are incarcerated for killing intimate partners, and Anthony attempted to murder his partner. Cleophas had previous convictions of culpable homicide, murder and assault charges. Ismael and Jacob had previous charges of assault, particularly against their intimate partners. Jacob, Ismael, David, Cleophas, and Anthony's crimes were all fuelled by jealous feuds involving their girlfriends. Most participants' biggest concern remained struggling to control their temper, thus anger management.

Financial support from men can contribute to GBV (DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Martin, 2020b). When men financially support women, they might expect sexual favours in return and place demands on women to remain faithful. Men may also feel an unspoken pressure to provide for their female partners and fear rejection if they cannot meet these expectations, and this dynamic can be a driving force behind GBV (Alesina et al., 2016; DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Martin, 2020b). These expectations may be a symptom of socialisation, cultural and religious norms related to gender roles embedded in the structural aspects of Namibian society that equate to masculinity with dominance and aggression and femininity with subservientness (Davoodi et al., 2019; DRL, 2020; DWYPD, 2020; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; van Anders et al. 2022; WHO, n.d.). These factors embedded within social structures contribute to maintaining the cycle of violence, normalising male aggression and violence.

Jacob expressed feeling pressured to take care of his girlfriend, yet she cheated on him, and she used his money to entertain other men. He blames women and his girlfriend (the victim) for behaving disrespectfully, undermining him, and threatening him (65:101). Ismael's narrative underscored this point several times as he was disrespected and used by his girlfriend (the victim)

and her mother (58:18). Anthony's crime was also driven by feeling disrespected and undermined and used after supporting his girlfriend financially, not only by his girlfriend but also by the men she was seeing (2:19). The anger experienced by Ismael, Jacob, and Anthony towards their girlfriends may be attributed to masculinity and gender norms. They perceived that they were undermined by unfaithful women who refused to obey and submit. This could also be linked to their and normalising male infidelity, difficulty managing stress and anger, and using violence to address conflict.

Research also indicates that alcohol abuse is a major contributing factor to violence, is linked to increased aggressive and violent behaviour, particularly GBV, globally, in neighbouring South Africa, and Namibia (DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015; HRW, 2021; IAS, 2020; Kefas, 2019; Njibu et al., 2017; Roche et al., 2015; Shikongo et al., 2017; UNFPA, 2020; WHO, 2014). FLON (2018) reported that the perpetrators of IPV acknowledged that they use alcohol as a coping mechanism, but they are aware that it contributed significantly to their offending behaviour. Many participants also mentioned how alcohol abuse and subsequent aggression harmed their relationships in the past. Jacob (65:70), Brandon (12:53), and Eliphas (31:3 & 32:19) admitted to this behaviour. The relationship these offenders had with alcohol as a stress relief, entertainment, and coping mechanism impacted their relationships, making it difficult to manage their emotions and led them to act aggressively.

The information provided could potentially help explain the violence perpetrated by several participants, including Ismael and Jacob. Ismael and Jacob mentioned experiencing ongoing frustration and feeling disrespected in their relationships, but they lacked the necessary emotional tools and communication skills to address these issues effectively with their partners. After suppressing their emotions for an extended period, they eventually lost control and resorted to violence. Unfortunately, they did not make any attempts to seek help or support for their emotional struggles and violent reactions.

The influence of important relationships and immediate circumstances has led to my discussion of the participants' socioeconomic conditions. These socioeconomic factors continue to operate within the same microsystem and mesosystem, directly affecting the participants. This aspect remains within the realm of the family and immediate environment, as presented in Figure 6.5.

Socioeconomic profile

Factors within the exosystem and mesosystem also contribute to the causes of violent crime. The mesosystem is the interconnections between different microsystems, or the immediate settings in which an individual participates (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). I commence this discussion by delving into the participants' educational experiences and the impacts thereof. I discuss the opportunities, skills, employment histories, and financial circumstances of the participants and how these may have impacted them through experiences. I remain cognisant of the impact of these circumstances and proximal processes within these systems on shaping their identities.

This discussion on the socioeconomic profile contribute to answering the following three research questions.

- What kinds of relationships have offenders had in the past, and have in the present?
- In what ways have offenders affected the lives of their significant others?
- How have offenders' life experiences influenced their behaviour?

Poor education and adverse school experiences. The role of the education system and school environment is significant in influencing an individual's risk of engaging in violent crime. Research indicates a positive school climate, encompassing a sense of belonging, fair discipline, and supportive teacher-student relationships, can protect against violent crime (Thapa et al., 2013). Being surrounded by supportive peers, having chances to develop social and academic skills, receiving recognition and rewards for achievements, and experiencing positive reinforcement are crucial elements that help prevent delinquent behaviour and potential criminal activities. Positive reinforcement leads to a strong attachment to prosocial teachers and peers and fosters prosocial activities and commitment to education (Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2015; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017).

Unfortunately, most participants' experiences at school were not very positive. Most, like Freddy, Ismael, David, and Jacob, experienced bullying from peers and teachers. Furthermore, corporal punishment was a common occurrence at the schools these participants attended. Although it was banned and made unconstitutional in 1990, research indicated that it remained a disciplinary measure frequently used in Namibia (Alweendo et al., 2018; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; LAC, 2019; Sloth-Nielsen, 2019). Bullying and corporal punishment normalise violence. It sends the harmful message that violence is both acceptable and effective. Children who experience corporal punishment may be more inclined to resort to violence as adults, potentially abusing

their own partners or children. Consequently, corporal punishment can influence attitudes and promote misconceptions about GBV (Alweendo et al., 2018; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; LAC, 2019; Sloth-Nielsen, 2019).

Peer relationships play a substantial role in shaping violent behaviour. Peer rejection or being a victim of bullying can lead to feelings of isolation and anger, which can increase the chances of aggressive behaviour. Additionally, these experiences can reinforce and normalise violence. When individuals befriend delinquent or antisocial peers, it can further support such behaviour and promote criminogenic thinking patterns. These cognitive styles or belief systems normalise criminal activities and are a significant indicator of an individual's likelihood to engage in criminal behaviour (Bonta & Andrews, 2016; Whited et al., 2015; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017). Due to their criminogenic cognitions, the person may develop pro-criminal attitudes and condone, support, and engage in criminal activities.

Adolescents often socialise in groups, thereby influencing each other's attitudes and social activity. Consequently, peer relationships play an important role in adolescents' aggressive behaviour. Behaviour such as truancy, pickpocketing, and bullying may occur in groups, and peer pressure may lead to forced displays of aggressive behaviour, and males are generally more aggressive than females (Bell, 2018; Del Giudice et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2013).

Instead of fostering prosocial friendships in schools, many participants admit to bullying children at school as well as acts of truancy and associating with antisocial, delinquent peers.

Several participants, like Brandon, Freddy, Gerson, and Anthony, admitted to associating with antisocial friends and engaging in delinquent behaviour like staying away from school and stealing. According to Anthony, bullying, stealing, street fights, muggings, robberies, truancy, and running away from home (2:98, 2:99, & 2:105) were frequent pursuits for him and his friends. Hannes also admitted to associating with antisocial friends (52:26), truancy, theft, and housebreaking (52:128). According to Eliphas, he frequently engaged in fights (32:6) and bullied kids in school. The situations of many participants align with the conditions described in the literature that are conducive to the development of delinquent behaviour. They may have been influenced by their friendships, which contributed to the development of aggressive behaviours. For some, learning to handle conflict through violence at an early stage, led to them replicating this behaviour in their later relationships.

To ensure these protective factors are enhanced, the family must enforce these prosocial interactions and restrict potentially antisocial interactions (Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2015; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017; Kabiru et al., 2014). However, most of them are from poor rural areas and were raised in female-headed households. Female-headed households, less educated, larger families, children, older people, and labourers in subsistence farming are particularly prone to suffering unemployment and poverty (OPHI, 2018; UNICEF, 2021). Their home environment did not provide them with the opportunity for the best support and best opportunities. The majority of the participants' parents, including the single mothers among them, had limited education, many uneducated. Some of the mothers were unemployed, while others could only earn a modest income, often working as domestic workers. For instance, Anthony's mother, a disabled single parent of three children, held a low-paying job fixing chairs at a non-profit organisation (NGO) focused on helping people with disabilities. Freddy's mother also worked as a domestic worker. This situation was similar to several others among the participants.

The literature indicates a connection between inadequate education and criminal activity. It underscores those factors like low academic performance, truancy, and dropping out of school contribute to the likelihood of engaging in violent crimes. Negative experiences in school, such as academic failure or disengagement, can increase the risk of violent behaviour (Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011).

Significantly, the education of most participants was poor. Jacob is the only participant who completed grade 12 and Anthony, Hannes and Brandon are the only participants who dropped out in grade 10. Two participants, Gerson and Eliphas, attended high school but dropped out before completing grade 9. The other four participants only attended primary school.

In 1990, when Namibia achieved independence, Cleophas was already an adult. He had started his education around the late 1950s or early 1960s. Cleophas attended a missionary school that provided limited educational opportunities, under Bantu Education for Black children during the apartheid era. Claiming to preserve cultural identities by teaching children in their native languages and fostering national and cultural pride, South Africa used Christian National Education and initiated the Bantu Education system for Blacks. However, it used Christian and Calvinist theology to justify a distinct educational system, indoctrinating Africans into accepting their social inferiority, political subordination, and economic servitude (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977; Reshad, 2021; State University, n.d.-b).

This education system, characterised by intentional constraints and indoctrination, played a role in perpetuating fundamental systemic racism and structural violence. Furthermore, South African magistrates concurred with their German counterparts that corporal punishment was a more effective means for Black individuals within the vagrancy system (Moore et al., 2021). Consequently, the frequent use of corporal punishment persisted, escalating violence against indigenous people and normalising corporal punishment in schools as well. Cleophas was affected by these issues that normalised aggression and violence. Numerous problems stemming from this system continued to impact and afflict Namibian schools even after gaining independence.

Examining the demographic data of the participants reveals that by 1990, when Namibia gained independence from the South African Apartheid regime, most of them were already in school. Among them, Eliphas, Freddy, Hannes, and Jacob were teenagers at that time. According to historical accounts, particularly from Marlow-Ferguson (2002), the period from 1971 to the 1990s witnessed widespread expulsions of students, school strikes, boycotts, and incidents of militant violence involving teachers and students. Consequently, Eliphas, Freddy, Hannes, and Jacob were inadvertently affected by these circumstances. Consistent with historical records, they did not complete their education due to high dropout rates and increased crime in Black communities, as described in the literature, which was a common occurrence for many Black students both before and shortly after Namibia's independence (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015; UNESCO, 2010).

Two participants, David and Gerson, had just started primary school a year or two before Namibia gained independence in 1990. Three participants, Anthony, Brandon, and Ismael began their primary education within the first five years following independence. Consequently, they were all affected by the educational transition that occurred after independence and the persistent challenges in black, rural, and economically disadvantaged areas.

The limited educational opportunities available to Black students and the financial difficulties faced by Black parents, who had to cover the costs of their children's education (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977), particularly in impoverished rural regions (NSA, 2018; UNESCO, 2021), contributed to Black parents being unable to afford basic education for their children. These participants also fall into the category of the poor demographic within the Namibian population, where rural areas and single-parent households experience the most significant disadvantages and have the fewest educational opportunities.

In the tumultuous period of Black school unrest and the transition after independence, Freddy, Eliphas, Ismael, David, and Jacob personally encountered these difficulties. Under apartheid, Afrikaans served as the official language and was used for instruction. Despite the intention for education to be delivered in students' mother tongues, it was conducted in Afrikaans due to inadequate investment by the state in developing teaching materials in Namibian languages (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002). An immediate change following independence was the adoption of English as the national language and the medium of instruction in schools beyond the 7th grade. However, the Namibian schools for Black students faced significant challenges right after independence, greatly affecting the students (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; UNESCO, 2010). Implementing changes to the education system was challenging and lengthy (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; UNESCO, 2010). These significant challenges encompassed the presence of underqualified teachers, disciplinary issues, insufficient textbooks, and a lack of classroom equipment. Consequently, the transition was fraught with difficulties, leading to continued student failures and dropouts, as seen in the experiences of these participants.

By ensuring that Blacks had access only to lower-tier education and limited job opportunities, the apartheid regime effectively kept them in the lowest socioeconomic class (Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015; Reshad, 2021), and this continued even after 1990. Apart from David, all the participants were more proficient in Afrikaans than English. Because they were Black, and from rural areas, they could not transition easily to English and the new curriculum. Their education was affected by this.

Belonging to the poorest and lowest socioeconomic class placed these participants in a demographic that was particularly vulnerable. This demographic includes female-headed households, individuals with lower levels of education, larger families, children, older individuals, and labourers engaged in subsistence farming, all of whom are at a higher risk of poverty (UNICEF, 2021). Being in this demographic also placed them at risk of substance abuse, aggression, violence and crime. They also imply that other social problems, including mental illness, violence, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, poor educational performance, homicides, and higher rates of incarceration, are more common in societies with higher income and wealth disparities (Howell & Elliott, 2018; IMF, 2015; Keely, 2015; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2014).

The school experiences of these participants were unfavourable and might have played a role in their inclination toward delinquent behaviour. Having a weak attachment to school and performing poorly academically can elevate the likelihood of engaging in criminal activities over

one's life, whereas a strong attachment to school and academic success can reduce this probability (Dick et al., 2019). The literature connects educational and behavioural outcomes to criminality, reflecting the historical context of inadequate education, limited financial resources, and reduced motivation in single-parent households in Namibia (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002; O'Callaghan, 1977; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015; UNESCO, 2010). In line with this literature, it is likely that the circumstances in their school experiences may have impacted these participants adversely, potentially influencing their engagement with antisocial associates and making them more likely to commit violent acts.

The communities and schools where the participants grew up did not provide a favourable environment or act as protective factors against delinquent behaviour. Their home environments were also challenging, characterised by inadequate parental supervision, neglect (as seen in Freddy's case), corporal punishment (like Gerson and Eliphas experienced), and domestic abuse (as in the cases of Brandon and Hannes). These circumstances likely drove them to seek support and form relationships through friendships. In alignment with findings in the literature, their poor academic performance, lack of supportive family connections, poverty, and associations with delinquent friends likely contributed to their involvement in criminal activities. Additionally, it's worth noting that most participants did not express an interest in pursuing education while incarcerated.

Employment, income and poverty. As indicated in Table 6.1, seven participants grew up in poverty-stricken rural areas on farms, two grew up in rural areas in small villages, one grew up in a town, and only one was raised in the capital city. In Namibia, poverty and unemployment remain high, particularly in rural areas (Moyo, 2013; MPI, 2018; UNICEF, 2021; World Bank, 2023). Due to their limited education (as discussed above), most of these participants lacked specific trade skills and were engaged in unskilled, low-paying odd jobs, resulting in them being categorised as low-income earners. They frequently faced unemployment, especially considering their rural and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, which limited their opportunities. In environments where social discord was normalised, they often found themselves involved in antisocial activities. A weaker economy often leads to more unemployed and underemployed individuals who may seek criminal opportunities as alternatives to poor or non-existent work (Webster & Kingston, 2014).

Jacob, was formally trained as an artisan and worked in the mining industry. Eliphas had formal training as an electrician and had been employed at one point. He was also self-employed,

running his own electrical business and owning a bar as a business venture. Jacob and Eliphas were the only participants with formal qualifications. In contrast, all the other individuals lacked formal skills and qualifications, leading to inconsistent income and low-earning potential.

Anthony worked in the catering industry without formal training, Brandon was employed as a farmhand, and Cleophas held unskilled positions across various industries without formal training. David, too, lacked formal training and worked as a farmhand and handyman. Freddy was unemployed and unskilled, Gerson worked as an unskilled farm labourer, living on a farm for most of his life. Hannes held unskilled positions and worked as a security officer multiple times. Ismael, without formal skills, engaged in farming and self-employment, primarily in small-scale gemstone mining.

Anthony has two children whom he used to support. Brandon, Freddy, and Hannes have no children and never had family responsibilities like caring for a family or paying rent. Cleophas has a wife and nine children, and he supported them when possible. David has three children and looked after several of his siblings when he could earn an income. Eliphas has 19 children and mentioned that he supported his mother and several family members when he earned. Gerson has four children whom he supported when he was earning. Ismael has four children and is the primary provider on the farm, supporting his mother and grandparents. Jacob was the primary provider for his girlfriend, her daughter, and his three biological daughters, who did not live with him.

Historically and currently, most of the Namibian workforce is engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, sectors characterised by low productivity and susceptibility to natural disasters (World Bank, 2023). These men also work in an industry prone to feeling the negative impacts of the economy and the climate. Unemployment rates in Namibia are highest, particularly among young individuals, those residing in rural areas, and individuals in female-headed households (UNICEF, 2021). Not only did these participants work in the industries that are most prone to economic difficulty, low productivity and lack of job opportunities, but they also fit the demographic of the population that is most likely to be the poorest because they lived in rural areas, and most were raised by single mothers. Anthony was raised by an uneducated, single mother, who is a person with a disability. She worked as an unskilled worker assembling desks and chairs. Freddy was raised by a single mother who was a domestic worker. Eliphas, Gerson, and Ismael were also raised on the farm by single mothers who were never formally employed.

David was also raised on a farm by an uncle. Hannes was raised by a single mother who worked in a clerical position. She stopped working while Hannes was still in school.

In Namibia, a nation marked by one of the highest levels of income inequality worldwide, poverty is most prevalent among specific demographic groups. Female-headed households, individuals with lower levels of education, larger families, children, the elderly, and labourers employed in subsistence farming are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing poverty and enduring severe deprivation than other segments of the population (National Planning Commission (NPC), 2020; United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 2021; World Bank, 2023; World Inequality Database (WID), 2021).

Poverty and unemployment also affect the parents and family members of these participants, especially the uneducated, single mothers of these men (LAC, 1996; MPI, 2018; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015; Reshad, 2021). Thus, the circumstances of poverty preceded the generations of these participants. Historically, women in rural Namibia were homemakers in subsistence environments, but with the migration of men, households were left with unemployed women who started working as domestic workers (Clarence-Smith & Moorman, 1975; Cooper, 1999; Katjavivi, 1989; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017).

Brandon, Cleophas, and Jacob were raised by parents who were farmers, not formally employed. These participants' living circumstances, particularly the farms and the neighbourhoods where they grew up, are the arid communal farmland and the neighbourhoods that Black people were forcibly relocated to in 1958 (Katjavivi, 1989; Melber, 2016, 2020). The farms and villages that the participants grew up on, such as Okombahe that Ismael grew up on are the "reserves", later called "homelands", for Black natives, that were on marginal, arid land, incapable of supporting the communities. This ensured they remained impoverished and thereby available for contract labour (Clarence-Smith & Moorsom, 1975; Cooper, 1999; Katjavivi, 1988; Nghitevelekwa, 2022; State University, n.d.-a). After independence, after the end of the contract labour system, the impacts were lasting and most Black people remained impoverished, continued living in these homes and on the same land, often they continued working on the same farms because, as poor, uneducated Black people, they had no opportunities to buy land and properties and create a better quality of life for themselves.

These participants and their parents are not commercial farmers. White landowners have retained wealth unfairly acquired through policies favouring them during apartheid (Tapscott, 1993). Even though the government continues in its attempts to create equality

through policies such as NEEEF (Melber, 2021; Mundia et al., 2021; NEEEF, 2018), the landownership system was originally established under circumstances characterised by inequality, racism, colonialism, and apartheid. Consequently, severe disparities in both land and wealth distribution remain. It is very difficult to remedy as the commercial landowners already profited tremendously from the illegally obtained land, and they retain that wealth. The Black Namibians who were most disadvantaged continue to be impoverished due to the illegal confiscation of their land and they remain unable to afford land (Langgenhager et al., 2021).

These farmlands and neighbourhoods' Black and Coloured people were forcefully moved to were at the fringes of the towns and cities, for example Katutura at the fringes of Windhoek, was small, with deplorable and inadequate housing, poor sanitation and without ablution facilities (Katjavivi, 1988; Melber, 2016, 2020). These neighbourhoods remain poor, the community members' circumstances remain less than optimal, and they lack opportunities. Lack of opportunities and unemployment may cause hopelessness and despair, leading individuals to resort to substance abuse, contributing to violence and crime (DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015). Insufficient access to necessities such as food, housing, and healthcare, and lack of access to quality education, social services, and employment opportunities, can create a sense of desperation, pushing individuals towards criminal behaviour as a means of survival (de Courson & Nettle, 2021; Sharkey, 2018; World Bank, 2019; WHO, 2014;). The concentration of poverty can create a vicious cycle where crime, lack of resources, and limited opportunities reinforce one another, leading to an environment where violent crime is more prevalent (Sharkey, 2018; WHO, 2014). Similarly, the participants in this study hail from environments, neighbourhoods, and families with limited opportunities, lacking positive influence, support, and role models. Gerson regularly engaged in illegal activities for financial gain before incarceration. This was supported and encouraged by his uncle and aunt, who raised him. Hannes also admitted to stealing and committing crime to feed his drug habit.

Neighbourhood factors such as poverty and high overall crime rates increase the prevalence of violent crime (FLON, 2018; Menard et al., 2016; Ndjibu et al., 2017; Shikongo, 2017; UNODC, 2019). Having access to opportunities for learning and practising social and academic skills and receiving recognition and rewards for participation and achievement serve as positive reinforcement and contribute to protective effects that decrease the likelihood of crime for individuals as well as communities (Farrington et al., 2016; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017). Unfortunately, the participants of this study did not benefit from such protective factors.

Such positive reinforcement and protective factors are often lacking in communities with social disorganisation and chaos.

Community disorganisation. The community environment, one of the significant factors within the mesosystem and exosystem, can contribute to violent crime. Individuals residing in environments with high poverty rates and limited access to resources can experience a sense of displacement, hopelessness, and despair, leading to increased stress and substance abuse, ultimately contributing to violent behaviour and crime (Blair et al., 2019; da Silva, 2014; de Courson & Nettle, 2021; Hertler et al., 2018; Kubrin & Wo, 2015). Social disorganisation occurs when a community is not upholding the shared values among its members and thus fails to maintain effective social controls (Kubrin & Wo, 2015). Ecological studies connect certain structural attributes of neighbourhoods with the occurrence of criminal activities. Factors such as the concentration of poverty, urban segregation, and residential instability tend to cluster within specific ecological contexts and exhibit a significant correlation with the incidence of crime (da Silva, 2014; Eck & Weisburg, 2015; Hirshfield et al., 2014). Social-ecological perspectives believe that crime is prevalent in communities characterised by social disorganisation, and social disorganisation and crime is perpetuated through cultural transmission. Criminality, including behaviours and thoughts, become like traditions passed from generation to generation. This social disorganisation and crime phenomenon is evident in the neighbourhoods that several offenders grew up in, such as Anthony and Freddy, where many youths have pro-criminal attitudes. Gerson's family condoned and encouraged criminal ways of making money.

An area's deteriorated economic conditions, combined with numerous potential spots that may be targeted for crime, give rise to many forms of crime (Eck & Weisburd, 2015). They found that neighbourhoods with higher income inequality are impacted more by crime (A. Hirschfield et al., 2014). There is evidence suggesting a connection between crime and specific hotspots and the value in considering geographic spaces in crime control (Braga et al., 2019; D'Orsogna & Perc, 2014; Malleon & Andresen, 2016; Rosser et al., 2017).

To a varying degree, factors that impact violent criminal behaviour include poverty (Lymporopoulou & Bannister, 2022; Wikström & Treiber, 2016), social factors including homelessness (Lee & Aykanian, 2016), high population density (Cabrera-Barona et al., 2019), psychological factors (Andrews & Bonta, 2016; Kamaluddin et al., 2015), income inequality (Coccia, 2017a, 2017b, 2018), and disorganisation (Kubrin & Wo, 2015). Despite significant efforts to reduce poverty, Namibia's inequality ranking remains one of the highest in the world (NPC,

2019, 2020; World Bank, 2023). The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which reflects the incidence and intensity of poverty, also reports that Namibia is one of the countries with the highest income and wealth inequality globally (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), 2018). Female-headed households, less educated, larger families, children, older people, and labourers in subsistence farming are particularly prone to poverty (UNICEF, 2021).

They also imply that other social problems, including mental illness, violence, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, poor educational performance, homicides, and higher rates of incarceration, are more common in societies with higher income and wealth disparities (Howell & Elliott, 2018; IMF, 2015; Keely, 2015; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2014).

Finances. Unemployment is another significant contributor to crime because unemployment is linked to low income, and there is a connection between low income, poverty and violent crime. A lack of education, in turn, limits opportunities and results in unemployment and reduced economic prospects for inadequately educated young people (UNODC, 2019). This harmful cycle heightens the likelihood of young people becoming entangled in delinquent and violent activities. The long-lasting effects of violence on physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health can be profound and extend throughout a person's life (UNODC, 2019). Education can provide individuals with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to secure stable employment and avoid criminal activities.

The participants' lifestyles reflected this. They possess limited education, lack skills, and many have experienced periods of unemployment, facing challenges in finding well-paying jobs. Several, including Gerson, Hannes, and Freddy, admitted they were open to illegal activities for financial gain. This inclination may be linked to their limited insight, low income, alcohol abuse, and involvement in activities like poaching. Eliphas even admitted to drinking on the job. These behaviours reflect pro-criminal attitudes and thoughts.

Regarding their financial backgrounds, most participants were low-income earners, with only Jacob and Eliphas falling into the low-to-middle-income category. The majority of participants were in the low-income bracket, making them part of the non-taxable, low-income earners. For the fiscal year from March 1, 2021, to February 28, 2022, individuals earning less than N\$50,000 per year were subject to a 0% income tax rate (PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), 2023).

Their financial circumstances in the correctional facility were also unfavourable. Without earning capacity, most depended on family members for their needs, beyond what the facility provided, and many depended on a government subsidy for the child support for their children. However, Brandon, David and Gerson did not have the option to rely on family support. Gerson ensured he supported himself by performing odd jobs for correctional officers and fellow inmates in exchange for payment for other goods. Several others like Hannes and David also did odd work in the facility by serving the inmates' food and cleaning the kitchen. However, the maximum-security unit has very limited opportunities to earn money because offenders in this unit were not allowed to work. Working is a privilege earned in units with lower security, like medium-security units. Hence, participants, including Freddy, expressed their deliberate efforts to remain compliant with rules to be reclassified and moved to lower security units where they could work in the workshops and earn money. Overall, the socioeconomic profile of these participants demonstrated the significance of poor education, lack of training and skill, limited employment opportunities, and poor financial stability in influencing their lives and criminal behaviour.

The factors contributing to the causes of violent crime are complex and multifaceted, as demonstrated by the PPCT model within the bioecological theory's mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Crawford, 2020; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa, 2020; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Family dynamics, peer associations, education and school environments, neighbourhood and community contexts, and societal factors can all influence an individual's propensity for engaging in violent crime. Personal circumstances mentioned earlier, such as poverty, rural areas, female-headed single-parent households, and being bullied, may have impacted the offenders' school experiences and contributed to them dropping out of school, their subsequent limited career opportunities, resulting in unskilled labour and low income. Based on the results of this study, the socioeconomic circumstances of these men increased their likelihood of experiencing adverse circumstances and stressors associated with an increased likelihood of developing antisocial behaviour, aggressive and violent behaviour, and a high likelihood of developing criminal thinking patterns and potential criminal actions.

Having looked at the participants' socioeconomic circumstances and how they impact the participants directly or through the proximal processes. I direct the discussion to the exosystem, which overlaps with the mesosystem. I discuss how the environment and proximal processes in the participants' exosystem impact them through their lifestyle and health. This forms part of the lifestyle, culture, and religion, as depicted in Figure 6.5.

Lifestyle, Culture and Religion

The exosystem encompasses the environment that indirectly influences an individual's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In the exosystem, significant factors encompass the impact of societal structures, including an individual's affiliation with religious groups, public policies, societal influences, and economic conditions within the country. These elements can profoundly shape an individual's worldview, their interactions with others, and their potential involvement in violent criminal activities (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015; Pinna & Manchia, 2017; WHO, 2014).

I discuss the offenders' lifestyle choices, personal experiences, beliefs, views on governance, physical and mental health, and concerns and the impact of social, religious and cultural influences and the use of alcohol. This discussion contributes to answering the following research questions.

- How do offenders perceive their own personalities?
- What kinds of relationships have offenders had in the past, and have in the present?
- In what ways have offenders affected the lives of their significant others?
- How have offenders' life experiences influenced their behaviour?

Lifestyle and health

The participants' primary influence is their tendency to view crime and violence as commonplace. Secondly, they have concerns about their circumstances as inmates and lack trust in the people around them. Their sense of insecurity is not solely due to their incarceration but is also rooted in broader societal conditions.

Violence normalised. All the participants do not trust people, are suspicious of most people, and feel unsafe in their environment. They perceived violence and crime as normal aspects of their lives prior to being incarcerated based on their history of multiple legal transgressions. Most participants have thinking patterns that are antisocial which support and precede criminal actions and other antisocial behaviours (Whited et al., 2015; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017). This is also exemplified by Freddy's account of when he raped a girl (39:13). He discussed it casually, downplaying the gravity of the act and the criminality involved. Freddy's attitude is not unique; others like Jacob, Hannes, and Anthony also recounted numerous transgressions, including breaking into places, stealing items for resale, and using alcohol and marijuana. Their narratives collectively convey the idea that crime is both unavoidable and acceptable, with the primary goal being to evade long-term sentences. The prevalent perception, as depicted in the

participants' accounts, is that they and many of their friends and family members are willing and capable of engaging in criminal activities if it serves their interests.

Exposure to violent media content, which includes movies, video games, and news reports, has been linked to a rise in aggressive behaviour, desensitisation to violence, and the potential normalisation of aggressive actions, increasing the likelihood of individuals engaging in violent crimes (APA, 2013; Anderson et al., 2017; Bushman et al., 2015; Gentile & Bushman, 2012; Patton et al., 2014). Regular exposure to violence in media leads to heightened aggressive thoughts, anger, aggressive behaviour, and desensitisation to violence, and negatively affects mental health, academics, and relationships (Anderson et al., 2017; Patton et al., 2014). Several participants not only encountered violence through media but also experienced it first-hand, either through domestic violence, bullying, their friendships, or their neighbourhood.

Growing up in households characterised by frequent domestic violence and alcohol abuse may have normalised violent behaviour and desensitised them. For instance, offenders like Brandon and Hannes were directly influenced by domestic violence and alcohol abuse in their childhood homes. Many participants also expressed concerns about their anger and its effects on their behaviour. Most acknowledged the need for support in managing their anger. Jacob, in particular, voiced his apprehension about the persisting anger within himself and the fear of losing control.

In addition to the prevalent domestic and alcohol abuse that was frequent and normalised in the homes of most participants, the dominant cultural and social norms in Namibia could have influenced their engagement in criminal activities. Social and cultural norms that encourage aggression and violence may indeed contribute to higher rates of violent crime (Bikinesi et al., 2017; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Olayanju et al., 2013). Societal norms and values play a crucial role in shaping individuals' behaviour and their attitudes towards violence. Cultures that glorify violence or promote aggressive behaviour can indeed contribute to the normalisation of violent crime (Huesmann, 2018). Violence is influenced by sociocultural factors, including parenting, disciplinary methods, alcohol and substance use, dynamics within relationships, national laws, policies, and the historical context of a nation (Alweendo et al., 2018; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; LAC, 2010; Martin, 2020b).

The normalised behaviours in the communities, such as alcohol use, domestic abuse, and male infidelity, may have played a role in these participants' violent behaviour. Based on their accounts, these participants lived in communities where alcohol abuse, violence, and infidelity

were common, and many of them experienced bullying and corporal punishment both in school and at home.

The normalisation of crime and violence within their environments may have caused the participants to feel unsafe and increased their suspicion and lack of trust in others. Many are concerned about false accusations, victimisation, and corruption. These experiences may have increased their anger, fear, and anxiety. They resort to manipulation and aggression for self-protection and safety. Deceptive and manipulative traits are exhibited by most participants and considered normal behaviours within the facility. Freddy considers this as necessary to survive. During his interview, Hannes cautioned me not to trust the inmates, including those referred to as pastors, because most are deceitful. Freddy said inmates commonly lie, are manipulate, and deceive the authorities. He admitted that most inmates, including himself, fake illness to take advantage of hospital visits: "I have been, I went every day to the hospital. To get these things in...., to survive... I am not sick! (39:81)"

Exposure to domestic violence, alcohol abuse, and other harmful behaviours during childhood and within the community may have shaped the participants' understanding of acceptable behaviour, potentially leading to a higher likelihood of engaging in violent crime.

Mental health and insight are intricately linked to the participants' relationships, their ability to trust others, and their sense of safety. These levels of insight and understanding play a significant role in shaping their lifestyles and behaviours, including their willingness to seek help when necessary. The perception of mental health and general health within the community, the stigma attached to mental illness, the lack of psychoeducation for community members, and the lack of accessible resources all impact the participants' perceptions. The factors that impact and influence the participants' perceptions and actions related to health are discussed below.

Mental health, lack of insight and stigma. The participants' views on mental health indicate that a significant number of offenders have limited knowledge and self-awareness when it comes to mental health. For instance, Eliphas was in the army and mentioned the trauma he experienced in the army. Cleophas was exposed to violence and worked in an environment that may have caused trauma when he worked as a migrant worker in the apartheid era. Hannes was involved in a motor vehicle accident as a child and lost many months of school. Adolescents who experience head injuries, including head injuries in motor vehicle accidents, may exhibit challenges in regulating their emotions, display impulsivity traits, engage in aggressive behaviours, and demonstrate a limited capacity for mindfulness (Cimino et al., 2022). Behavioural

disorders in adulthood can result from childhood TBIs, and the impact of these issues tends to be more severe when the injury occurs during childhood (Li & Liu, 2012; Padurariu et al., 2016; Ray & Richardson, 2017).

Hannes and Gerson have attempted suicide, Eliphas had suicidal ideations, and Jacob experienced perceptual disturbances under the influence of alcohol, yet none associated their symptoms with mental illness. Before being detained and incarcerated, they had not been evaluated and had not received formal diagnoses. Gerson and Hannes only received treatment and basic counselling in the facility but insufficient intervention. Their lack of help-seeking might be linked to misconceptions about mental health or the stigma surrounding mental health, or the lack of knowledge about resources, or the lack of resources available.

The stigma surrounding mental health and limited awareness frequently result in delayed diagnoses, inadequate treatment, and social isolation for those affected by mental health disorders. Stigma and lack of support may lead to heightened stress, frustration, and anger levels, potentially manifesting as violent behaviour (Adepoju, 2020; DWYPD, 2020; Gould, 2015; Monnapula-Mazabane & Petersen, 2020; Moore et al., 2016). Limited access to mental health services can also contribute to the link between mental health and violent crimes. Lack of resources can lead to inadequate care for individuals suffering from mental health disorders, increasing their risk of violent and criminal behaviour. Furthermore, untreated mental health disorders may cause impaired judgement, impulsivity, and emotional dysregulation, thereby increasing the likelihood of criminal activity (Girasek et al., 2022; Ogundele, 2018).

For example, Jacob experienced perceptual disturbances while under the influence of alcohol. Yet, he continued drinking alcohol and did not seek help. Thus, he did not receive mental health screening or psychoeducation linking the experiences with alcohol abuse or potential mental health concerns. He explained that this happened more than once.

Because if I am drunk, then I would start thinking things and if I thought of the things that were happening then I would get disturbing thoughts... While I am sitting like that I would get the smell of blood... Such things would come... (65:177).

Mental health can be a factor in criminal behaviour, but it's essential to note that many mental health conditions do not strongly contribute to criminal behaviour (Halle et al., 2020). There is a significant correlation between contact with the criminal justice system, particularly through arrest and incarceration, and mental health issues. This association is particularly

pronounced among individuals who grew up in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas during their adolescent years (Sugie & Turney, 2017). Moreover, various psychological and psychiatric factors, including personality traits, mental health disorders, and parent-child interaction dynamics (which may or may not have a hereditary component), are associated with antisocial behaviours, criminality, and aggression (Defoe, 2021; Mancke, 2018; Pappa et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2014).

Although most individuals with mental health issues do not participate in violent behaviour, a small percentage are at an elevated risk of committing violent acts (Girasek et al., 2022; Hasheela et al., 2020; Peterson et al., 2014). This risk can be exacerbated by insufficient mental health insight, as it hinders the early identification and treatment of mental health problems. While numerous factors contribute to criminal activity, the role of mental health is often insufficiently examined because, in many communities, mental health care is underfunded, and treatment options are limited (WHO, 2018). Substance abuse is another factor that can arise from a lack of mental health awareness. In the next section, I discuss the potential link between substance abuse and mental health.

Mental health and substance abuse. Several offenders, including Jacob and Ismael's narratives indicate that they may have grappled with a depressed mood and challenges in regulating their emotions, which could have been influenced by their past experiences in relationships with women. They had a history of enduring mistreatment by their girlfriends, leading to prolonged feelings of anger, frustration, emasculation, and disrespect. Unfortunately, they often failed to address these issues constructively. For instance, Ismael described himself as usually slow to anger but loses control over his actions when extremely angry. Similarly, Jacob described himself as someone who tries to avoid conflict and is typically slow to anger, but when he does react later, it often results in problematic outcomes (65:9). Both participants acknowledged that they had noticed issues in their relationships but had avoided dealing with them for an extended period. It's crucial to acknowledge that they may not have realised that their mounting frustration and resentment could be connected to mental health issues, which might ultimately lead to a loss of control and instances of violence.

None of these participants sought assistance for anger management or emotional support, despite many of them experiencing bullying and other potentially traumatic and emotionally taxing situations. Instead, most mentioned resorting to excessive drinking to cope, relax, and calm themselves. This suggests that they may have employed alcohol as a coping

mechanism or a form of self-medication to deal with their emotional challenges. The coping mechanism of using alcohol, as observed in these participants, aligns with research findings that indicate many perpetrators of violence in Namibia and South Africa acknowledge using alcohol as a way to cope and that alcohol plays a role in their aggressive behaviour (DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015). Individuals grappling with mental health challenges may turn to drugs or alcohol as a form of self-medication to alleviate their symptoms (Arshad et al., 2013, 2016; Biringer et al., 2016). Substance abuse can heighten the risk of engaging in violent behaviour by affecting cognitive function and emotional regulation (Defoe, 2021; Mancke et al., 2018; Pappa et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2014). In Namibia, there is a significant prevalence of reported cases of alcohol abuse and research has established a link between alcohol abuse and criminal activity (FLON, 2018; Hasheela et al., 2020, Njibu et al., 2017; Shikongo et al., 2017). Furthermore, individuals involved in drug-related activities may be more susceptible to engaging in violent crimes.

In the context of lifestyle and health, this aspect of the study explores the participants' patterns of substance use and how it becomes integrated into their daily lives. I also examined how these patterns influence their self-perception and how others perceive them. It's worth noting that all participants in this study reported consuming alcohol. However, only Hannes, Gerson, and Jacob had used other substances before their incarceration, and Hannes and Gerson were the only ones who engaged in illicit drug use at the time of their crimes. Importantly, Hannes is the sole participant who admitted to being dependent on substances other than alcohol when arrested. With this information in mind, the subsequent discussion primarily focuses on the patterns of alcohol use and abuse and their impact on the participants.

Substance use patterns. Alcohol misuse was prevalent among the participants, as well as among their friends and family members within the micro and mesosystems. Furthermore, this issue extends to the wider community within the exosystem, and it is influenced by policies within the macrosystem that regulate alcohol, such as the availability of alcohol outlets, among other factors. While some participants did use other illicit drugs, these instances were limited, and alcohol remained the primary substance of concern. Therefore, the discussion primarily focuses on alcohol use, and other substances are not addressed separately.

Researchers have examined the relationship between alcohol, drugs, and crime, particularly domestic violence for several decades. The data indicates that prolonged or binge drinking, whether among adolescents, teenagers, or adults, significantly elevates the risk of

engaging in violent offences. Alcohol plays a substantial role in impacting community economic levels, contributing to criminal activities, and fueling violence (DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015; Kathena & Sheefeni, 2017; LAC, 2014, 2016; Martin, 2020b; Mazorodze, 2020; Roche et al., 2015; UNFPA, 2020; WHO, 2014).

Most participants started using substances as teenagers. Jacob and Freddy began drinking and using other substances during primary school. Jacob shared that he was around eight or nine years old when he started drinking and used mandrax for the first time (65:36). David also mentioned that he was eight or nine years old when he began drinking. Both David and Freddy's mothers sold alcohol at home and both participants were younger than ten when they started drinking alcohol. Freddy admitted to stealing and drinking the alcohol at home. The alcohol abuse patterns of all the participants involved binge drinking and a lack of awareness of the dangers of substance abuse. Excessive alcohol consumption can reduce inhibitions, impair judgment, and heighten the likelihood of aggressive behaviours, thereby raising the incidence of alcohol-related violence and crime (Francesconi & James, 2015). Among these participants, only Ismael was not intoxicated when he committed the crime.

Namibian Correctional Service (NCS) assesses offender risk factors and classification upon admission to a correctional facility. This evaluation considers the offender's lifestyle, associates, and criminal attitudes, which are crucial in predicting criminal behaviour and recidivism. Among the ten participants, eight scored high risk in this factor. The most common issue among the participants was their history of maintaining antisocial friendships and alcohol abuse.

The proximal processes between participants and their friends, as well as the environments where these friendships exist, significantly impact their behaviour, mindset, and perspectives. Therefore, their associations with antisocial friends may have influenced these participants to adopt criminogenic thinking patterns and engage in criminal activities that escalated into aggression and violence, ultimately leading to criminal behaviour. For example, Anthony, Brandon, Freddy, Eliphaz, Hannes, Gerson and Jacob's association with antisocial, criminal-minded friends, and Brandon, Gerson and Jacobs's friends and family modelling pro-criminal activity through drug use and crime contribute to these outcomes. Such friendships involve drinking, vandalism, stealing, street fights, muggings, carrying weapons like knives, and truancy, among other activities.

According to Andrews and Bonta (2016), life-course persistence, the importance of associations, and the RNR links are essential to consider. Participants' social activities, often

influenced by peers, are strikingly similar, involving excessive drinking and normalising such behaviour. A history of antisocial behaviour is also evident, persisting within the facility as corroborated by the CMO and the case note, despite denial from some participants. This is significant in the bioecological model, as the impact of both positive and negative peer relationships are highlighted (Walters, 2015, 2020).

Consistent and heavy alcohol consumption heightens the risk of mental health disorders and contributes to a broad spectrum of social issues, including domestic violence, marital discord, child abuse, and neglect (Roche et al., 2015). A significant negative association exists between domestic violence and socioeconomic status. Disadvantaged neighbourhoods, such as the rural areas where most of these participants, like Brandon, Cleophas, Gerson, Jacob, and David, grew up and the locations such as Katutura, where Anthony grew up, experience higher rates of reported domestic violence and alcohol is significantly implicated in domestic violence incidents (Roche et al., 2015). Income inequality influences patterns of alcohol consumption more than socioeconomic status alone (Roche et al., 2015).

As mentioned in Chapter One, Namibia is one of the countries with the highest inequality ratings in the world (NPC, 2020; WID, 2021). These participants' living circumstances and environments are rooted in Namibian historical accounts (Katjavivi, 1989). Black and Coloured people were forcibly relocated to impoverished areas in 1958. Black communities continue to live in these areas where opportunities remain scarce, and many young people continue to engage in negative activities. Three offenders grew up in areas designated for Black people, and seven lived in rural settings. These areas, marked by poverty, suffer from the worst education systems, with the highest alcohol abuse, poverty, and crime rates (UNICEF, 2021).

The exosystem encompasses aspects of the economic and political climate. Alcohol-related crime and violence impose significant costs on individuals and communities in managing their aftermath (IAS, 2020). These expenses further burden economies and communities, particularly poor communities, already facing challenges. Conditions such as elevated poverty rates, high income inequality, high unemployment, and limited access to quality education have been associated with heightened crime rates. A lack of economic prospects and financial strain may drive individuals to turn to criminal activities, including violence, to meet their basic needs to survive or to acquire necessary resources (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015; WHO, 2014).

Additionally, political factors such as government policies, corruption, and law enforcement practices also play a role in the prevalence of violent crime (Goldstein et al., 2020;

Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015; WHO, 2014). For example, weak law enforcement and corruption can create a culture of impunity, where individuals feel they can commit violent acts without facing the consequences. This may be the case with the rural areas, and the impression of the offenders that the justice system and law enforcement in Namibia are corrupt. Many of them had multiple previous delinquent acts and transgressions of the law for which they did not get sentenced.

The complex interplay of substance use patterns, antisocial friendships, socioeconomic conditions, and public policies contributes to the prevalence of crime and violence in society. Addressing these factors holistically can help mitigate crime rates and improve overall social well-being. For these participants, alcohol abuse and associating with deviant peers comprise one of the factors contributing to violent behaviour.

I have discussed the three interrelated systems as depicted in Figure 6.5: lifestyle, culture, and religion (exosystem and macrosystem); family and immediate environment (microsystem and mesosystem); and the Namibian context (exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem). It's crucial to recognise and appreciate that these systems are interconnected and exert continuous, simultaneous, and varying influences on the individual. The chronosystem also has a continuous impact on all aspects and systems. In the following section, I delve into the personality and character traits I identified as the most prominent in the participants. Subsequently, I compile the concluding descriptive data to address the research questions and proceed to analyse and present the participants' identities.

Identity, Personality, and Character

The primary themes of personality and character illustrate the participants' identity, highlighting their self-perception and how others view them. These themes highlight attributes of the participants observed by themselves, their significant others, and the CMO, and revealed through their behaviour recorded in the case notes. These traits may be influenced by a combination of factors, including the immediate environment, moral principles, and external institutions like the church. Additionally, genetics and various circumstances within interconnected environments can reinforce these traits. These interrelated environments represent the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem.

Character

Character encompasses the virtues acquired through upbringing, encompassing individual self-perception, objectives, and principles (Bajraktarov, Gudeva-Nikovska et al., 2017; Bajraktarov,

Novotni, et al., 2017; Conrad et al., 2013; Nucci, 2019). Character is seen as a product of various factors, including the environment, individual mental capabilities, moral principles, and ethical values. According to Nucci (2019), aspects contributing to character, such as fundamental moral thinking, social-emotional skills, and emotional self-regulation, necessitate deliberate cultivation and nurturing. Three sub-themes under the main character theme are traits, faith and religion, and culture and values.

A key observation I made during the analysis is that most participants have numerous similar character traits. Under the theme character, I discuss the most important aspects under the three sub-themes: traits, faith and religion, and culture and values. Characteristics drawn from the data contributed to addressing the research question:

- How do offenders perceive their own personalities?

The traits observed as most prominent include emotional dysregulation, aggression, manipulation, and hostility. I discuss these in greater detail below.

Emotional dysregulation and lack of self-control. The data revealed that these participants are sensitive to criticism, emotionally reactive, tend to take offence easily and exhibit poor emotional regulation. They struggle to manage emotions, particularly anger. Understanding and identifying emotions is crucial for managing and controlling intense emotions like anger.

Self-regulation is governed by multiple brain regions, such as the PFC and amygdala, and it relates to an individual's ability to exert cognitive control over their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. It factors in various behaviours, including alcohol and substance abuse, violent acts, sexual offences, and other impulsive or risk-taking actions. When self-regulation is impaired, it can lead to emotional outbursts, potentially involving aggressive behaviour (Baker et al., 2013; Gillespie et al., 2017; Ling et al., 2019). As per Cimino et al. (2022), emotional regulation extends beyond simply managing emotional arousal. It also includes aspects like awareness, understanding, the ability to accept emotions, and the skill to control one's actions irrespective of their current emotional state. Essential attributes encompass the ability to identify, understand, and acknowledge one's emotional responses, goal-oriented behaviour, impulse control, and strategies for managing emotional reactivity (Cimino et al., 2022).

Individuals who have difficulties regulating negative emotions, which are associated with specific brain regions, might be at an elevated risk of engaging in aggressive and violent

behaviour. This sheds light on why violent offenders often struggle to regulate their emotions, particularly in response to stress or negative emotional states (Baker et al., 2013; Batrinos, 2012; Coppola, 2017; Darby et al., 2018; Li et al., 2019; Ling et al., 2019; Lischinsky & Lin, 2020; Ott & Nieder, 2019). Those who display antisocial, violent, and psychopathic tendencies may share deficiencies in emotional regulation capacity, resulting in an inability to control impulsive or aggressive behaviour, thereby increasing the likelihood of engaging in violent actions (Glen & Raine, 2014; Herpers et al., 2014; Ling et al., 2019; Raine, 2018). Early exposure to adverse environmental conditions can profoundly impact the development of brain regions associated with emotion regulation. Studies suggest that children exposed to exceptionally high environmental challenges may develop unique regulatory strategies, including an increased reliance on emotional suppression, in contrast to their peers from safer neighbourhoods. This adaptation may serve as a coping mechanism to manage the unique stressors and social pressures they face within their communities (McCoy et al., 2016). Poor emotional regulation and avoidance, coupled with inadequate problem-solving skills, can result in explosive loss of control.

Many participants, such as Eliphas, Ismael, and Jacob (57:35), frequently engaged in the suppression of emotions, conflict avoidance, and emotional suppression, which would lead to emotional outbursts and loss of control. This behaviour may be influenced by genetic predisposition but also learned through behaviour modelling and a lack of emotional problem-solving skills.

Aggression. Aggression is a deliberate action with immediate intent to inflict harm on another individual (Allen & Anderson, 2017; Allen et al., 2018; Asherson & Cormand, 2016; R. J. R. Blair, 2016; Mancke et al., 2018; Padurariu et al., 2016). Aggression is one of the most common characteristics among these participants. Violent individuals often exhibit a pattern of aggression and antisocial behaviour, which may develop early in life (Hagenbeek et al., 2016; Hagenbeek et al., 2018, Wrangham, 2017).

David is the only participant with no history of aggression and is not described as aggressive by the CMO. All others have a history of aggressive behaviour, mainly aggressive ways to resolve conflict. For example, Jacob used aggression to protect himself and other vulnerable children at school that he felt were being bullied (65:17). Ismael also has a history of aggression towards his ex-girlfriends (56:31). Most participants like Brandon (12:53), Jacob (65:70), and Cleophas acknowledged that their aggression would be exacerbated by alcohol consumption.

Brandon admitted that drinking and fighting frequently went hand in hand. Many participants have a history of aggression, including charges and convictions of assault.

Manipulative. A manipulation is a form of influence that involves trying to alter how someone would naturally behave without the manipulator's involvement (Susser et al., 2019). Manipulation involves employing deceitful strategies. Deceitfulness involves a deliberate effort by an individual, often using methods like lying, to manipulate another person's mental state and reactions by making them believe something that is untrue (Bosco & Gabbatore, 2017). The interviews revealed that deception and manipulation were common practices among offenders and were perceived as normal behaviours within the correctional facility. The CMO described many participants as deceitful and manipulative, including Anthony, Freddy, Hannes, and Jacob. They habitually resorted to lying, cheating, and other dishonest tactics to attain their objectives. These individuals often displayed characteristics such as secrecy, insincerity, and inauthenticity.

Hostile. Hostility encompasses expressions of anger, frustration, and disappointment toward others and situations, as well as overt hostility such as fighting, sarcasm, and emotional abuse (Padilla-Walker et al., 2015). Most participants were described as hostile by the CMO. They were described as antagonistic and often very unpleasant to be around. Thus, they regularly appeared annoyed and irritable, easily infuriated, and enraged. Anthony, Brandon, Freddy, and Jacob have multiple entries in their criminal profiles indicating hostility. These traits might have been influenced by their environment, such as modelling the behaviour of primary caregivers or others as they were growing up. The hostility may also have developed as a coping mechanism to project strength and confidence. The environment, friendships, and interactions with prosocial friends may have influenced and shaped these characteristics.

Based on these common traits, it seems clear that most participants' traits, particularly collective, may have contributed to them eventually succumbing to violent and criminal behaviour. Anthony, Brandon, Cleophas, Eliphas, Freddy, and Gerson, are impulsive, and Anthony, Freddy, and Jacob are confrontational. Apart from David and Gerson, most others exhibit aggressive behaviour, mostly Brandon, Freddy, Jacob, and Cleophas. Impulsivity, confrontation, and poor emotional regulation can lead to explosive aggression. Aggression and violence are closely associated with antisocial behaviour and criminal activity.

The participants exhibited various antisocial tendencies, including a lack of inhibition, empathy, and remorse, as well as engaging in extreme violence and aggressive behaviours, which were characteristic of their behaviour (Johnson, 2019; Jurjako et al., 2019; Newbury-Helps et al.,

2017). Antisocial behaviour, such as adolescent deviance, alcohol and drug abuse, fighting, suspension or expulsion from school, and truancy, is part of the behavioural repertoire for Anthony, Brandon, Eliphas, Freddy, Hannes, and Jacob.

As mentioned earlier, beliefs, values, faith, and religion are crucial components of character, and this was a prominent finding in this research. Many participants often relate their behaviour and decisions to Christianity and the Bible. I next discuss Christianity and culture together.

Christianity and culture

The majority of Namibians, estimated at 80% to 90%, adhere to Christianity (Prill, 2020). Consistent with this statistic, all the participants in the study were raised in households where Christianity served as the foundational framework for child-rearing practices. Only David and Ismael, who were also raised as Christians, do not identify as Christians. However, Ismael refers to biblical principles of households and men as the head of the house. The rest of the participants repeatedly refer to the Bible, God and their Christian faith. However, most aspects of the participants' professed beliefs as Christians and their practiced behaviour are in stark contradiction. This is apparent in analysing their criminal profiles, the CMO's impressions, significant others' accounts, their case notes, and the official records.

Notably, most use Christianity to explain that their actions can be attributed to external forces. For example, Cleophas blamed the devil for his aggressive behaviour. He exonerated himself and blamed external forces, as he explained, "the kind of person who can't do these things that had happened on those days". He referred to the things that "happened". However, he is the one who repeatedly engaged in violent actions and was responsible for the deaths of several individuals over the years. This may be indicative of participants' employing an external locus of control. As per the APA (2023), individuals characterised by an external locus of control often react to external circumstances and view their life outcomes as determined by factors beyond their influence. This is consistent with the coping mechanisms observed among many participants, who tend to attribute their situations to external factors that are perceived as beyond their control. These factors may include luck, fate, injustice, bias, or the actions of others.

Hannes blamed the government and the devil for sodomy and many issues in the facility. He also explained that God allowed this to "happen to him" and that it happened to change him for the better. Ismael and Jacob blamed disrespectful women for their violent actions, and Gerson

attributed his circumstances to witchcraft. According to David, he was a victim because "other people look for arguments and trouble self" (25:47), and this is how he got into the problem.

The third significant aspect impacting character formation is culture and tradition. I discuss the opinions that the participants expressed, and that reveals a part of their character below.

Culture and tradition. Culture plays a substantial role in shaping power dynamics within society. It establishes expectations, guides interactions, and influences gender relationships. In historically patriarchal contexts like Namibia, cultural norms and beliefs often reinforce the idea that women hold a subordinate position to men, which can heighten the risk of violence against women and contribute to gender inequalities (Ambunda & De Klerk, 2008; Becker, 2006; Chitando et al., 2021; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Selebano, 2019; Tamale, 2014). In Christian culture, traditional family structures often exhibited a strong patriarchal influence, with the notion that domesticity symbolised femininity (Ahinkorah et al., 2018; Becker, 2006; John, 2021).

The values, opinions, and perceptions of these participants were significantly influenced by their cultural background, religion, and upbringing and shaped many decisions and actions they took. They justified their opinions on same-sex relationships by referring to sodomy as a sin in the Bible, believing men are the breadwinners, and women should be respectful and submissive to their husbands. Their opinions on sexual relationships, public and justice matters, and their sense of power were all informed by their cultural and religious context, but their actions often do not align with these beliefs.

Having examined the factors influencing the participants' character, which contributes to their identity, I next discuss the key aspects of personality that shape their identity. This discussion encompasses behaviours, emotions, and cognitive processes, all of which play significant roles in shaping a person's identity.

Personality

Personality comprises enduring traits that shape how individuals think, feel, and behave. It is a multifaceted and intricate concept characterised by deeply ingrained patterns of emotional and behavioural traits that manifest spontaneously across various aspects of an individual's mental functioning (Bleidorn et al., 2019; Conrad et al., 2013; Nucci, 2018). The most important personality components I discuss are behaviour, thinking, and emotion. These contribute to answering the research questions:

- How do offenders perceive their own personalities?
- What kinds of relationships have offenders had in the past, and have in the present?
- How have offenders' life experiences influenced their behaviour?

Prominent behaviours revealed in the data include aggression, substance abuse, confrontational and defiant attitudes, impulsivity, and intimidation. Substance abuse is a prevalent issue among violent offenders. Alcohol and drug use can exacerbate pre-existing aggressive tendencies, impair judgment, and reduce inhibitions, increasing the likelihood of engaging in violent behaviour, increasing criminality, and being detrimental to persons and communities (Asherson & Cormand, 2016b; Baker et al., 2013; Gillespie et al., 2018b; Glenn & Raine, 2014; Hagenbeek et al., 2018; Lui et al., 2013; Pinna & Manchia, 2017).

The most persistent personality traits, encompassing behavioural, emotional, and cognitive aspects, derived from the data analysis, are discussed below. Research has shown that distinct emotions, even when they share the same emotional tone (positive or negative), can have varying effects on how individuals process information, make judgments, and respond to situations, events, and objects (Brader & Marcus, 2013). Emotions play a significant role in influencing the actions of offenders, particularly in their interactions with others.

Jealous. Jealousy is a basic emotional response that is common among both humans and animals. However, in humans, it evolved into a more complex form as cognitive abilities. Essentially, jealousy is an emotional state that arises when an individual perceives a threat to a significant interpersonal relationship from an outsider (Chung & Harris, 2018; Lennarz et al., 2017). While jealousy can have an adaptive and positive role in preserving relationships, it can also lead to problematic behaviours like aggression or persistent dwelling on the issue, which may contribute to detrimental actions, including violence (Lennarz et al., 2017).

The CMO described many participants as jealous. According to the CMO, several participants who exhibit jealousy also exhibit tendencies of male chauvinism. Anthony and Eliphas are described as womanisers, and they also proudly talk about themselves as such. Disputes and evidence of jealous behaviour are found in the criminal profiles of Ismael and Jacob. The crimes committed by David, Jacob, Cleophas, and Anthony are related to outbursts of jealousy. Antisocial cognitions and a sense of grandiosity also emerge as notable patterns among many participants with jealousy as a trait. These cognitive tendencies may contribute to the behavioural patterns mentioned above, which may be influenced by genetics, family background, and peer relationships.

Anger. Anger is linked to experiencing frustrating events, perceived as inevitable, externally caused, and unjust and this may lead to actions to protect or defend (Rico et al., 2017). Anger and hostility are frequently observed emotions in individuals who commit violent crimes. Anger is a powerful and intricate emotion, often linked to aggression. It spans from initial thoughts and ideas to physical arousal and can play a significant role in violent behaviour (Padurariu et al., 2016). Moreover, feelings of hostility and irritability can contribute to the amplification of anger, and exaggerated anger and aggressive behaviour are correlated with psychopathy (Blair, 2015; Miller & Lynam, 2015).

Anger is a common emotion among participants, and many struggle to manage conflict non-violently. Several participants, including Eliphas, Ismael, and Jacob, said that it takes a considerable amount of time before they become angry, but once they do, they lose control of their actions. David avoids anger, while others like Brandon and Cleophas become angry very quickly. Most participants, such as Brandon, Cleophas, Freddy, Jacob, and Ismael, commonly identify anger as problematic because they struggle to manage it.

Insecure. Psychologically insecure individuals tend to perceive the world as a threat and see life as uncertain. On the other hand, emotional security is characterised by self-acceptance and confidence, which promotes positive relationships. Insecure individuals may struggle with trust issues because they fear potential harm from others (Taormina & Sun, 2015). The perception of being disrespected and undermined generated feelings of insecurity in most participants. They commonly expressed emotions of abandonment, disrespect, and frustration, which often led to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, resentment, or anger in them. Jacob (65:90), Ismael, Brandon (12:6) and David (24:9) felt disrespected. David (25:28) felt abandoned. Ismael's mother explained how his girlfriend and her mother repeatedly disrespected him (58:18). Most participants react through angry, defensive externalising behaviours while others feel sadness and react through internalising behaviours such as self-isolating.

Intimidation. Intimidating behaviour, as outlined by the APA (2015), entails using threats and negative consequences to coerce others into complying with requests or demands. Individuals with this trait employ intimidation to manipulate persons or situations. Participants like Brandon, Eliphas, Freddy, Ismael, and Jacob used threats to control others and situations, including threatening their victims, members of the public, police, or correctional officers. The CMO mentioned this behaviour, which is also recorded in the Case Notes of these participants on multiple occasions.

Alcohol abuse. Alcohol abuse entails a recurring pattern of compulsive substance use characterised by frequent and significant negative consequences across various aspects of life, including social, professional, legal, or personal areas (APA, 2023). The consequences entail regular work or school absenteeism, legal troubles, and marital difficulties. Alcohol and substance abuse is also associated with aggression, violence, and criminal behaviour because individuals might resort to aggression to obtain alcohol, or aggressive acts may occur while under the influence of alcohol (Liu et al., 2013). Alcohol use, particularly binge drinking, poses a significant public health concern and is linked to various forms of violence (Khan et al., 2016).

Alcohol and drug use and abuse may lead to disinhibition, thus poor emotional regulation and exacerbate emotions such as anger, leading to outbursts and subsequently triggering reactive aggression and associated behaviour (Padurariu et al., 2016; Swogger et al., 2015). All participants exhibited a pattern of regularly binge drinking and displayed poor insight regarding responsible alcohol consumption. Similar patterns of binge drinking were evident in the narratives of Anthony, Brandon, Eliphas, Freddy, Hannes, Ismael, and Jacob. In addition to alcohol, Hannes, Jacob, and Gerson used other substances, such as cannabis, mandrax, ecstasy, and glue (Pattex).

Lack empathy. Empathy encompasses automatic, affective, and cognitive responses. It refers to the capacity to feel emotions, perceive, and comprehend the source of those emotions while acknowledging that the source or stimulus belongs to someone else (Cuff et al., 2014). Lack of empathy and shallow emotions may play a role in proactive acts of aggression (Blair, 2015; Blair, 2013; Gillespie et al., 2019; Miller & Lynam, 2015; Neumann et al., 2015; Qadeer et al., 2021). A lack of empathy is a common characteristic of individuals who engage in violent criminal behaviour, because when paired with a lack of sympathy, guilt, and remorse, and impulsivity, it is associated with socially deviant lifestyles (Blair, 2015, 2013; Miller & Lynam, 2015). This deficiency can lead to a disregard for the feelings and well-being of others, ultimately resulting in violent behaviour. A lack of empathy was notably observed in Freddy, Jacob, Cleophas, Anthony, Ismael, and Eliphas while others displayed varying degrees of empathy.

Antisocial tendencies. Antisocial tendencies encompass **cognitions and behaviour**, such as rule-breaking, impulsivity, a disregard for the rights and feelings of others, lack of inhibition, empathy and remorse, extreme violence, and aggression, characterised the behaviour of several participants (Johnson, 2019; Jurjako et al., 2019; Newbury-Helps et al., 2017). This behaviour can manifest in various forms, such as physical aggression, verbal aggression, or relational aggression. Freddy, Jacob, Anthony, and Eliphas mostly exhibited these cognitions and behaviour. Others, like

Brandon, Cleophas, Hannes, Ismael, and Gerson exhibited certain antisocial cognitions and behaviour, although to a lesser extent.

Impulsive. Impulsivity refers to behaviour characterised by minimal or no consideration, forethought, or evaluation of potential outcomes or consequences, especially in situations involving risk-taking (VandenBos, 2015). Impulsivity, acting without thinking, was a common trait among several participants. Anthony, Brandon, Cleophas, Freddy, and Gerson were described as impulsive by the CMO. Others like Eliphas and Anthony also described themselves as impulsive, particularly when angry.

External locus of control. All the offenders exhibited varying degrees of an external locus of control. They attributed their situations to external factors beyond their control, like luck, fate, injustice, bias, or others' actions (APA, 2023). This view absolves them of personal responsibility for their crimes, allowing them to believe that events primarily happened to them rather than being choices they made. Some even placed blame on their victims, avoiding accountability. Most blamed the devil for their demise. They explained that there was a reason for what happened to them, whether luck, fate, injustice, bias, or other people's actions. Brandon blamed his uncles. David blamed "other people" who "look for arguments and trouble self". Freddy blamed his mother for contributing to his situation through her negligence as a mother. Cleophas blamed the devil, "It's the work of the devil... ". Ismael and Jacob blamed women and the correctional services. Hannes also blamed outside factors and rationalised his actions by using the Bible. Eliphas (30:56) and Gerson also refer to the devil and witchcraft.

Male chauvinism. Many of the participants' views aligned with male chauvinistic and patriarchal norms and values. They perceived women as inferior to men and expected women to be subservient to men, drawing on cultural, traditional, and biblical perspectives to justify their beliefs. Throughout history, African tradition, and religion, have often promoted male chauvinism, resulting in significant disadvantages for women. This notion of male is often supported by cultural and biblical references, suggesting that women's inferiority is divinely ordained (Ezebuilo, 2019).

These values, beliefs, and traditional practices are often detrimental and unjust, infringing upon women's human rights, perpetuating gender inequality, and contributing to issues like GBV (Alweendo et al., 2018; Ambunda & De Klerk, 2008; Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014; Chitando et al., 2021; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Ezebuilo, 2019; Martin, 2020b; Selebano, 2019).

These participants who shared these chauvinistic perspectives normalised men having multiple sexual partners and infidelity while expecting monogamy and loyalty from women. Anthony and Eliphas admitted this about themselves, boasting of infidelity and having many children with different women. Most other participants also had histories of multiple relationships and having children with multiple women.

Having discussed character and personality traits, I look at the conceptualisation and definition of identity in the literature and the typical criminal identity types identified in the literature. After that, I discuss the identity types I have extracted as the participants' most prominent identities based on this study's results.

Identity

Identity comprises the experience or perception of oneself as novel, a sense of continuity, self-esteem, self-appraisal, and the capacity for managing broad emotionality (Zahid & Goth, 2022). An individual's identity is influenced by their self-perception, unique traits such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, and resilience, as well as their social roles and affiliations, such as being a student, Christian, or feminist, among others (Gottlieb et al., 2021; Haslam et al., 2021). The identity traits of individuals who commit violent crimes are diverse and complex, making it difficult to establish a definitive profile. Nevertheless, scholars have identified several common identity traits that can be found among violent, repeat offenders, and criminogenic cognitions are the most pertinent (Defoe, 2021; Howell & Griffiths, 2018; Mancke et al., 2018; Međedović, 2017; Mihalic & Elliott, 2015; Whited et al., 2015; World Prison Brief (WPB), 2023; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017). Criminogenic cognitions encompass distinctive cognitive styles, thinking patterns, and belief systems that predict and precede criminal and antisocial behaviour (Andrews & Bonta, 2016; Whited, 2015; Zeigler-Hill, 2017). Criminogenic cognitions were also common among most of the participants in this study.

Firstly, I list and briefly discuss the common traits of violent offenders stated in the literature. After that, I list the common identities among the participants based on the results of this study.

Common Identities among Violent Offenders based on Literature

History of victimisation. A significant number of violent offenders are victims of violence themselves. Based on literature, experiencing childhood abuse, neglect, or exposure to violence can lead to the development of cognitive patterns, hostility, and deficiencies in social problem-

solving skills and may contribute to the development of aggressive and antisocial behaviours in adulthood (Contreras & Cano, 2016; Girard et al., 2019; Gould, 2015). This phenomenon, known as the "cycle of violence," highlights the importance of early intervention, support and education for children and parents, and support for victims of violence to prevent future criminal behaviour (Contreras & Cano, 2016; Girard et al., 2019; Gould, 2015; The office of the First Lady of The Republic of Namibia (FLON, 2018)). This study's findings also indicate that most participants experienced violence during their childhood. Some witnessed domestic abuse, and most were regularly subjected to corporal punishment at school and home. Freddy received state-sanctioned corporal punishment multiple times, Eliphas experienced traumatic events as a soldier in the army, and Cleophas was a migrant worker who was abused and tortured during the apartheid era.

Low self-control. Low self-control is a common identity trait among violent offenders. Self-control involves emotional processing, which is impacted by processes such as decision-making, attention, emotion regulation, impulse control, moral reasoning, and social understanding (Baker et al., 2013; Batrinos, 2012; Coppola, 2018; Q. Li et al., 2020; Lischinsky & Lin, 2020; Ott & Nieder, 2019). Individuals with low self-control are more prone to engaging in impulsive, risky, and antisocial behaviours, increasing the likelihood of committing violent acts (Defoe, 2021; Mancke, 2018). Furthermore, low self-control may contribute to substance abuse, exacerbating the risk of violence (Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), 2016; Liu et al., 2014; Pratt & Cullen, 2000). My findings also suggest that low self-control is a common trait among most participants like Eliphas, Freddy, Ismael, and Jacob who all have difficulty controlling and managing anger.

Masculinity. Research has consistently shown that men are likelier than women to engage in violent behaviour (WPB, 2015). Globally, more than 90% of violent offenders are comprised of men (UNODC, 2022). This gender difference may be linked to social and cultural factors that emphasise certain aspects of masculinity, such as dominance and aggression. This phenomenon is also present among these participants. The CMO identified Hannes, Freddy (35:8), Eliphas and Jacob (69:5) as dominant because they are difficult, strong, destructive, influential, and capable of leading. Culture and religion have impacted the perception of gender roles held by the participants. According to the WHO (2013), the prevalence of intimate partner violence in Africa is among the highest globally. These gender norms can perpetuate violence, especially when combined with other risk factors (Alweendo et al., 2018; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; LAC, 2010; Martin, 2020b; Selebano, 2019).

Socioeconomic status. Individuals with low income levels, low education levels, inequality, and alcohol abuse have an increased risk of violence. Thereby, the lower socioeconomic demographic is disproportionately represented among violent offenders (UN, 2022; UNDP, 2019). Social disorganisation theory posits that disadvantaged neighbourhoods characterised by poverty, unemployment, and limited resources are more likely to experience high levels of crime and violence (da Silva, 2014; de Courson & Nettle, 2021; Frank et al., 2019; Kubrin & Wo, 2015; Mihalic & Elliott, 2015). This relationship between socioeconomic status and violent crime underscores the importance of addressing socioeconomic inequalities to reduce crime rates.

Gang involvement. Gang involvement is a common identity trait among violent offenders. Gang members are more likely to engage in violent behaviour due to group dynamics, territorial disputes, and the normalisation of violence within the gang culture (Howell & Griffiths, 2018). The participants in this study mentioned the existence of gangs within the correctional facility, but they claim not to be members of these gangs. Additionally, there is no evidence of them belonging to gangs before they were incarcerated. However, some participants, such as Anthony and Freddy, had social circles in the past that exhibited collective behaviours similar to those of gangs.

The following section offers an in-depth analysis and discussion of the identity types derived from the data collected from the participants.

Participants' Identities

Personality, identity, and criminal activity

Personality is a complex concept consisting of deeply rooted patterns of emotional and behavioural traits (Bleidorn et al., 2019; Conrad et al., 2013; Nucci, 2018). The concept of identity has evolved from foundational work by Erikson and Erikson (1997) to more recent elaborations by Larrivé (2013), who expanded the definition to encompass aspects like self-esteem, self-appraisal, and the capacity to manage broad emotionality. An individual's identity comprises their unique attributes and the social groups they associate with (Gottlieb et al., 2021; Haslam et al., 2021). Thus, identity encompasses personal and social aspects.

Character and temperament are significant in shaping a person's personality, and together with their life experiences, the individual's personal and social identity is created. There is no direct link between personality and criminal activity. However, it's important to recognise

that specific personality types and traits can make individuals more prone to criminal behaviours. Criminality is a complex phenomenon with no single, straightforward explanation, and offenders are diverse (Ling et al., 2019; Raine, 2018). Each offender possesses a distinct identity shaped by their personality, environment, and experiences, including mental illness, predisposition, and peer influence (Johnson, 2019; Liu et al., 2014; Padurariu, 2016; Wrangham, 2018).

Participants' Identity Profiles

Identity formation is a complex and ongoing process, influenced by various factors such as personal experiences, social environment, and cultural context (Fadjukoff et al., 2016; Kroger, 2013; Schwartz et al., 2014; van Doeselaar et al., 2020). Identity is not fixed, it is a social process, constructed and reconstructed in interpersonal negotiations and interactions (Thornberg, 2015).

Based on the results of this study, the following identities fit the participants, considering Erikson's ego identity definition (Erikson, 1968; Erikson & Erikson, 1997) and more recent conceptualisations of identity (Gottlieb et al., 2021; Haslam et al., 2021; Larrivée, 2013; Schwartz et al., 2014). It is crucial to note that these identities are not mutually exclusive, and individuals may exhibit elements of multiple identities. Intervention and support from mental health professionals, family, and community resources could help individuals develop a more adaptive and prosocial identity over time (Bonta & Andrews, 2016; Fraguera-Vale et al., 2020; Varela et al., 2020).

Below, I list and provide a detailed explanation of the six identity types and the subtypes. I provide an overall summary of the six identity types based on the findings. Table 6.2 provides the terminology used for the identity types, and Figure 6.6 provides the identity of each participant.

Criminal identity

Criminal identity involves personality traits, and characteristics centred around criminality. The individuals who fit this identity type show a lack of concern for others' well-being, disregard for social norms, and a strong inclination toward criminal behaviour (Andrews & Bonta, 2016).

Pro-criminal cognitions. Criminogenic cognitions are common among all these participants. These cognitions are thinking patterns of persons who have pro-criminal attitudes, condone, support, and engage in criminal activities (Bonta & Andrews, 2016; Simane-Vigante et al., 2017). The findings suggest that many participants consistently participated in delinquent and

criminal acts for personal benefit. They surrounded themselves with individuals who shared similar views and either endorsed, aided, or ignored criminal behaviour, as long as they avoided legal consequences. For most of them, even legal penalties did not deter them from engaging in illegal activities again. Based on their traits, pro-criminal beliefs, antisocial thoughts, engagement in antisocial actions, and associations with like-minded individuals, they have developed a criminal identity.

Antisocial associates. Individuals who hold pro-criminal beliefs often seek out and build relationships with others who share similar antisocial traits. These antisocial traits include a lack of self-control, empathy, or remorse, a propensity for extreme violence, and a history of aggressive behaviour (Johnson, 2019; Jurjako et al., 2019; Newbury-Helps et al., 2017). Pro-criminal friends and family members are significant in leading these individuals to commit criminal acts, as peer influence is pertinent. Most participants have a history of associating with antisocial friends and engaging in antisocial activities, including housebreaking, theft, truancy, fighting, assault and more activities that violate social norms and harm people.

Manipulative. Given the dishonest and manipulative traits of several offenders, they are willing to do whatever it takes for their personal gain. These participants have developed an identity centred around deceit and manipulation. They may see themselves as mastermind or as puppeteers, skilled at controlling others to get what they want (Bosco & Gabbatore, 2017; Susser et al., 2019). This is certainly the identity displayed by Eliphas, Jacob, and Freddy, as well as Anthony. Manipulative individuals are intent on deliberately deceiving others through various methods in order to make them believe something that is untrue and influence other people's behaviour (Bosco & Gabbarote, 2017).

The personality and character traits of this Criminal Identity type fit several participants, including Freddy, Jacob, Eliphas, Gerson, and Anthony.

Emotionally dysregulated identity

Emotion regulation involves the capacity to recognise emotions, monitor, evaluate, and modify emotional reactions in response to perceived stimuli. It also includes understanding the necessity for regulating emotions and then choosing and implementing suitable strategies to achieve specific goals (Sheppes et al., 2015). The inability to understand and identify emotions and difficulty managing and controlling intense emotions such as anger is common among all participants. This poor emotional dysregulation manifests in various proportions. For example, some participants, such as Anthony, Freddy and Jacob, are very confrontational and explosive,

while Gerson, Hannes and David tend to turn their emotions inward and be depressed. Several emotions are significant under this identity.

Anxious. Several participants like Gerson, Hannes, Ismael and David have traits of anxiety. Individuals with anxiety disorders often experience anxious anticipation, involving increased worry and tension when approaching a feared situation. They may employ avoidance behaviours, steering clear of stimuli or situations that trigger anxiety and these symptoms may debilitate them, significantly interfering with their daily functioning (Maina et al., 2016). With a history of anxiety and insecurity, individuals who tend to be mostly anxious might form an identity centred around a constant state of worry and unease. They may perceive themselves as vulnerable and powerless, contributing to their defensive and suspicious demeanour that impacts stress tolerance (Bandelow et al., 2017; Hirsh & Kang, 2016; Maina et al., 2016).

Depressed. The presence of undiagnosed depression and sadness may result in a state of depression for others. This emotional state is characterised by pervasive negative emotions, low self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness, and hopelessness about their future, irritability, and suicidal ideation (Chang et al., 2017; Cruwys et al., 2014; Maina et al., 2016; Orchard et al., 2017; Stringaris, 2017). Depressive persons may develop tendencies of being insecure and self-isolating as well. The introverted nature, history of being socially awkward, and bullying experiences might contribute to forming an insecure identity. This person may perceive themselves as inferior or unworthy, leading to poor self-esteem and difficulty forming strong social connections (Chang et al., 2017; Cruwys et al., 2014; Maina et al., 2016; Orchard et al., 2017; Stringaris, 2017).

Potentially based on their personal experiences of rejection and loneliness, David and Ismael experienced a strong sense of insecurity. Given the introverted and emotionally avoidant traits, some individuals develop an identity characterised by depression coupled with social isolation and a preference for solitude. They struggle with connecting to others and view themselves as separate from society (Chang et al., 2017; Cruwys et al., 2014; Maina et al., 2016; Orchard et al., 2017; Stringaris, 2017). Likely due to their introverted nature, coupled with personal experiences David, Gerson, Hannes, Cleophas, Brandon, and Ismael fit this identity.

Explosive. Explosive individuals are chronically highly irritable, may frequently display explosive outbursts, have a quick temper, or openly express anger (Barata et al., 2016). These individuals may exhibit poor emotional regulation and a tendency to internalise anger until they lose control. Their identity is characterised by emotional explosiveness. Low self-control is central to the emotional dysregulation exhibited by these explosive participants. Similar to teenagers and

adolescents, these participants can't interpret or express their emotional changes appropriately, and this may result in a loss of control (DeYoung, 2014; Llorca et al., 2016). They may view themselves as unable to control their anger and may even fear their emotions. Often explosive persons develop a tendency of being confrontational. With a history of aggressive conflict management, confrontational behaviour, and frustration, the offenders with these traits may often exhibit behaviour that revolves around being confrontational and argumentative (Barata et al., 2016). This emotional expression fits the identity of Anthony, Jacob, Freddy, Ismael, and Cleophas. Jacob and Ismael expressed their concern of becoming angry and losing control again. Freddy and Brandon, Cleophas, and Anthony have multiple entries in their Case Notes of reacting explosively.

Jealous. Jealousy is experienced when an individual perceives a threat to their relationships, and this may contribute to possessiveness and insecurity (Chung & Harris, 2018; Lennarz et al., 2017). This may happen in various relationships, including friendships and romantic relationships. These persons might view themselves as unable to trust their partners, which can lead to unhealthy and potentially abusive relationship dynamics. Many participants' relationship history and their crimes are related to jealousy. Anthony, Cleophas, David, Eliphas, Ismael, and Jacob exhibited jealous tendencies.

Victim identity

Individuals construct their identities as they develop and judge themselves from the standpoints of their groups and being a victim of bullying can result in a loss of belonging, self-depreciation and being socially discredited (Thornberg, 2015). Being the victim of bullying impacted several participants' identities. Individuals who were victims of bullying in their childhood may have challenges that lead them to develop a victim identity and feel they have no control over their lives.

External locus of control. Most participants attribute their situations and actions, including their crimes, to external factors beyond their control, such as luck, fate, injustice, or other people's actions (APA, 2023). By employing an external locus of control, they avoid taking responsibility and accountability. They might see themselves as victims of circumstances or other people's actions. They may perceive their criminal behaviour as a natural and unavoidable response to their life experiences. All participants exhibit this tendency.

Blaming. Due to the external locus of control and the tendency to blame others for their mistakes, these participants develop an identity that revolves around avoiding personal

responsibility (Erickson et al., 2018). They might view themselves as someone whom others have wronged, and this perception may be used to justify their violent and antisocial behaviour and reinforce their sense of being unsafe. Some people deal with transgressions in their past by means that allow them to protect themselves. For instance, they may downplay the harm that was done, deny responsibility, or blame the victims. This allows them to feel positive about who they are currently (Meerholz et al., 2019). This is a trait exhibited by several participants, such as Gerson, who sees himself as someone who is being targeted. Eliphas also sees himself as someone who is being targeted. David feels abandoned by his family.

Misogynistic identity

This identity is born through the influences of parenting, cultural, and religious influences that become internalised. Issues of sexism, racism, and other social injustices such as homophobia and religious practices like Christian evangelism were central in shifting gender dynamics, and these systems perpetuate institutionalised racism and sexism, conservative gender norms and essentialist views that equate masculinity with dominance and aggression (Alweendo et al., 2018; Davoodi et al., 2020; van Anders et al., 2022).

Christian. Most participants identify as Christians, despite the incongruence between their behaviour and the basic Christian values. Even Brandon, David, and Ismael, who do not specifically identify as Christians, narrated that they were raised with these principles. Like the rest of the participants, they used selective interpretations of religious teachings to rationalise, interpret and explain their actions. They used the Bible and tradition to justify their behaviour, gender perceptions, and expectations. For example, Ismael mentioned that a man is the anchor and head of the house. Jacob's father justified corporal punishment by the phrase, "spare the rod and spoil the child". Most participants also use the Bible to condemn same-sex relationships.

Patriarchy. The adherence to traditional masculine gender roles may result in the formation of a strong and aggressive masculine identity (Alweendo et al., 2018; Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014; Chitando et al., 2021; Ezebuilo, 2019; Martin, 2020b; Selebano, 2019). This identity is characterised by a strong sense of masculinity and the belief that men should be dominant, aggressive, and unemotional. This is the identity of most of these offenders influenced by patriarchy, including Ismael, Jacob, Anthony, and Eliphas.

Grandiosity. Grandiosity refers to an individual's exaggerated sense of their own greatness, importance, or ability (APA, 2023). The presence of grandiosity might contribute to forming an identity characterised by an inflated sense of self-worth and entitlement (Erickson et

al., 2018). These participants view themselves as superior to others, which could lead to a lack of empathy and an inclination toward criminal behaviour. Only David, Cleophas, and Brandon do not exhibit a sense of grandiosity. Gerson's grandiosity is linked to Christianity, and for Hannes, Freddy, Ismael, and Jacob, it is linked to culture and ethnic identity. For Anthony and Eliphas the grandiosity is linked to their personal view of themselves.

Substance-abusing identity

Aggressive behaviour that appears in adulthood, including IPV and GBV, may also be associated with the increased abuse of substances (LAC, 2016; Liu et al., 2013; WHO, 2021). Alcohol is a central aspect of most participants' self-concept. Alcohol was used as a coping mechanism and a form of entertainment for most of them. Most have an identity that revolves around their addiction or misuse of alcohol (Erickson et al., 2018). Only, Gerson, Hannes, and Jacob have used other substances. All of the participants have a history of binge drinking and lack insight regarding the impact of alcohol abuse. They recognise that they overindulge, yet they have low insight and do not view themselves as addicts. However, only Ismael did not consider substance use a major aspect of his life. His significant others corroborated this. The use of alcohol combined with emotional regulation problems is implicated in the criminality of all participants, apart from Ismael. Alcohol consumption, when heavy and chronic, contributes to many social ills, including violence, family breakdown, and domestic violence (Roche et al., 2015).

Low socioeconomic identity

Given the similarity in the socioeconomic circumstances of the participants, their socioeconomic status influences their identity. Poverty, alcohol abuse, and low education levels have been consistently linked to violent crime, with impoverished conditions exacerbating frustration and hopelessness, leading to increased aggression (Kauari & Kaundjua, 2015; Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), 2016; Mitonga et al., 2017). Disadvantaged neighbourhoods, poverty, access to fewer resources and opportunities for residents, and poor education contribute to the development of criminal behaviour and the exacerbation of violent crime (Mihalic & Elliott, 2015). Seven participants come from rural, poverty-stricken areas with the most disadvantaged schools. Six were raised by single mothers and are unskilled, and only one completed high school.

Summary of Identity Profiles

The results revealed a distinct pattern in the personality structure of the participants. Several factors were consistently observed among all individuals in the study. One of the most prevalent traits among the participants was the challenge of effectively managing emotional

regulation. Most of the participants exhibited reactive tendencies, often leading to emotionally explosive behaviour. This volatile nature was evident in seven of the participants, suggesting that these offenders were prone to externalising their issues.

Conversely, other participants, such as David, Hannes, and Gerson, tended to internalise their concerns. These individuals are more likely to experience feelings of sadness, low mood, and helplessness in relation to their situations. Additionally, it is important to highlight that all participants share commonalities in alcohol abuse, victim identity, and low socioeconomic status.

Religious and misogynistic identity components were present in 60% of the participants, while antisocial and criminal identities constituted 50% of the participants. This pattern of personality structure provided valuable insights into the factors that influenced the behaviour of the individuals in question. Table 6.2 provides the terminology and the acronyms applied to the identity profiles. The participants' identities that emerged through this research are presented in Figure 6.6.

Table 6.2

Identity profile terms

1	Emotionally dysregulated identity	2	Misogynistic identity
	Explosive (confrontational) (Ex)		Christianity (Ch)
	Anxious (Ax)		Patriarchy (Pa)
	Depressive (self-isolating and insecure) (Dp)		Grandiosity (Gr)
	Jealous (Je)		
3	Criminal identity	4	Victim identity
	Antisocial associates, friends, and family (Aa)		Blaming (BL)
	Pro-criminal cognitions (Cc)		External locus of control (ELC)
	Manipulative (Ma)		
5	Substance-abusing identity	6	Low socioeconomic identity
	Alcohol (Al)		Income:
			Low income (Li) Middle income (Mi)
			Low education (Ed): Primary (Pr)
			Secondary (Se), Tertiary (Te)
	Other (Cannabis, Mandrax, Glue, Ecstasy) (Oth)		Poor neighbourhood Rural (Ru) Urban (Ur)
			Poor neighbourhood Rural (Ru) Urban (Ur)

A DYNAMIC EXPLORATION OF OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF VIOLENT CRIMES

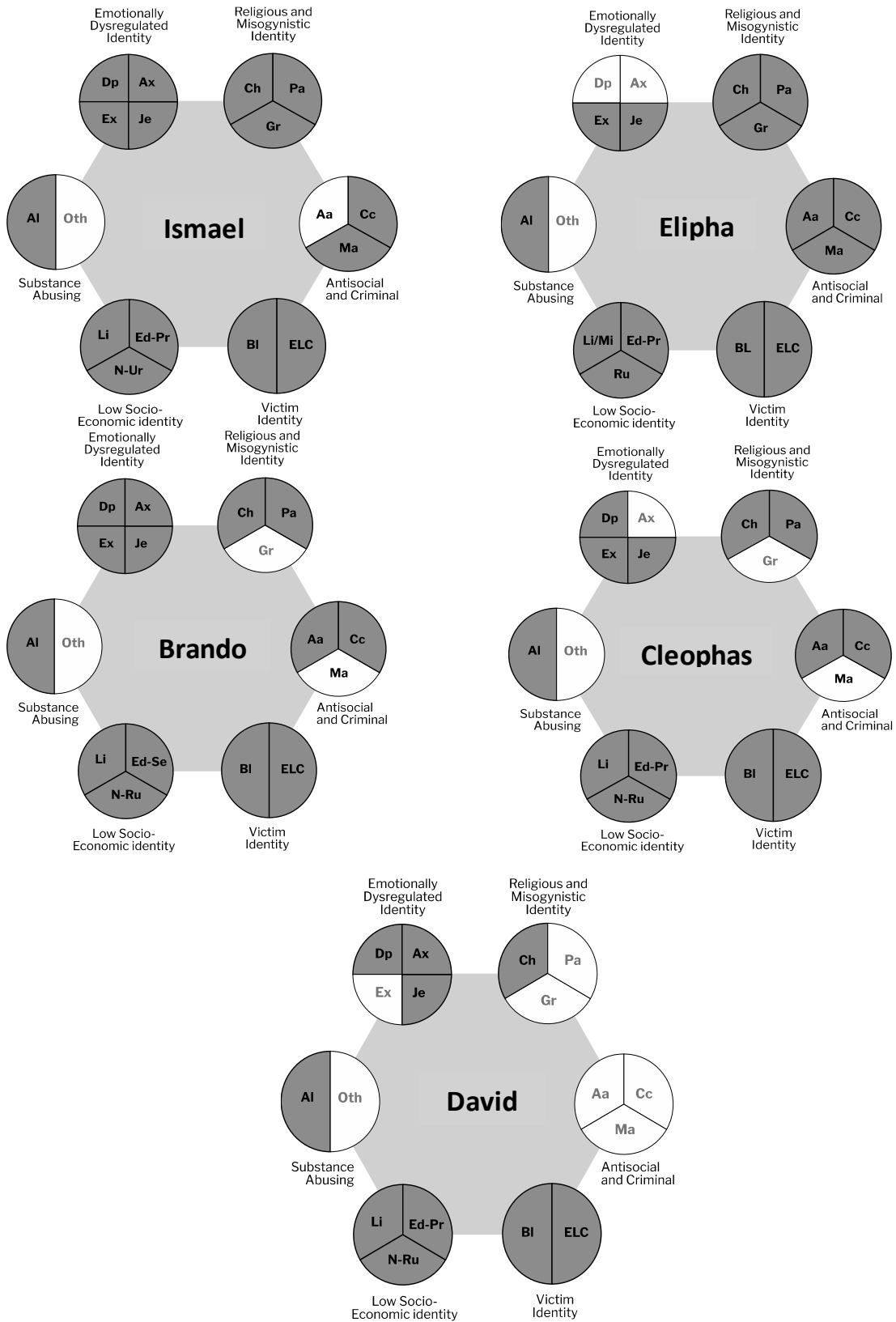


Figure 6.6
Offender identity profiles

A DYNAMIC EXPLORATION OF OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF VIOLENT CRIMES

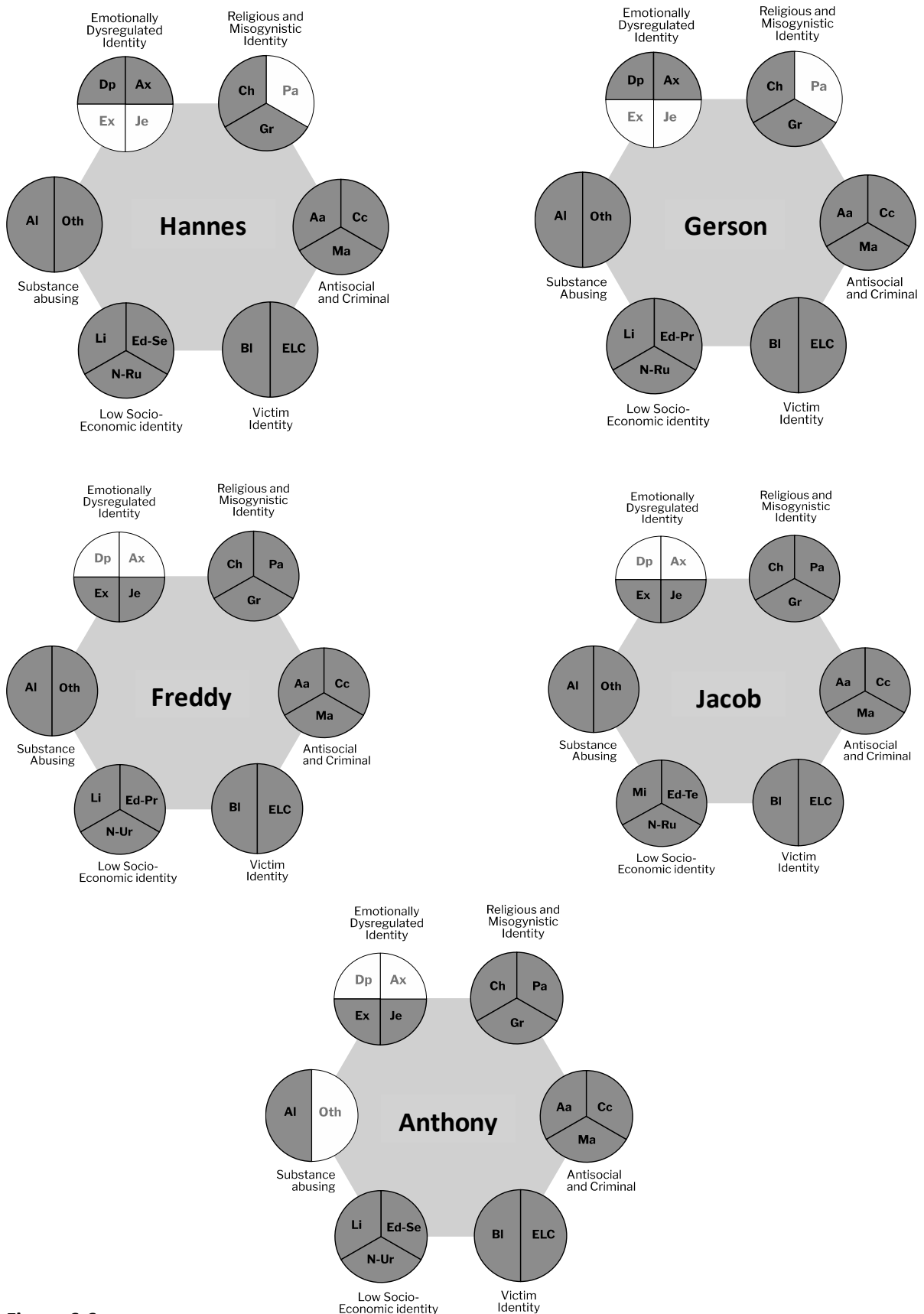


Figure 6.6
Offender identity profiles continued

Summary of the Findings and Recommendations

This section summarises the primary findings of the current study, offering insights into the participants' identity constructions based on their context, experiences, personal perceptions and interpretations, and the way significant others and the CMO perceive them. The implications of the findings are discussed, and recommendations are made for industry and future studies.

Summary of findings

Congruent with findings in the literature, this study found that the factors that lead individuals to commit violent crimes and the identity formation of the individuals who commit these crimes are complicated and multifaceted (Hagenbeek et al., 2016, 2018; Liu et al., 2013; Padurariu et al., 2016). Similarly, the factors that contribute to crime are also congruent with the factors demonstrated by the P-P-C-T model within the bioecological theory of the context, relationships, experiences over time, and cultural and social factors (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Crawford, 2020; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Poppa, 2020). The socioeconomic profile of these offenders highlighted the importance of family dynamics, peer associations, education, employment, neighbourhood and community contexts, societal factors, and financial stability in influencing their lives and criminal behaviour. Identity formation is influenced by various factors such as character, personality, temperament, and social aspects (Gottlieb et al., 2021; Haslam et al., 2021) that can have significant implications for criminal behaviour. Some key factors that affect identity formation in relation to crime that I identified include the following:

- Socioeconomic status: The participants' socioeconomic background may have significantly shaped their identity and influenced the likelihood of engaging in criminal activities. Low socioeconomic status contributed to a lack of opportunities, resources, and social support, increasing the risk of criminal behaviour (Hébert et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2015; Roche et al., 2015; Sheng, 2023; UNODC, 2019; WHO, 2021a).
- Family dynamics: Family played a crucial role in the identity formation of these participants. Dysfunctional family environments characterised by abuse, neglect, and inconsistent parenting may have negatively impacted them and increased the propensity for criminal behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; da Silva, 2014; Eck & Weisburd, 2015; Etekal & Mahoney, 2017; Hirschfield et al., 2014; Poppa et al., 2022; World Health Organisation (WHO), 2014; Yubero et al., 2017).
- Peer influence: Peer relationships were vital in shaping the participants' identity, particularly during adolescence. Association with delinquent peers can foster the development of

antisocial identities and encourage criminal behaviour (Bonta & Andrews, 2016; Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2016; Farrington, Loeber, et al., 2012; Hall, 2012; Jurjako et al., 2019; Moffitt, 1993; Simões et al., 2008; Walters, 2015, 2020).

- Education: Educational experiences also greatly impacted the participants' identity formation. Most had very limited education, and this limited their ability to earn. Low educational attainment can contribute to a diminished sense of self-worth and reduced opportunities, potentially leading to criminal behaviour (UNODC, 2019; Williams et al., 2018).
- Cultural and religious factors: Cultural and religious beliefs also played an essential role in shaping the participants' identities. As discussed earlier, certain religious principles, such as sin and forgiveness in Christianity, can have both positive and negative effects on crime (Ahinkorah et al., 2018; Alweendo et al., 2018; Davoodi et al., 2020; John, 2021; Namupala & Mushaandja, 2022; van Anders et al., 2022). They may have used religion to rationalise and justify their crimes, leading to cognitive distortions that absolve them from responsibility and normalise such behaviour (Knabb et al., 2012; Topalli et al., 2012).

Various factors, including socioeconomic status, family dynamics, peer influence, education, and cultural and religious factors, influence identity formation and can affect an individual's propensity for criminal behaviour (Johnson, 2019; Ling et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2014; Padurariu et al., 2016; Raine, 2018; Wrangham, 2018). Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective crime prevention and intervention strategies.

Chronosystem. The colonial and apartheid regimes demonstrated how historical events within the chronosystem impacted the level of violent crime in Namibia. The oppressive policies and social divisions from these periods had lasting impacts on Namibian society by contributing to poverty, alcohol abuse, limiting education, resulting in inequality, and ultimately impacting the rise in crime rates (Brasche, 2003; Hall, 2015; Melber, 2003; NSA, 2018; UNICEF, 2021).

During colonialism and apartheid, land was expropriated from natives and given to White settlers, the labour practices were exploitative, with natives underpaid and subjected to inhumane conditions, Whites received the best education and occupied positions of power and privilege (Hall, 2012; Katjavivi, 1988; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Melber, 2005, 2016, 2019b; O'Callaghan, 1977; Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015; Siiskonen, 1994; State University, n.d. - b). This created a culture of racism and discrimination with profound impacts on the micro, meso, exo, and macro-systems of Namibian society, which persists today. Historically, little was invested in the health and education system of Black Namibians, and this has contributed to high rates of

mental illness, substance abuse, and other social problems (Chipare et al., 2021; Shifiona et al., 2019; WHO, 2019, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2023).

Furthermore, religion, specifically Christianity, played a significant role in shaping Namibian society and culture. Most conversions to Christianity started in the early 19th century and about 90% of Namibians still identify as Christians (Prill, 2020; Sundstrom, 2007). Men occupied dominant societal positions, and women and girls were often denied access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities (Alesina et al., 2016; Martin, 2020b). Religion, particularly Christianity and African tradition are combined to justify gender inequality, contributing to GBV and IPV (Alweendo et al., 2018; Ambunda & De Klerk, 2008; Becker, 2006; Becker, 2010; Davoodi et al., 2020; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; van Anders et al., 2022).

Poverty, income inequality, unemployment, alcohol abuse, poor educational experiences, and societal degradation have all been associated with increased rates of violent crime, aggression, and a higher likelihood of engaging in violent behaviour (Anser et al., 2020; de Courson & Nettle, 2021; Haque & Muniruzzaman, 2020). These circumstances have made it challenging for them to build careers and accumulate wealth (Open Textbooks for Hong Kong, 2015). Patriarchal norms and values were reinforced over time, making it difficult to challenge and change these deeply ingrained beliefs and practices. These religious and patriarchal beliefs that perpetuate GBV were evidenced in the participants' narratives. Furthermore, the impact of divisiveness between the racial groups is evident in the dialogue and discourse of these participants in the form of tribalism.

Microsystem and mesosystem. Certain factors in the microsystem impacted the participants' identity and potentially contributed to their violent behaviour. These factors included fatherlessness and a predisposition to behave similarly to their fathers. The literature explains that growing up without a father figure can negatively affect a boy's emotional well-being, academic performance, social behaviour, and ability to form healthy relationships. This may increase the likelihood of risky behaviours like substance abuse, criminal activities, and aggressive conduct (Ashari, 2017; Bojuwoye & Sylvester, 2014; Buschlen et al., 2018; McLanahan et al., 2013; Radl et al., 2017). The problem behaviour may be exacerbated by cultural beliefs and societal norms perpetuating male dominance and unequal power dynamics in relationships (Athinkorah et al., 2018; Becker, 2006; John, 2021).

Additionally, living in unstable environments may also have impacted the participants' identity and criminal behaviour (Allen & Anderson, 2017a, 2017b; Wang et al., 2020; Wrangham,

2018). The unstable immediate environment included their homes, interactions with the family, peer groups and school environment, and any other experiences they may have had in their close environment. One such factor that impacted these offenders' identity and behaviour was alcohol consumption. Alcohol has been a significant social problem in Namibia since it was introduced during the colonial era (Alweendo et al., 2016; Likuwa & Shiweda, 2017; Siiskonen, 1994). The impact of alcohol abuse on families and communities has been devastating, contributing to a breakdown of the family and community in the micro and meso-systems. All the participants' drinking habits were problematic, they would binge drink, and they lacked insight regarding healthy alcohol consumption.

Attending schools in rural areas and having dropped out of school prematurely led to most of the participants having poor education levels, lacking qualifications and skills and remaining in the low-income bracket. The education system and school environment may have played a significant role in shaping these participants' identity and their risk of engaging in violent crime. Weak school attachment and poor school performance increase the probability of an offending trajectory throughout the life course, while strong school attachment and success can decrease it (Dick et al., 2019; Ling et al., 2019; Moffitt, 1993, 2006; 2018; Raine, 2018).

Exosystem and macrosystem. The normalisation of violent behaviour is a significant contributing factor to crime in a society. Factors such as societal norms, economic conditions, and public policies, as well as the influence of media, contribute to the normalisation of violent behaviour in various ways. Exposure to domestic violence by witnessing violence between their parents or caregivers may severely affect the mental and emotional well-being of individuals (Anderson et al., 2017; Bushman et al., 2015; FLON, 2018; Frank et al., 2019; Gentile & Bushman, 2012; Hasheela et al., 2020; Kauari & Kaundjua, 2015; LAC, 2016; Mitonga et al., 2017; Ndjibu et al., 2017; Patton et al., 2014; Shikongo, 2017).

Frequent exposure to violence at home, in the community, and in the media may have led to the desensitisation of these participants to violence. It may also have led to trauma, anxiety, depression, and other psychological issues. Moreover, being exposed to domestic violence may have led these participants to develop aggressive behaviours, which escalated into violent crimes (Widom et al., 2014).

Limitations inherent to the study

The findings in this study provided insight into the unique identities of the perpetrators of violent crime. They are useful in creating a unique understanding that may support developing

interventions such as rehabilitation programmes and sentencing such offenders. However, these findings need to be examined in relation to the limitations of this study.

Sample size. The study was qualitative and was conducted with a small sample size of ten offenders, their significant others, and one CMO. The sample size and the qualitative, context-bound approach limit the generalisability of the findings to a larger offender population and the ability to draw broad conclusions (Hadi & Closs, 2016; Stacey, 2019).

Scope. The scope of the study was limited because the study was restricted to only offenders serving long-term sentences for violent crimes in the Windhoek CF. Therefore, the findings are not generalisable to other correctional facilities or offenders convicted of violent crimes serving shorter sentences. The possibility exists that if more correctional facilities were included, the results may have been different.

Respondent reluctance. Some participants may have been unwilling to disclose certain information, which could have meant that some participants did not provide a comprehensive account of their life experiences. This limitation could have resulted in excluding valuable information relevant to the study and may have impacted the quality of the data collected.

Setting. The setting of the interviews in the counselling room by the courtyard may have influenced the responses given by the participants due to the distractions and interruptions. The research was also limited to conducting interviews with participants in the presence of the CMO. The offenders may have potentially withheld essential information that they were not willing to share in the presence of the CMO.

Delimitations

Timeframe. The study was conducted within a specific timeframe and may not account for changes in offender behaviour or experiences over time.

Limitations of population. The study focused on a specific population of offenders, namely male offenders who were convicted of violent crimes and were incarcerated in the Windhoek CF in Namibia. It excludes offenders serving shorter sentences or those convicted of non-violent crimes and female offenders.

Setting. The study is limited to the Windhoek CF, and it does not include other correctional facilities.

Self-report data. The study relied on self-report data, which may be subject to social desirability bias.

The researcher made efforts to address potential biases and ensure objectivity through reflexivity, detailed notetaking, and the use of multiple sources of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Mackieson et al., 2018; Probst, 2015). The study followed ethical guidelines, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality, and using a secure storage system for data.

Recommendations

This study provides valuable information, creating a platform for understanding the type of individuals who commit violent crimes and can aid in developing intervention strategies that may be more useful for the Namibian setting. Understanding and addressing the multifaceted causes of crime and violence requires a comprehensive approach considering individual behaviour, social relationships, environmental factors, and the broader economic and political context (Hagenbeek et al., 2016, 2018; Wrangham, 2018).

Acknowledging the role of substance use patterns, antisocial friendships, socioeconomic conditions, and public policies, it is possible to develop targeted interventions and strategies to mitigate crime rates and promote a safer, more inclusive society. By comprehending the multifaceted causes of crime, we can improve preventive and rehabilitative strategies for violent criminal behaviour (Gould, 2015; Mazorodze, 2020; Murhula & Singh, 2019; Raine, 2018). This is a complex task requiring a multifaceted approach. I make recommendations based on the findings of this study and the conclusions drawn from them.

Based on the areas that were most impactful in influencing the identities of these participants, as presented in the results, key interventions should target unemployment, poverty eradication, education, substance abuse, and mental health support. Additionally, collaboration among stakeholders and focused programmes can help reduce violence and promote positive change. I also recommend further research in these areas, particularly comparative studies between Namibia and other countries with similar demographics but differences in the offending population. Figure 6.7 and Figure 6.8 illustrate my recommendations.

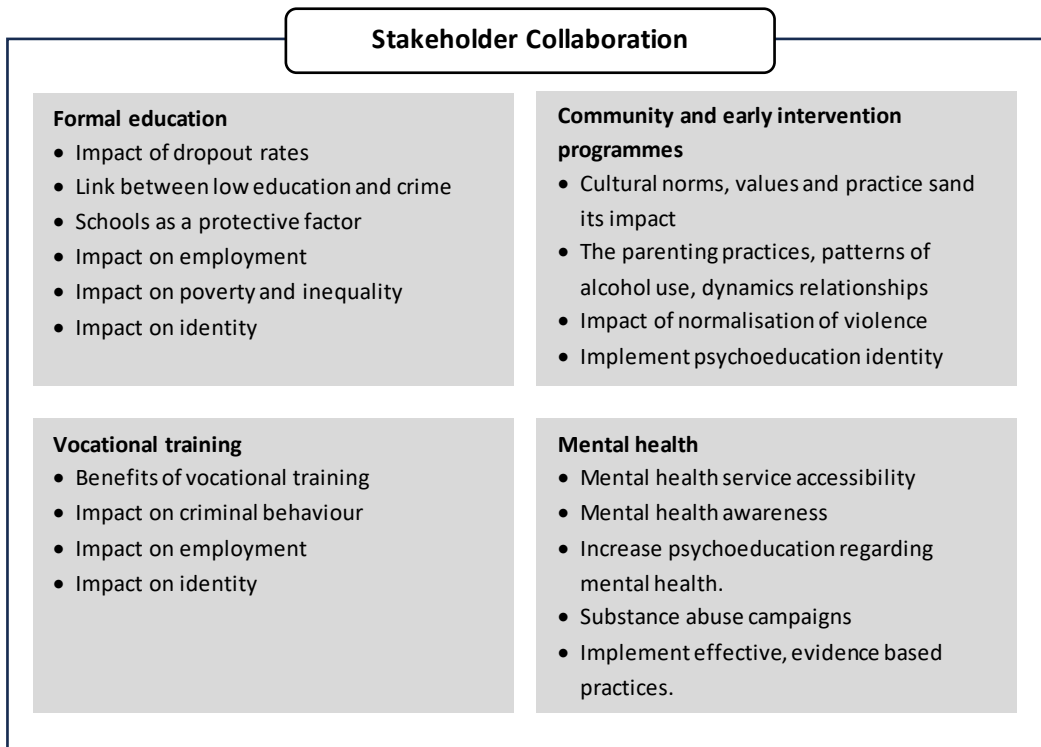


Figure 6.7

Stakeholder recommendations

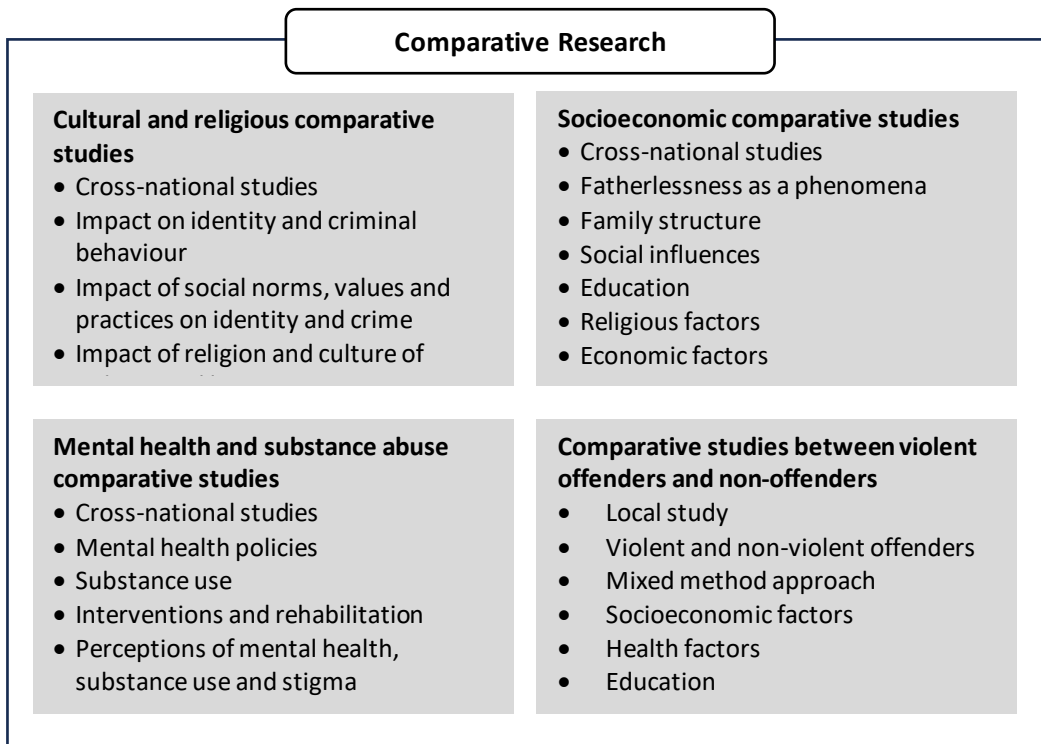


Figure 6.8

Recommendations for future research

Recommendations for stakeholders

Social norms and values strongly influence people's behaviour, attitudes towards violence, and their sense of self. These influences stem from a range of sociocultural factors, such as parenting styles, disciplinary methods, substance use patterns, relationship dynamics, national laws, and a country's history. The Namibian history of structural discrimination and impact on education and poverty impacted the Namibian crime trends. Additionally, culture can perpetuate ideas like male dominance, biological determinism, the glorification of violence, and acceptance of aggressive behaviour, which can contribute to the normalisation of violent actions (Alweendo et al., 2018; Bikinesi et al., 2017; Davoodi et al., 2020; Edwards-Jauch, 2016; Huesmann, 2018; LAC, 2010; Martin, 2020b; Olayanju et al., 2013; van Anders et al., 2022).

In this context, the study's findings reveal that, the participants are non-White males from the historically impoverished demographic of the Namibian population, they have limited education. They adhere to typical dogmatic gender perspectives rooted in cultural and religious traditions. Additionally, they maintain racially discriminatory, tribalistic perspectives that also maintain the belief in White superiority. These are the factors that impacted on the criminal behaviour of these participants. Therefore, I recommend community and early intervention programmes to target these fundamental aspects.

Community and early intervention programmes. Implementing community programmes that promote strong family bonds and educational initiatives that encourage excellence, commitment to education, and the formation of healthy peer groups could be beneficial. The interventions should target key social, economic, and cultural factors contributing to crime that I identified in this study. These factors include unstable family environments, poverty, unemployment, lack of father figures, exposure to violence, and the normalisation of violence. The intervention programmes should address the root causes of these factors and may include community-based mental health services, substance abuse treatment programmes, and efforts to reduce income inequality.

A study conducted in South Africa found that a community intervention programme, which focused on teaching life skills and promoting abstinence from drug abuse, was beneficial but did not effectively reduce recidivism (Larner, 2017). Participants in the programme still faced various pressing needs related to finances, education, mental health, and relationships that were not adequately addressed by the aftercare programme. To effectively tackle the risk factors contributing to persistent reoffending, community advocates and government authorities must

address both material and psychosocial barriers to successful community integration (Larner, 2017).

I recommend implementing family support and parenting programmes for offenders with children, focusing on positive parenting techniques and strategies to break the cycle of violence and crime. Programmes should also aim to address the issues surrounding fatherlessness and its impact on children's development and identity formation. In a South African study, the impact of living in consistently dangerous environments is linked to aggressive and violent behaviour. The continuous exposure to violence is not only linked to the emergence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) but also an increase in aggressive behaviour and violent episodes, and substance use disorders exacerbate these patterns, as drug consumption can both alleviate symptoms and lower the threshold for engaging in violent actions (Hemmings et al., 2018).

The participants in this study similarly faced multiple psycho-social and educational barriers and challenges within the family unit, including socioeconomic problems, being raised in single-mother households and substance abuse. The normalisation of violence and the normalisation of alcohol use and abuse among the participants of this research was also a significant factor that impacted their identity. Exposure to violence has adverse effects on the mental health, academic performance, and relationships of young individuals (Patton et al., 2014). Measures of violence prevention and psychotherapeutic interventions for trauma-related suffering may not be effective without enduring drug abuse rehabilitation (Hemmings et al., 2018).

Community psycho-educational campaigns on parenting skills and healthy communication in families can help raise awareness about the importance of healthy relationships and family and community cohesion. It may also teach effective disciplinary methods and help parents identify early signs of problematic behaviour, and help-seeking may be supported early on. The results of this study are congruent with literature findings that corporal punishment normalises solving conflict with violence (Alweendo et al., 2018; Gierse-Arsten, 2020; LAC, 2019; Makhasane & Chikoko, 2016; UNICEF, 2014). Most participants experienced corporal punishment in schools and at home, and this may have had an impact on their personality, identity, and their violent behaviour.

Researchers concur that effective parental supervision and active school engagement are protective factors against delinquency and criminal behaviour (Farrington et al., 2016; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017). The development of strong ties to the family during early

childhood can facilitate the formation of strong ties with peers and teachers in school (Dick et al., 2019). Initiatives targeting schools, workplaces, and community centres can foster a supportive environment that encourages individuals to build the required strong ties and to seek help when needed. By identifying and addressing concerns with their children and within families early, individuals can receive the necessary support and treatment to manage their symptoms and reduce the risk of engaging in violent acts. Research indicates that prosocial peers, interactions, or goals are recognised as protective factors. However, for these factors to be effective, the family must enforce and restrict peers for parental supervision and school engagement as protective factors to work together (Dick et al., 2019; Farrington et al., 2015; Farrington et al., 2016; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017; Kabiru et al., 2014).

I recommend financial and human resources should be invested in early intervention programmes in communities, schools, and correctional facilities with the families of the inmates. Lifeskills such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, and problem-solving skills are essential components in the prevention of violent criminal behaviour and rehabilitation of violent offenders. These life skills programmes should be part of early intervention strategies. Programmes should be designed to teach individuals coping strategies, stress and anger management, and effective communication skills. Cognitive-behavioural approaches which centre around restructuring pro-criminal cognitions and understanding and increasing the ability for self-regulation, reasoning and feelings, and the associations between the two should be focussed on (Bonta & Andrews, 2016; Vyas, 2023).

Psychoeducation programmes have the potential to influence participants' self-perception and, subsequently, impact their criminal identity. These programmes may also target cultural factors and assess the effects of harmful cultural practices and entrenched beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality within communities.

Formal education. Based on the literature, the education system and school environment play a significant role in shaping an individual's risk of engaging in violent crime. Researchers indicate that active school engagement is a protective factor against delinquency and criminal behaviour. Positive reinforcement through strong connections with pro-social teachers and peers fosters a commitment to education and encourages prosocial activities (Farrington et al., 2016; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017). Therefore, it is crucial for schools to foster strong attachment and commitment to education to reduce the likelihood of delinquent behaviour. As schools and peers become more influential during adolescence (Bell, 2018; DelGiudice, 2018; Liu et al., 2013), students committed to their education and performing well are less likely to engage

in later delinquency and drug use. This suggests that schools can provide resiliency or protection for those most in need. A positive school environment with clear expectations, supportive staff, and academic opportunities can protect against violent crime (Farrington et al., 2015; Fontaine et al., 2016; Henson et al., 2017).

Understanding the historical context of education in Namibia and how this impacted the participants was pivotal in this study. The findings from this study suggest that most participants did not finish their schooling, and a significant number of them associated with peers who were involved in delinquent activities. This limited formal education and antisocial associates impacted their social and personal identity. Addressing the sociocultural and economic challenges families face and improving the educational prospects is essential in addressing the challenges with violent crime. Furthermore, this can contribute to developing effective strategies to reduce crime and support at-risk youth.

Therefore, my recommendation is for increased investment in the formal education system, financially, infrastructure as well as in human resources.

Vocational training. The results show that only two participants possessed formal training and qualifications in a trade, and interestingly, they were the most financially secure among the participants. This finding holds significance because the socioeconomic background of the participants played a crucial role in shaping their identities and potentially influenced their involvement in criminal activities. Insufficient education can result in unemployment or low-paying jobs, which in turn can lead to financial stress and poverty. It's worth noting, research indicates that poverty is associated with various social problems, including criminal behaviour (FLON, 2018; Menard & Mihalic, 2001; Ndjibu et al., 2017; Shikongo, 2017; UNODC, 2019).

In addition to formal education, vocational training is critical in providing skills that may support individuals in obtaining employment. Thus, vocational training may help prevent criminal behaviour because unemployment is linked to criminal behaviour (DWYPD, 2020; FLON, 2018; Gould, 2015; Hirschfield et al., 2014; UNODC, 2019). Vocational training programmes give individuals the skills to secure employment in specific trades or industries. Chaddha and Wilson (2011) suggested that vocational training programmes have been shown to reduce recidivism rates among ex-offenders by equipping them with the necessary skills to re-enter the workforce and break the cycle of crime. Therefore, I suggest investment in vocational training centres that may provide essential opportunities for youth that may have limited opportunities regarding

tertiary education. This may also offer opportunities for youth that fail to complete formal education.

Mental health. The study's findings further revealed that anger and explosiveness, and substance abuse were integral parts of many participants' identity. None of the participants sought intervention from mental health professionals for issues related to their anger, substance abuse, low mood, lack of motivation, and self-esteem, despite experiencing these emotions frequently and sometimes for extended periods throughout their lives. These individuals lacked insight into the connection between mental health and their anger issues. Moreover, they did not perceive their substance use as problematic. Instead, they saw it as a fundamental aspect of their identity, similar to their fathers.

This highlights the need for improved mental health support services in Namibia, especially within low-income and rural communities, as well as correctional facilities. There remains a need for such services in the country, and addressing this gap is essential (Shifiona et al., 2019). Furthermore, addressing the link between substance abuse and mental health is vital. Integrated treatment programmes focusing on mental health disorders and substance abuse can help individuals develop healthy coping mechanisms and reduce their reliance on drugs or alcohol.

State mental health services in Namibia remain limited to two hospitals, the Psychiatric hospital in Windhoek and the psychiatric unit at the hospital in Oshakati. Thus, the majority of the population in rural areas have inadequate services. In essence, the facilities are inadequate to serve the entire Namibian population. Government-funded mental health awareness campaigns should be implemented. The Namibian government should also invest in human resources and increase the number of mental health professionals to support the community, at-risk youth, inmates, and ex-offenders (Chipare et al., 2021; Shifiona et al., 2019). This may support preventative and intervention strategies for violent crime. Mental health programmes may support rehabilitation programmes for offenders and support reintegration in the communities, potentially reducing recidivism rates. Increased availability of state-funded mental health professionals for at-risk youth may curb crime.

Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach that promotes mental health awareness, early intervention, and accessible treatment services. By increasing public understanding of mental health disorders and reducing stigma, individuals may be more inclined to seek help and support for their mental health challenges (Shifiona et al., 2019). A

comprehensive approach to addressing crime and violence should involve the review and change in the laws governing the treatment of offenders. Outdated acts, such as the Mental Health Act of 18 of 1973 (Republic of Namibia, 1973) should be reviewed and replaced with a more relevant and current laws that are specific to the Namibian situation. By working collaboratively and focusing on sustainable, long-term solutions, we can create safer and more resilient communities for all.

Collaboration between different sectors, such as healthcare, social services, law enforcement, and education, is vital in addressing the complex relationship between mental health, substance abuse, and crime. By working together, these sectors can share resources, knowledge, and expertise to develop and implement targeted interventions that address the specific needs of individuals and communities.

Recommendations for future research

My recommendations are based on using the findings from this study as a baseline for future studies. In addition to conducting the recommended studies to understand the causes of violent crime, I recommend conducting studies on the complex interplay between personality, identity, and criminal activity. I suggest these studies focus on identifying protective factors that may help prevent crime.

Interdisciplinary studies. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach to future research is valuable. Therefore, I recommend shared research between different disciplines, allowing scholars to marry insights from psychology, sociology, criminology, and other relevant fields to develop a more comprehensive understanding of crime and its contributing factors. This will encourage further collaboration between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. Such collaboration may ensure that research findings are translated into effective policies and programmes that address the needs of offenders and their families in Namibia. This can involve engagement between researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and the general public will support evidence-based strategies to address crime.

Comparative research studies. Social phenomena, such as criminal behaviour, can rarely be attributed to individual causes. Instead, what social scientists observe is often the result of a combination of several factors (Mello, 2021). Thus, it is valuable to conduct research that allows the comparison of phenomena at country, community, and institutional level. Comparison is inherent to the practice of knowledge because it allows us to assess and establish similarities and differences between our units of analysis and, consequently, establish what general elements are

relevant in order to derive a general theorisation of the mechanisms that make the social reality in question function (Fachelli & López-Roldán, 2021). Comparative analysis involves the examination and interpretation of similarities and differences in various aspects, such as situations or outcomes, across a broad range of social units, including regions, nations, societies, and cultures (Miri & Shahrokh, 2019). Comparative analysis is applied across multiple disciplines including cross-cultural analysis in anthropology, cross-societal analysis in sociology, cross-national analysis in political science, and psychological analysis. Cross-national analyses can be conducted at a macro level and an individual level and may use different terminologies and emphasise different criteria of comparison (Goerres et al., 2019; Miri & Shahrokh, 2019).

I recommend encouraging comparative studies, collaboration, and knowledge sharing between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners of Namibia and other African states with similar demographics and religious contexts. Identifying comparable countries that share similar demographic, social, and economic characteristics with Namibia will ensure that the comparisons made are more accurate and reliable. The demographics may include the similarities in the court system, a history of colonialism, being a democratic nation, and the population size. Such studies can enhance understanding of factors contributing to violent criminal behaviour to see the differences in the laws and the impact thereof. These countries may include Botswana, Zimbabwe, or South Africa. Research may analyse the differences and similarities and policymakers can develop more targeted interventions and strategies.

Social phenomena are becoming more interdependent across borders and the distinctions are less clear in the complexities of global society (Fachelli & López-Roldán, 2021). Therefore, conducting comparative analyses that go beyond ethnocentric viewpoints is a suitable and essential research approach. Such an approach helps raise awareness of diversity and seeks to explain and understand our environment without relying solely on our own categorisations. Sharing knowledge, data, and best practices can lead to more effective policies and interventions to reduce violent criminal behaviour.

Cultural and religious comparative studies. Comparative research studies between Namibia, which is a largely Christian nation, and an African country, which is largely Muslim, can be an effective way to understand better how religion impacts violent crime. This will be beneficial based on the baseline findings of this study that religion is a major source of coping and external locus of control for these participants.

Such a comparative study may evaluate how the difference in religious upbringing impacts people and how they employ religion to conceptualise crime. Such a study will also shed light on how religion influences the policies and laws compared to Namibia and, ultimately, the impact these have on the violent crime rates. The studies may also explore how cultural factors contribute to the stigmatisation or normalisation of certain criminal activities. This could include examining the role of religious institutions and leaders, as well as the impact of religiously motivated legislation on crime rates in both contexts. Further, studies could investigate the influence of family and social factors on violent and non-violent criminal behaviour.

Socioeconomic comparative studies. These case studies can provide valuable insights into the specific cultural, religious, and social factors that contribute to or mitigate crime in communities. This may involve exploring how income inequality, poverty, and access to resources influence crime rates, and whether these factors differ between contexts. The participants' identity was strongly tied to their childhood neighbourhoods and friends.

Investigating the role of education in shaping attitudes towards violence and crime in these contexts will be imperative as the participants' friendships and many characteristics, such as fighting and being bullied, impacted their identity and behaviour. Comparative studies of this nature may explore the content of religious education, as well as the impact of secular education on promoting tolerance and non-violence. This may involve exploring the impact of family structure, parent-child relationships, peer influences, and social networks on criminal activity. Studies could investigate the relationship between youth populations, education, and opportunities for criminal behaviour in different contexts. This could involve examining the prevalence of youth gangs, the impact of education programmes on crime reduction, and exploring ways to provide more opportunities for young people to avoid criminal activity.

Growing up without a father was a significant factor that impacted the identity of most of the participants in this study. Comparative studies examining the role of individual-level factors, such as age, gender, personality, mental health, and employment status, in shaping the identities of perpetrators of violent and non-violent behaviour would be valuable. These studies may also help identify risk factors and protective factors for different types of crime.

Mental health and substance abuse comparative studies. I recommend investigating the differences and similarities in the general perceptions of substance use and mental health in the different states and the national policies to treat and manage these conditions and how these impact violent crime rates.

The results of this study indicated the prevalence of emotional dysregulation, anger, and substance abuse among the participants. The results also indicated significantly that the participants have poor insight regarding mental health and that alcohol use is a significant factor in their personal and social identity. Cross-national comparative studies may also focus on the impact of and prevalence of mental health issues and substance abuse among violent offenders in both Christian and Muslim nations and demographically similar African nations. This may provide insight into the potential triggers for violent behaviour and help design more effective rehabilitation programmes. The studies may also explore stigmatisation as a phenomenon.

Comparative studies between violent offenders and non-offenders. I believe that conducting in-depth studies that compare violent offenders and non-offenders is pivotal in shedding light on the factors that distinguish violent offenders from non-offenders. Therefore, I recommend comparative studies of violent and non-violent offenders.

The participants of such comparative studies should share similar backgrounds and traits and should be selected carefully to ensure representativeness. A comprehensive, mixed-method approach that considers multiple contributing factors to crime and includes a large representative sample must be used. Mixed methods research is a research approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative data within a single study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Halcomb & Hickman, 2015; McKim, 2017). This method allows researchers to thoroughly investigate complex phenomena by utilising the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Halcomb & Hickman, 2015; McKim, 2015). The investigations must also examine the influence of family and social factors on violent and non-violent criminal behaviour. This may involve exploring the impact of family structure, parent-child relationships, peer influences, and social networks on criminal activity. Examining the role of individual-level factors, such as age, gender, personality, mental health, and employment status, in shaping violent and non-violent behaviour will be helpful. These studies will help identify risk factors and protective factors for different types of crime.

By incorporating these recommendations into future research studies, we can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the profile of persons most likely to commit violent crimes. Differentiating between the factors that contribute to violent and non-violent criminal behaviour may inform more effective policies and interventions to address crime.

Summary of Recommendations

Based on the findings, I suggested a multifaceted approach to address the underlying causes of these societal issues. This approach includes community-based initiatives, preventive measures, and targeted policies. I also advised a collaborative effort involving different stakeholders to tackle the intricate connections between violent behaviour, personality, culture, identity, religion, socioeconomic conditions, political factors, mental health, and substance abuse.

Furthermore, I proposed future research endeavours, including longitudinal and comparative studies involving Namibia and other demographically similar regions. In addition, I recommended practical changes at the community level to raise awareness, implement early intervention strategies, and make services for substance abuse and mental health more accessible.

Implementing these strategies in combination has the potential to strengthen existing efforts to reduce the incidence of violent crimes. By fostering effective communication, resource sharing, and partnerships, we can cultivate a more inclusive and supportive society that prioritises mental well-being and lowers the likelihood of criminal involvement.

Conclusion to the Study

The study focused on exploring the histories, experiences, and personalities of the offenders convicted of violent crimes, particularly murder, to understand the factors that impacted and influenced them to commit violent crimes. The study's aim was achieved by conducting semi-structured interviews with ten inmates at the maximum-security unit at the Windhoek CF in Namibia. The study reported that the participants' environmental circumstances and experiences largely impacted their behaviour. Some of the main aspects of the similarity in their personalities that were apparent were their tendency for external locus of control, explosiveness, their Christian background, and their limited insight into substance abuse as well as their emotional regulation. The study also reported the similarity in the way the families of these men have been impacted and how they make sense of their experiences. This study described the participants' identities, and the findings may contribute to empowering the sectors involved in policymaking, preventing violent crime and rehabilitating offenders.

The findings and recommendations in this study have implications for the Namibian communities and government at large, particularly the Ministry of Safety and Security, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Health and Social Services. I recommended community

intervention and psychoeducation regarding parenting and mental illness, cooperation amongst stakeholders, and adequate training and education for young people, especially at-risk young people. This should include vocational training to increase job security and act as a protective factor. This study may also serve as a baseline study for future studies on a larger scale. Thus, I made recommendations for future studies. These recommendations were drawn based on the findings of the study.

Reflections

I embarked on this PhD study during a time in my life that I experienced multiple challenges. This project remained alive through the grief, multiple changes in my career, pregnancy, and birth of my third child, and the loss of my father. There were multiple obstacles, and one major obstacle was my not understanding, anticipating, and appreciating the challenges involved in conducting research in a highly monitored and secure maximum security correctional facility. The challenges caused multiple delays but also enabled me to improve my method, develop the skills to become a better, more detailed, attentive researcher, and remain focused on the output quality. The methodology was significantly enhanced by shifting from discourse analysis to thematic analysis and opting not to use the MCMI personality assessment. I underwent tremendous growth in this process.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I provided a brief overview of the context of the study, the literature review, theoretical framework, purpose, methodology and procedures of this study. I summarised the significant findings, discussed the findings, drew conclusions, and made recommendations based on the findings. I also made recommendations for future studies with the intent to use this as a baseline study.

I approached the layout of this chapter by first reminding the reader of the study's main aim and purpose, the research question that I sought to answer through the study, and the methodology that I followed. After that, I provided a brief recap of the findings which addressed the themes that emerged from the data analysis. I discussed the findings in detail and the limitations inherent in this study. Finally, I made recommendations based on the findings.

Based on these, it is concluded that the research question of the study was answered, and all the objectives were achieved.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: CSO OFFENDER POPULATION AS PER CRIME CATEGORY

Extracted from CHAPTER 2

THE NAMIBIA CORRECTIONAL SERVICE BACKGROUND AND OFFENDER POPULATION TRENDS

Table 10: CSO Offender population as per crime category

CRIME CATEGORY	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Theft under false pretences	55			17	9
Theft	100	44			
Nature Conservation Ordinances		10	16		13
Customs and Immigration Offences	15			8	
Fraud		4			10
Forgery					
Arson		11		15	
Malicious damage to Property					6
Bestiality	20				
Stock Theft			30		3
Cruelty to Animals		15			
Indecent assault	35			20	
Crimen injuria	211		15		
Shoplifting	110	17			22
Dependence-producing substances	52				
Arms and Ammunition			23		11
Robbery		1			
Trespassing	87			11	
Culpable Homicide		2			1
Assault (threat, common, GBH, Domestic Violence)			18		18
Contempt of court	34	15		22	
Attempted (theft, murder)					
Housebreaking with intent to (steal and theft, rape, commit an unknown offence to State)			16	16	
Possession of suspected stolen property			20	19	
Child Neglect					6
Traffic Offences	52				
Total	771	134	138	128	99

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE FOR M/D STUDENTS: RESEARCH ON HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

Ref. No: PERC-16075

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

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

Student Name:	B. U. Sinkala,	Student no.	41267931
Purpose of study:	MA Dissertation	Affiliation:	Independent
Supervisor/promoter:	Dr R.M. Dhloomo-Sibiya contractor		

Title of project:

A dynamic exploration of offenders convicted of violent crimes, serving long-term sentences in the Windhoek Correctional Facility, maximum security unit.

Result: Ethical clearance is granted.

The application was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Psychology at Unisa on the understanding that all ethical requirements regarding informed consent, the right to withdraw from the study, the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the information will be met to the satisfaction of the supervisor.

Additional conditions are that ethical approval and permission for the study is provided by the correctional authorities at the Windhoek Correctional facility, and that the descriptions provided by the correctional officers of the 'problematic behaviours' of potential participants, are kept confidential as far as this is possible.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'H C Janeke'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Date: 10 November 2016

Prof H C Janeke
[For the Ethics Committee]
[Department of Psychology, Unisa]

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT**Title**

A dynamic exploration of offenders convicted of violent crimes serving long-term sentences in the Windhoek Correctional Facility, maximum security unit.

Researcher

Research conducted in fulfilment of the doctor of philosophy in psychology degree (PhD) at the department of psychology, college of human sciences, University of South Africa by Ute Bianca Sinkala.

What is this study about and why are you doing it?

I am doing a study which will explore the thoughts and feelings of offenders in the maximum security unit at Windhoek Correctional Facility. By doing this study, I want to understand the offenders such as yourself to give a clear description of the offenders' identities and personalities. This will help me better understand who the people are who commit violent crimes in Namibia. In doing this study, I also want to understand the thoughts and feelings of the offenders relatives as well as some correctional staff about the offender. I think the results of this study may be helpful to both safety and justice ministries in Namibia as well as different professionals working with offenders. I will publish this study as a requirement for my degree as doctor of philosophy in psychology.

What are you asking me to do if I agree to be in the study?

If you agree to be in this study, you will answer some basic questions and be interviewed by the researcher. The interview might last about 2 hours and will be recorded with your consent. Your relatives a correctional staff officer who works with you will also be interviewed. I will need your permission to review your Case File. You will also answer a personality inventory that takes about 30 minutes to complete. The total time for the interview and personality inventory is approximately 2 hours 30 minutes.

Who will have access to the results of this study?

The results of this study will be published as a dissertation. You may choose to use a pseudonym. This pseudonym will be used on your inventory and interview transcriptions and other research papers instead of your name or case/docket number. I will not include personal information about you in any report or paper. The correctional facility authorities who give me permission to conduct the research will know of your participation, but they will not know your pseudonym. I will do everything I can to protect the confidentiality of your personal information.

Are there any risks or can I get hurt by being in the study?

I do not know of any risks or discomforts that are due to being in this study.

However, you may feel tired toward the end of a two hour interview as well as the written inventory. Also, you may feel embarrassed when answering some of the questions. Personal information about you could be revealed if I do not properly protect the data. Personal information could also be revealed if I am required by law to reveal it. Most likely, this will not happen.

What steps are you taking to reduce these risks or discomforts?

You may take a break any time you feel tired. You may decide to not respond to any questions you find disturbing. If you struggle to answer the questions on the inventory, I can help you by explaining the meaning.

What else do I need to know?

- Your decision whether or not to be in this study is voluntary.
- You may refuse to be in this study at any time and you will not be penalized.
- Your decision either way not will not affect your release date or parole eligibility.
- I must report the following:
 - 1) If you seem suicidal,
 - 2) If you say you want to hurt yourself or someone else,
 - 3) If you tell me you plan to commit a crime in the future, or
 - 4) If you admit to unreported crimes committed while incarcerated.

How will this study help me?

You will receive no direct benefits from being in this study.

Why should I be in the study?

Through giving the ministry of safety and justice important information about the personality and identity of offenders such as yourself, the results from this study may impact on future prison policies for offenders. It might also help identify potential perpetrators before committing a serious, violent crime.

Whom can I contact with questions or concerns?

If you have questions please contact me, Ute Sinkala at +264 812611817 or utesinkala01@gmail.com. If you have concerns about the study, please contact the Department of Psychology, College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa at +27 12 441 5702 or mandd@unisa.ac.za

Participant's Agreement

I have read the above information (or it has been read aloud to me). The study has been explained to me. My questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to be in this study.

Name (printed)

Signature.....

Date

I give the researcher permission to review my Case File for the reason described in this consent form.

Name (printed)

Case File Number

Signature.....

Date

APPENDIX D: OFFENDERS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (ADAPTED FROM SAPS SEX OFFENDER QUESTIONNAIRE)

Date of Interview

Place of Interview

Name of Interviewee

Status

Committal Date

Sentence

Offense(s)

Any previous convictions?

For what crimes were previous convictions and how long were you remanded?

Release Date

Work/Employment

Were you employed prior to coming to prison? Where and for how long?

What did you do?

What were your wages/Salary?

If not, how did you survive?

What are your thoughts about employment?

Are you in debt?

What does that mean to you?

Do you work here in prison? What do you do?

If no, why not?

Would/Do you like to work? Why?

Tell me, what interests you?

What motivates you?

Who do you admire? Why?

Current Family and Home

Your current address/home/homeless

Where were you born?

Where are your parents?

Tell me about your family

Marital Status

No. of Children

Ages of Children

Whereabouts of children

What is/will be your involvement with your children

Mothers of children

Whereabouts of Mothers

Level of Support

Tell me about current relationships (Family/Partners/Children/Friends/Work)

What are the major problems in your current relationship?

What is your view on family?

Tell me about your sexual history?

Childhood and adolescent history and problem behaviour

How would you describe your relationship with your parents and other adults as a child?

As a child were you obedient?

How would you describe your relationship with your siblings and other children as a child?

Have you ever been in care?

Have you ever been abused?

By whom?

Have you ever abused anyone? Who? What kind of abuse and for how long?

Did you bully children at school?

Did you take part in any activities that involve stealing from parents and other kids, assault, robbery, high jacking, mugging, forgery, trespassing, alcohol and drug use and abuse, violence, running away, rebel, impulsivity, hyperactivity, run away, destructive, sex deviance, temper tantrums, obscene phone calls etc.

Were you ever suspended or expelled from school? How many times? Why?

What was school like?

Did you have friends at school, tell me about your friendships?

Did you have a pet as a child? What was it?

Tell me about the pet? Did you feel close bond with it? How did you take care of it?

Did you ever tease or hurt the pet? How?

Crime and Prison History

How old were you when you first committed a crime and what was the crime?

Can you remember why you did it?

How old were you on your first arrest? For what crime? How long were you remanded?

How old were you when you first went to prison?

How did you feel?

Adult behavioural history

Tell me about all your crimes and arrests since age 18?

If you were in prison, how did you feel about it?

What have you hated most about being caught and under control

Tell me about yourself.

Do you feel you are more sneaky and manipulative than most people? Why?

Do you believe you are a hurtful person? Why?

Have you ever felt so guilty or ashamed of yourself that you wished you could die? When and why?

Treatment history

Have you had treatment or counselling before? When and for what? Diagnosis?

How long were you on treatment and on what treatment?

Have you ever been hospitalised for mental illness? When and for what? Diagnosis?

The Experience of Prison

What do you think about the prison environment?

Do you enjoy being in prison? Why?

Tell me about coming into the prison? How did you feel?

Do you have friends in prison? Tell me about them.

Do you have sex with anyone in prison? Intimate relationship?

What is your view on the prison system and the correctional staff?

What is your relationship with the correctional staff?

What is your view on the court system?

Have you ever been assaulted, raped, and intimidated in prison? By whom?

How did you deal with it?

Have you ever assaulted, raped, and intimidated other offenders in prison? How?

Tell me about the different groups/gangs in the prison

Do you belong to a group/gang? Tell me about it.

Does it get easier or harder as time goes by in prison?

What is the worst thing about prison?

Do you use drugs or alcohol in prison? How do you get it?

Is there any connection between your drug use and the crimes you have committed?

Who visits you in prison?

Do members of your family misuse drugs?

Do your friends misuse drugs?

Have you been featured in the media?

Press or other? Tell me about it.

Have you been mentioned in the newspapers in connection with your case?

Tell me about that.

APPENDIX E: SIGNIFICANT OTHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Date of Interview

Place of Interview

Name of Interviewee

Relationship to offender

How long do you know this offender?

If you are a parent or older relative or grew up with offender, what were the early years of his life like?

As a child did the offender take part in any activities that involve stealing from parents and other kids, assault, robbery, high jacking, mugging, forgery, trespassing, alcohol and drug use and abuse, violence, running away, rebel, impulsivity, hyperactivity, run away, destructive, sex deviance, temper tantrums, obscene phone calls etc.

How did his behaviour affect you and impact on your life?

What are your impressions of this offender?

How does he relate to you?

Do you like the offender? Why or why not?

Did you ever enjoy social gatherings together with the offender? Tell me about it?

Do you think he is selfish, manipulative, impulsive, kind, caring, destructive, jealous, aggressive, smart, eager, clever, load, quiet, strong, weak, shy, leader etc?

In the time that you have known the offender did the offender get into conflict with you and other family and friends? How often?

If he offended you or others, did the offender show remorse, ask for forgiveness, or feel guilty?

What are the major problems caused by the offender?

How does the offender affect you?

How does that make you feel?

Tell me more about the offender.

What are your thoughts on the offender's criminal history?

Do you understand why he committed the offence he is currently remanded for?

How does the offender's offending and being imprisoned make you feel?

How does his offending and being imprisoned affect the rest of the family and friends?

What do you know about the offender's drug and alcohol use? How do you think it influenced him, his relationships, and criminal history?

APPENDIX F: CORRECTIONAL MANAGEMENT OFFICER (CMO) INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Date of Interview

Place of Interview

Name of Interviewee

Title

How long do you know this offender?

What are your impressions of this offender?

How does he relate to you?

Do you like the offender? Why or why not?

Do you think he is selfish, manipulative, impulsive, kind, caring, destructive, jealous, aggressive, smart, eager, clever, load, quiet, strong, weak, shy, leader etc?

Does the offender get into conflict with you and other correctional staff? How often?

What are the major problems caused by the offender?

How does the offender react to punishment?

How does the offender affect you?

How does that make you feel?

Tell me more about the offender.

What are your impressions of the offender, his relationships and interactions with other offenders?

Have you observed the offender with his family members or friends during visits? What did you observe?