

# UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

## Faculty of Community and Health Sciences

**Title: Exploring experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults**

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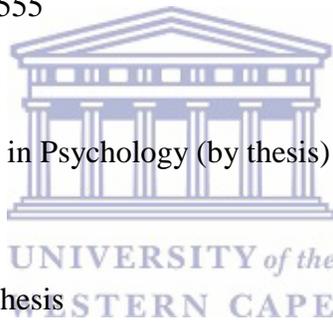
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## DECLARATION

I declare that *Exploring experiences and self-explanations of the antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults* is my own work. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other university, and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Signed: .....Brendon Duran Faroa



Date: ..... 23 February 2018

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the grace and strength provided to me by my creator and all loving Heavenly Father; God.

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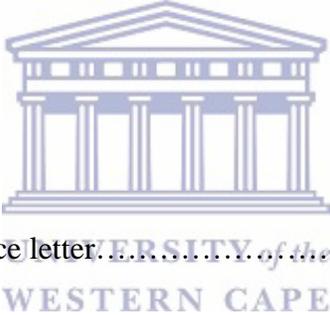
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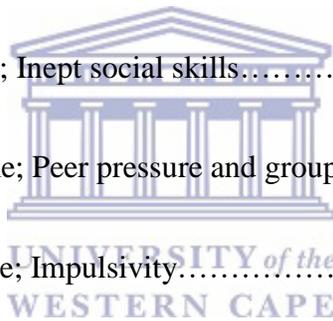
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## Abstract

**Title:** Exploring experiences and self-explanations of the antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults

Antisocial offending behaviour relate to instances of criminal and societal norm violating behaviour. In South Africa, statistics on antisocial offending behaviour reflect high incidence rates among South African young people who engage in societal norm violations that are largely aggressive and criminal in nature. In the country's prisons, the average inmate is a young substance abuser who is unemployed, has dropped out of school before high school, is functionally illiterate and, more often than not, homeless. This is particularly true for emerging adults (those between the ages of 18 and 25 years) who constitute the poorest economic age group, the average house burglar as well as make up more than a quarter of the prison population in South Africa. In South Africa as well as internationally, the antisocial offending behaviour of emerging adults remain grossly understudied especially through qualitative self-explanations. The present study utilised a qualitative research approach to explore experiences and self-explanations regarding antisocial offending behaviours of a group of 10 South African emerging adults. The study used an exploratory research design. Participants were drawn from a number of non- government organisations, and two townships in Cape Town which is located in the Western Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa. Data for the study were collected through semi-structured interviews and data were analysed using thematic analysis. Terri E. Moffit's developmental taxonomy of offending behaviour was used as a guiding theoretical framework from which to view antisocial offending behaviour. Seven primary themes were identified, these included: *home environment, labeling and stigmatisation, social-emotional adjustment, moral reasoning, unemployment, substance abuse* and *future self*. The findings indicated that participants invoked multiple causes, explanations and highlighted several factors, which contributed and motivated their engagement in antisocial offending

behaviours. Moreover, participants' explanations overwhelmingly attributed their antisocial offending behaviours to external factors in the home and social spaces.

**Key words:** antisocial offending behaviour, emerging adults, experiences, self-explanations, South Africa, developmental taxonomy of offending, qualitative, exploratory, thematic analysis



## DEDICATION

First, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my participants who so bravely shared their experiences. I would also like to dedicate this thesis to those who passionately work night and day to assist young people escape the cycles and patterns of antisocial offending behaviours. This is for all the community and health workers who with exceptional bravery help those in need. Finally, this thesis is dedicated to every child in Salie Street, Riverview with the hope that it may inspire them all to pursue their dreams with the courage that they already possess inside.



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background and Rationale

South Africa's high crime rates and the extent to which it affects the country's citizens has long been a matter of great concern. The country has one of the highest crime rates in the world with an estimated offender population of 157 375 inmates (International Centre for Prison Studies, 2011). Crime in South Africa has been described as one of the greatest challenges in the country's history (Marimuthu, 2014). The average age of people committing crime was 22 years of age in 1988 and decreased to 17 years in 1990 (Stevens & Cloete, 1996). The country's townships have some of the highest crime rates distinguishing them as *crime hotspots* (Manalyio, 2014). Crime presents as a pervasive social problem that plagues post-apartheid South Africa, of particular interest in South Africa is the criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people (Breetzke, 2010). The criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people have been a matter of interest to theorists throughout history (Bartollas, 2000; Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003, 2008; Saunders, 1981; Siegel & Senna, 1998). In South Africa, the study of the criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people is no new topic with some very real issues hampering research surrounding it. One such challenging dilemma is that almost all of the concepts used to refer to the criminal and societal norm violating behaviours in general and that of young people are both too narrow and too broad in scope (Bohm & Vogel, 2010). This includes concepts such as *crime*. The demarcation of such concepts in order to adequately investigate these behaviours has therefore proven exceedingly challenging and has been neglected.

To elaborate further on the spate of antisocial offending behaviour of emerging adults in South Africa, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS, 2011a), noted that more than a third of those incarcerated are youth. In addition, in 2009 the average of a South African house robber was between ages of 19 and 25 years (Centre for Higher Education & Transformation, 2009). According to Centre for Higher Education

Transformation (2012) also noted that this age group; particularly those between the ages 18 to 24 years were more likely to be unemployed, not involved in education or study. The link between societal norm violating and criminal behaviour was also acknowledged by the Department of Correctional Services which noted that the average inmate is a young substance abuser who, has dropped out of school before high school, is functionally illiterate and, more often than not, homeless (DCS, 2013). Implicit, in this statement is the startling reality that statistics, on incarceration reflect a picture of South African emerging adults who are active societal norm violators engaged or sentenced for largely aggressive criminal acts.

A closer look at the criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people reveals a distinct category of young offenders in need of urgent study. These young people were referred to by Arnett (2004; 2006b) as emerging adults. Emerging adulthood describes an extended period of development, different from the stage of adolescence that precedes it and the young adult period that follows (Arnett, 2006a; 2006b). This period falls between adolescence and the young adulthood period that follows, typically extending from ages 18-25 years. Thus, emerging adults are individuals who are between the ages of 18 and 25 years. Furthermore, emerging adulthood distinguishes the psychological, subjective experiences as well as a period of identity explorations feeling in-between, instability, self-focus and possibilities of young people (Arnett, 2006b). So great has the interest in emerging adulthood been that in a review of empirical studies, Swanson (2016) concluded that emerging adulthood was a global and cross-cultural developmental period and field of study. Therefore, in South Africa as well as other parts of the world emerging adults' behaviours present as an area in need of much academic study.

Fourchard (2010) argued that officials and academics perceive youth crime as a contemporary social and political concern. South Africa is no exception to the plague of antisocial offending behaviours. In 2012, it was estimated that emerging adults between the ages of 18-25 years constitute over 0.85 billion of the world

population thus making up a significant portion of the global population (United Nations, 2012). These figures in addition to the crime trends among emerging adults make a strong argument for special attention to be focused on young people between 18 and 25 years of age, who are transitioning into adulthood (United Nations, 2007). In 2008, the number of emerging adults incarcerated in South Africa accounted for at least 30% of the total offender population (DCS, 2008). While according to the Department of Correctional Services (2013), emerging adults made up almost a third of the prison population. What proves even more alarming is the crime category for which most emerging adults had been sentenced for was largely aggressive and violent offenses (DCS, 2013). While a wealth of research have been conducted on antisocial offending behaviour, few studies shed light on the antisocial offending behaviour of emerging adults; those between the ages of 18-25 years. Therefore, it may be said that in South Africa as well as elsewhere, a growing need for more research on the antisocial offending behaviour of this age group proves much needed.



## **1.2 Research Question**

The main research question of the study was: How do a group of South African emerging adults describe and experience their antisocial offending behaviours?

## **1.3 Aims of the study**

The aim of the present study was to explore experiences of a group of South African emerging adults who have engaged in antisocial offending behaviours.

## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study were:

1. To explore and describe experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour of a group of South African emerging adults.
2. To describe recommendations which may contribute to the body of literature on experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour in South Africa and internationally.
3. To describe the need for more research on the antisocial offending behaviour of South African emerging adults.



## 1.5 Theoretical Framework

Psychological theories have long been influential in shaping the way society think about crime and delinquency and in shaping policies that relate to these issues (Moore, 2011; Sampson & Laub, 2003, 2005). While many theories seek to adequately explain offending behaviour, one of the most influential theories in existence is Moffit's (1993) developmental taxonomy of offending behaviour. According to Fairchild et al. (2013) this particular developmental taxonomic theory has had a major influence on the fields of developmental psychology, psychiatry, education and criminology. In addition, Fairchild et al. (2013) also held that this theory has largely helped bring together disciplines and sub-disciplines of developmental psychology, psychopathology and criminology. The value of this theory to psychology as a field of study has and still proves very significant and this study seeks to utilise this theory as has been done to view antisocial offending behaviour through a psychological lens. To delineate then, Moffit proposed two qualitatively

different types of offenders that require two distinct theoretical explanations (Moffit, 1993; Skardhamar, 2009). According to Skardhamar (2009), Moffit (1993) offered a taxonomical theory of antisocial behaviour by providing a theoretical justification for studying distinct categories of offenders. The distinction set out in Moffit's theory has informed the categories of childhood-onset and adolescent-onset conduct disorder which was introduced into the DSM-IV in 1994 and retained in the 2013 DSM-5 (Fairchild et al., 2013). According to Moffit (1993), her dual taxonomy aimed to reconcile two incongruous facts about antisocial behaviour, which are that (1) it shows impressive continuity over age and (2) that its prevalence changes dramatically over age, increasing almost ten- fold during adolescence. Moffit (1993) suggested that delinquency has two distinct categories of individuals, each with a unique history and aetiology. Moffitt (1993) referred to these two categories of offenders as Adolescent-Limited (AL) and Life-Course Persistent (LCP) offenders, respectively. According to Moffitt (1993), the life-course persistent type represented a small group, which engages in antisocial behaviour of one sort or another at every life stage, whereas a larger group, adolescent-limited is thought to be antisocial only during adolescence. Accordingly, Moffit (1993) argued that, the LCP type resulted when children's neuropsychological problems interact cumulatively with their criminogenic environments across development, culminating in pathological personality traits. On the other hand, the AL type results from a contemporary maturity gap encouraging teens to mimic antisocial offending behaviour in ways that are normative and adjustive. AL type offending has been found to be sporadic, non-violent, and indicative of adult-like behaviours; desistance is the norm for the majority of these offenders, except for a select few who become ensnared because of the consequences of their offending (Bellair et al., 2016). A further, third group was also identified and have been referred to as *abstainers*, those who do not engage in any delinquent behaviour (Brezina & Piquero 2007; Moffitt et al., 1996; Piquero, Brezina & Turner 2005). Some researchers have also considered those who abstain from antisocial offending, especially during adolescence as social introverts; thought to have been insulated from delinquent peer role models because of

their exclusion from normative peer activities (Brezina & Piquero, 2007; Moffitt 1993, 2006; Moffitt et al., 1996; Piquero et al., 2005). Few studies have attempted to examine the associations between factors such as peer influence and delinquency abstention and for this reason; Moffitt's theory on delinquency abstention has not been fully tested (Chen & Adams, 2010). Furthermore, Chen & Adams (2010) did not find strong empirical support for the hypothesis that delinquency abstention is correlated with unpopularity and social isolation. Drawing on a combination of social learning, isolation stress theories Moffitt (as cited in Chen & Adams, 2010) argued that abstainers from delinquency are those rare individuals who are excluded from normative peer group activities in adolescence. While the evidence on abstainers has been mixed, several studies have examined and re-examined Moffitt's (1993) theory and have found empirical support for the AL and LCP typologies (see also Bellair et al., 2016; Kratzer & Hodgins, 1999; Leaw et al., 2015; Piquero, 2005; Piquero et al., 2007). The offending trajectories (AL and LCP) formulated by Moffitt (1993) offers well established theoretical principles from which view a group of South African emerging adults' antisocial offending behaviour. The theory therefore provides a lens through which to understand the antisocial offending behaviours of emerging adults. Given, the theory's focus on early childhood and later developmental pathways its use for the exploration of antisocial offending behaviours of emerging adults seem particularly appropriate. Additionally, the theory also makes provision for understanding societal norm violations and its development towards more grievous forms of behaviour from childhood throughout the lifespan while also accounting for those who abstain. The theory is therefore uniquely suited for the present study.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2. Introduction

This chapter attempts to contextualise the present study against the background of the body of literature on antisocial offending behaviours.

#### 2.1. The study of antisocial offending behaviour

A number of terms and concepts have been used to describe antisocial offending behaviour. Concepts such as: *juvenile delinquency* (Jansen, 2014; Marimuthu, 2014; Richards, 2011), *youth crime* (Cottle, 2001; Curran, 1994; Jonson-Reid, 1998; Rosario, 2007; Snyder, 1997; Stout, 2004), and *youth misbehaviour* (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003, 2008, 2011) have all been used to refer to antisocial offending behaviours. However, the use of these concepts has proven conflicting, conflated and limiting in terms of where and how these can be applied. While all these concepts have been studied to a large extent, the limitations of their use have remained unexplored both internationally (Armitage, 2002; Dodd, Nicholas, Povey & Walker, 2004; Loeber, Farrington & Petechuk, 2013; Nixon, Blandly, Hunter, Jones & Reeve, 2003) and in South Africa (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003, 2008, 2011; Mqadi, 1994; Roman & Hiss, 2012; Tyson & Stones, 2002). The failure of these terms can be shown in several examples such as when; the term crime is described as both too narrow and too broad to accurately delineate the criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people (Bohm & Vogel, 2010). It is therefore not surprising that there is a variety of concepts in existence to capture the criminal and societal norm violating behaviours of young people. These concepts include juvenile

delinquency, youth crime, youth antisocial behaviour, youth offending behaviour and youth misbehaviour (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003, 2008, 2011).

Each of these concepts, however, also have varied, competing, conflicting and conflated meanings in terms of the age profiles and criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people in different contexts. Since, many of these concepts find very different meaning internationally as well as in South Africa, the need for a more inclusive term referring to criminal and societal norm violating behaviour in general as well as a uniform term for the distinct young people whose criminal and societal norm violating behaviour are being studied arises. To illustrate: the word *juvenile* stems from the Latin, *juvenilis* meaning young while ‘delinquent’ originates from the Latin word, *délinquentia* which means an offence or fault (“Délinquent”, 2014). Thus, together the terms *juvenile delinquency* refers to a youthful offender or young offender. In South Africa, the term *young offender* is considered an inclusive term for delinquent children, juveniles and youth (Du Preez & Luyt, 2011). Similarly, the term *misbehaviour* denotes mischief, bad as well as insubordinate behaviour, therefore all implying very general and vague conceptualizations of the criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people (“Misbehaviour”, 2014). On the other hand, *offending* refers to an instance of breaking a law or breaking the rules but does not include status/norm violations. Status offences are distinguished from delinquent and criminal acts by the fact that they are only law violations based on the offender’s status as a minor (Musonda, 2010). These (status offences) include acts such as truancy, entering a bar or alcohol serving venue when under the legal age to do so implying that these acts describe behaviour that violates societal norms rather than criminal justice laws (Whitehead & Lab, 1990). Finally, antisocial behaviour has been defined as external behavioural traits concerning not obeying rules and laws (Baumrind, 2005).

Furthermore, while the South African definition of *youth* and *juvenile* find continuous contention to that of the world norms, this while the study of the criminal and societal norm violating behaviours of young people remain a critical area of study. Accordingly, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) known as the intellectual agency of the United Nations define *youth* as persons between the ages of 15 and 25 years (United Nations, 2015). The United Nations (2015) also noted that the experience of being young can vary enormously across the world, and that *youth* is often a fluid and changing category further indication that no uniform definition of the age profile of the term youth is available. Contending with this definition of youth, the South African Youth Policy drawing on the African Union's Youth charter (as cited in Ward, Dawes & Matzopoulos, 2013) employs an age definition of 14-35 years. This means that the terms such as juvenile and youth may apply to both children and adults depending on the context in which they are used. Moreover, terms such as misbehaviour, antisocial behaviour and delinquency do not draw clear distinctions between illegal, criminal or norm violating behaviours and are therefore conflicted, competing and conflated. Conflicting and competing concepts, which are critical to the study of the criminal and societal norm violating behaviour of young people, continue to prove problematic. First, it limits the extent to which these terms can be applied in different international and local settings and studies; a uniform term is therefore needed. These include concepts such as juvenile delinquency, youth crime, antisocial behaviour, and offending behaviour. Second, labels often assigned to persons are also problematic; while one may refer to a person as an *offender*, a *juvenile delinquent*, or a *criminal* or even an *antisocial misfit*; it would not be clear whether their behaviour has merely violated a societal norm or is just illegal. The term antisocial offending behaviour, which encompasses both societal norm violations as non-criminal, and criminal behaviour as illegal and at times violent and aggressive acts, seems poised to address the dilemma from a developmental psychological perspective. This term (antisocial offending behaviour) is therefore used to refer to instances of criminal and societal norm violating behaviours throughout the present study.

### 2.1.2 The extent of offending behaviour of emerging adults

What emerges as both an under studied age group as well as an almost neglected age group is emerging adults, those between the ages of 18-25. While not falling within the life stages of adolescence or adulthood, emerging adults have shown problematically high rates of antisocial offending behaviour both as free individuals as well as in their high volumes of entering incarceration in countries such as, the United States of America, England, Wales and South Africa. Another issue, which highlights the need for more research among this age cohort, is competing views on whether emerging adults' offending behaviour is more similar to that of juveniles, children or that of adults. In providing a distinctly American perspective on delinquency, Loeber, Farrington and Petechuk (2013) concluded, that young adult offenders aged 18-24 are more similar to juveniles than to adults with respect to their offending, maturation and life circumstances. Notwithstanding, the conflation of concepts such as juvenile; this might not be the case in South Africa. In South Africa, offender profiles have provided a different view. When taking into account the crime categories of which emerging adults in the country's prisons have been found guilty of they appeared remarkably similar to children (under the age of 18) who are held in secure care centres as well as older adults. This is perhaps indicative of the in-betweenity which emerging adults are thought to exhibit. Children, emerging adults and older adults have reportedly been sentenced for largely aggressive and violent crimes. Jules-Macquet (2014) concluded that the age group 18-25 show greater similarities with adult and child and not juveniles offenders per se, when considering the rank order of their crime categories (violent to non-violent). The offences of emerging adults also become more vivid when looking at the South Africa in the Department of Correctional Services 2008, 2011 and 2013 offender profiles. According to the Department of Correctional Services (2011a), the crime categories which emerging adults have been found guilty and the number of offenders are as follows: Aggressive and violent offenses (26 884 offenders), economic offenses (16 310 offenders), sexual offenses (6 978 offenders), other (2 432 offenders) and narcotic offenses (1 267 offenders). The weight of the

South African crime pandemic in general becomes more vivid when taking into account that from a total of 400 serious offenders sentenced to life imprisonment in 1994, the total has dramatically increased to 11 000 in 2013 (DCS, 2013). Emerging adults (18-25 year olds) also accounted for 53 871, an alarming 48% of the total inmate population (112 467) in 2011 (DCS, 2013). When comparing the 2008 prison population with the 2011/2012 profile, the picture for emerging adults seems even grimmer. In England and Wales, 18-25 year-olds make up one in ten of the prison population as a whole, but they account for a third of those sent to prison each year, a third of the probation caseload and a third of the total social and economic cost of crime (Prison Reform Trust, 2012). Several studies (Armitage, 2002; Dodd, Nicholas, Povey & Walker, 2004; Nixon, Blandly, Hunter, Jones & Reeve, 2003) conducted in particular in England shows the extent of the body of research that has been done on antisocial offending behaviour (criminal and societal norm violating behaviour). While a wealth of research has been conducted on antisocial offending behaviour, few studies shed light on the antisocial offending behaviour of emerging adults.



### **2.1.3 The use of the term antisocial behaviour**

The study of antisocial behaviour has had a long lingering history in psychology and other related disciplines. Here, it is useful to consider the development of the use of the term, which has not changed much since its inception but has merely gained additional meanings (Waiton, 2003). The first usage of the term *antisocial* can be traced back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in the work of James Mckintosh (as cited in Waiton, 2008). Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the term was associated with dark, rebellious, malignant and atrocious acts committed by people who fought for civil liberties. According to Waiton (2008), this constituted a new relationship between the politicians and the public; antisocial behaviour was therefore not considered a political issue but rather a replacement for a political relationship (underpinned by political issues). The term's

political roots however remain difficult to ignore. In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the term *antisocial* was defined as being opposed to principles on which society is constituted (“Antisocial”, 1885). This meant that antisocial behaviour could be considered any behaviour, which defied societal norms of good behaviour and or creates civil unrest. Later definitions of antisocial behaviour further purported these meaning; these included that antisocial behaviour was any behaviour, which antagonised normative social practices, instincts as well as those considered contrary to the laws and customs of society (“Antisocial behaviour”, 1989; Baumrind, 2005). These definitions faced two central dilemmas. However, what has not been made explicitly clear in the definitions discussed was whether, antisocial behaviour was considered illegal or merely violations of societal norms. In contemporary times, particularly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the term antisocial behaviour has been associated with psychopathologies such as conduct disorder, psychopathy, and antisocial personality disorders, in psychological and criminological research (Frick & Viding, 2009; Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Haapasalo & Hämäläinen, 1996; Rutter & Smith, 1995; Lahey, Waldman & Mc Burnett, 1999; Rutter, Giller & Hagell, 1998; Tsopeles & Armenaka, 2012; Vermeiren, de Clippele & Deboutte, 2000). On the other hand, sociological meanings of the term have implied the defiance of social customs (Milena & Macy, 2015; Przepiorka & Diekmann, 2003; Slattery, 2003; Squires, 2008). The use and adoption of the term antisocial behaviour has been very problematic in and of itself, not only in terms of the breadth of types of behaviour it incorporates, but equally in its use as a category for labeling persons (Waiton, 2003). Therefore, the use of the term antisocial behaviour necessitates caution especially given its political, historical and sociological applications. While the differences in definitions may be read as a matter of perspective from one discipline to another, the confusion surrounding the term does prove damaging to research.

#### 2.1.4 The study of societal norm violations

Norms fulfil an essential role in societies especially because they are believed to create order (Stamkou, van Kleef, Homan & Galinsky, 2016). Norms are typically defined as prescriptions of behaviours and attitudes, which are considered acceptable or appropriate by a particular society or unit (Sherif, 1936; Brauer & Chekroun, 2005). Violating societal norms is therefore seen as a disruption of societal order (Feldman, 1984; Stamkou et al., 2016). Examples of societal norm violations may include littering, swearing in public, disrespecting one's parents or elders, leaving rubbish out on the street, sleeping out without parents' permission and many more. According to Fransson and Biel (1997), norms are a distinct part of moral values. The role of norms in antisocial offending is made explicit in the definitions of concepts such as delinquency, antisocial behaviour and offending. Those who defy societal norms are distinctly classified as either delinquents, offenders or antisocial. Moreover, in every society, there exist groups which are part of the larger society but whose members adhere to norms and values that favour the violation of the norms of the larger society (Esiri, 2016). Norm violations or norm violating behaviours have been attributed to the influence of peers, early socialisation as well as shared antisocial attitudes (Allen, 2003; Nsofor, 2013; Sutherland, 1949). The implication is that because of these factors individuals may become delinquent through association with people who endorse criminal norms and that criminal behaviour is therefore learned within primary groups, in particular peer groups (Esiri, 2016). Societal norm violations are therefore thought to exert influence on individuals via their peer group associations as well as through internalised group and individual attitudes. The consequences of engaging in societal norm violations much like that of engaging in criminal acts include, becoming the subject of societal scrutiny, labeling as well as social exclusion (Blake & Davis, 1964; Janowitz, 1975). The defiance and violation of societal norms are therefore accompanied by a range of negative reactions (Chekroun & Brauer, 2004). The relationship between law-breaking behaviour and social norms has been a subject of many studies and has previously offered a fresh perspective on the relationship between law and

social behaviour (Weisberg, 2003). Furthermore, informal social, moral standards and rules may regulate group and individual behaviour as pervasively as, or perhaps even more pervasively than, the law itself (McAdams, 1997; Posner, 2000). Social norm violations exhibit an inextricable link to criminal behaviours as they often serve as a prerequisite to these especially when considered from a developmental psychological, sociological and criminological point of view.

### **2.1.5 Self-explanations and its usefulness in the study of antisocial offending behaviour**

The majority of research conducted on antisocial offending behaviours have tended to focus on risk factors, though valid risk factors are predictive constructs and not necessarily explanatory (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Hefferman & Ward, 2015). It would also seem that risk factors while incredibly useful for understanding how offending develops; might be more applicable for risk assessment for detecting future antisocial offending patterns (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Ward, 2016; Ward & Fortune, 2016; Ward & Fortune, 2017). Risk factors have dominated the research on antisocial offending in psychology and criminology. On the other hand, very little research has studied the self-explanations, which emerging adults attribute to their criminal and societal norm violating behaviour. According to Sampson and Laub (2003) there are very few studies which have provided a thorough examination of criminal careers over time and across developmental periods. Additionally, majority of studies seem to have only relied on official records to study criminal careers (Benson, 2013; Farrington, 1997). While the usefulness of self-reporting has been established in the research on antisocial offending behaviours, the benefit of self-reporting may not have been realised for young people engaging in such behaviours. In particular, the self-explanations of emerging adults have remained virtually unexplored and warrant more research and investigation. Self-reports offer a number of key features, which help better understand the causes, which those who offend ascribe to their behaviour.

According to Thornberry and Krohn (2000), the self-report technique is one of three major ways of measuring involvement in antisocial offending behaviour. The basic approach of the self-report method is to ask individuals if they have engaged in delinquent or criminal behaviour, and if so, how often they have done so. To this end, an account of research participants' experiences of antisocial offending behaviours may therefore complement self-reporting. This may provide rich and insightful data into these forms of behaviour. Hence, the emphasis on the experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviours in this study. Though seemingly simplistic, Thornberry and Krohn (2000) argued that self-reporting measures allow the researcher to obtain information closer to the source of criminal and delinquent behaviour. If one could not observe the behaviour-taking place, self-reported accounts of delinquent and criminal behaviour would be the nearest data source to the actual behaviour. While observing the behaviour-taking place (observational studies) would be one method, this is complicated given the illegal/immoral nature of the behaviour and the potential consequences if caught. For these reasons participants involved in crime and delinquency are often reluctant to have their behaviours observed, thus making observational studies less likely choices for such research. This has proven to be the case even when observational studies were conducted, for example, in studies of gangs (see also Thrasher 2000); researchers could only observe a very small portion of crime and societal norm violations that took place. Thus, although observation studies could generate theoretical ideas about why and how antisocial offending behaviour took place, they had limited utility in describing the distribution and patterns of criminal behaviour (Thornberry & Krohn, 2000). Therefore, if one could not observe the behaviours taking place; self-reports of antisocial offending behaviours would be ideal. More recently, Forrest, Edwards and Vassallo (2014) have also argued that self-reports of antisocial offending behaviour were highly correlated, concord with official statistics and though individual differences (such as race, gender, ethnicity, age) between participants cause the accuracy of both measures to vary, these differences are very few. This has also been mitigated by much of the work, which have been done on

improving the reliability and validity of self-reports. This included specialized techniques to enhance the quality of self-report data (Stirratt et al., 2015). In other words, while simplistic self-reports are supported by evidence as good and reliable measures for the study of antisocial offending behaviours. This means that self-reporting remains open to quality improvement and therefore offers the possibility of even greater reliability and validity thereby making it even more attractive in the study of crime and delinquency. These developments have made self-report studies an integral part of the way crime and delinquency is studied (Thornberry & Krohn, 2000). In the context of the present study, self-reports through self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour of a group of South African emerging adults present as the nearest data source to the actual antisocial offending behaviour as well as the most appropriate given its stature, widespread use in the study of these type of behaviours.



## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### 3. Methodology

According to Bryman (2008), a research method can be described as one of the techniques for collecting and analysing data to respond to the research question. Keeping this in mind, this chapter will expand on the methods used to collect, analyse data as well as provide for information of the study's design, setting and participant profiles.



#### 3.1 Research Design

The present study used an explorative research design. Exploratory research designs allow the researcher to: (1) *become familiar with the basic facts, settings, and concerns*; (2) *create a general mental picture of conditions*; (3) *formulate and focus questions for future research*; (4) *generates new idea, conjectures*; (5) *determine the feasibility of conducting research* and (6) *develop techniques for measuring and locating future data*(Grinnell & Unrau, 2011; Neuman, 1997). According to Creswell (2007), an exploratory research design attempts to gather new insights, discover new ideas, and increase the knowledge of the topic under investigation. To this end, an exploratory design has enabled the researcher to gain valuable new insights as well as to broaden his knowledge about the antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults. Furthermore, the use of an exploratory research design has allowed the researcher to examine an understudied topic of interest, which is in keeping with the purpose of exploratory designs as posited by some methodologists (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Richard, 2008). This design enabled the researcher to do the

following: become familiar with the basic facts of antisocial offending behaviour, the settings where this form of behaviour as practiced and its concerns. Additionally, this design allowed the researcher to create a general mental picture of conditions surrounding emerging adults' engagement in antisocial offending behaviours. It also enabled the researcher to formulate and focus questions on antisocial offending behaviour for future research as well as allowed the researcher to generate new ideas on antisocial offending behaviour. Thirdly, the exploratory design enabled the researcher to determine the feasibility of conducting research on antisocial offending behaviours and develop techniques for locating future data on antisocial offending behaviours. These features of exploratory research designs proved essential to the investigation into the antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults especially given the lack of available research.



### **3.2 Research Approach**

The aims of qualitative approaches are to describe and understand social realities, including the meanings that people attach to their experiences and perceptions (de Vos, Strydom, Fouchè & Delpont, 2011). A qualitative approach therefore allowed the researcher to describe, explore and understand social realities of a group of South African emerging adults 'experiences and self-explanations of their antisocial offending behaviours. According to Creswell (2007) qualitative research, prove complementary to exploratory research designs. Moreover, qualitative approaches are especially valued for the naturalistic descriptions, interpretations of the subjective realities and the meaning attached to these realities by those who experience them (Langdrige, 2007). This meant that the researcher was able to authentically explore, describe, and interpret the antisocial offending realities and experiences of a group of South African emerging adults. Finally, the qualitative approaches also allowed the researcher to describe, explore and understand the meanings which emerging adults attached to their experiences of antisocial offending behaviours.



### **3.3 Population and sampling**

The population of the study was South African emerging adults living in the Western Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa. The Western Cape Province, houses 6,510,300 (11.5 %) of the South African population (Statistics South Africa, 2017b). According Statistics South Africa (2017b), 15-29 year olds make up 1,639 475 of the province's young people.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on a specific criterion who are knowledgeable about the issue under investigation (Creswell, 2003, 2007). To this end, the participants in the final sample of this study were emerging adults between the ages of 18-25

years who had previous experience or were presently involved in antisocial offending behaviours at the time of interviews. First, a criterion-based purposive sampling technique was used to identify potential participants. This was done because this type of sampling allowed for the selection of participants who can provide an understanding of the research problem (antisocial offending behaviours of South African emerging adults) being studied (Creswell, 2007). According to Babbie & Mouton (2007), purposive sampling methods can be used to select participants based on the specific criteria required by the research investigation. Furthermore, Babbie & Mouton (2001, 2007) also stated that this form of sampling entails the selection of a participant pool that will best assist the researcher to understand the problem, the research question but that they (participants) must be willing to reflect on and share their knowledge of the problem being studied. Potential participants were accessed through three non-governmental organisations in Cape Town, which is located in the Western Cape Province of, the Republic of South Africa. 17 participants were interviewed; however only 10 participants met the criteria for participation in the study. All, finally selected participants involved in the present study were emerging adults; those between the ages of 18 and 25 years of age. The average age of the participants was 23.3 years. The study initially aimed to access at least 10 to 15 participants who present as a reasonably acceptable sample for a qualitative study of this design (Smith, Flower & Larkin, 2009). The demographic profiles of the finally selected participants were collected using a demographic profile sheet (Appendix D) and are shown below, in Table 1.

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the participants**

Gender	Highest grade/Education level	Religion	Economic status	Parents' Economic status	Race	Residence status	Why attending re-entry unit or site	South African citizen
Male	Grade 8	South	Middle	Middle	Black	With close	Working on	Yes

		African				family member	community project	
<b>Male</b>	Matric (grade 12)	Christian	Middle	Middle	Coloured	With parents	To gain insight and learning	Yes
<b>Male</b>	Grade 10	Christian	Middle	Middle	Coloured	With parents	Want to be successful in growing spiritual and to be responsible for my own future	Yes
<b>Male</b>	Grade 10	Christian	Middle	High	Coloured	With parents	Addicted to dagga	Yes
<b>Male</b>	Grade 12	Christian	Middle	Middle	Coloured	With parents	Not much to do	Yes
<b>Male</b>	Grade 10	Christian	Low	Low	Coloured	With close family member	To change myself and prevent others from doing the same things I did in the past	Yes
<b>Male</b>	Grade 10	Non-religious	Middle	Middle	Coloured	With parents	Minor problem with dope use	Yes
<b>Female</b>	Grade 10	Christian	Middle	Middle	Coloured	With parents	-	Yes
<b>Male</b>	Grade 7	Christian	Middle	Middle	Coloured	With parents	Lives in Community	Yes
<b>Male</b>	Grade 8	Afrikaan	Middle	Middle	Coloured	With parents	Lives in Community	

While the researcher aimed to obtain a diverse sample of emerging adults from different races, gender, cultural backgrounds and socio-economic backgrounds, the final sample included mostly males. This was not the case in the final sample. Nine (9) male participants and one female participant formed part of the final sample. Nine participants identified their race as coloured (mixed race) while only one identified himself as black. Majority (8) of participants identified with the Christianity while, the three remaining participants identified themselves as non-religious, Afrikaan (participant did not explain what this meant) and South African, respectively. All participants were South African and the average educational status as described by participants was grade nine high/secondary school. Eight (8) participants left school before completing their grade 12 while one participant left school during their grade 12 year and only one completed their high/secondary school education. All participants lived at home with either their parents or a close family member.

Most of the participants also reported their socio-economic status as middle while two other participants identified with a high and a low socio-economic status, respectively. Socio-economic status was defined based on participants' subjective interpretations. A middle socio-economic status entailed that participants had just enough resources (such as food, money) to survive but felt they could not help others. The low socio-economic status involved being in constant need of food, money and not knowing where your next meal will come from. Participants therefore disregarded income as a determinant of socio-economic status.

All participants lived with their parents or a close family member and were unemployed. Participants reported their socio-economic status as high when they were of the opinion they had all their daily needs (such as food, water, money etc.) met while also having enough money and resources to help others.

Participants provided several reasons as to why they were part of a community based project or attending a programme at a particular site. These reasons included, to gain life skills or improve future behaviours, substances addiction treatment and desistance or abstention from antisocial offending behaviours.

### **3.4 Research setting**

All the participants were accessed through three non-governmental organisations, which conducted work in two townships (one in the Northern and the other in the Southern suburbs) of Cape Town, which is located in the Western Cape Province of, the Republic of South Africa. In South Africa young people have been found to exhibit extremely vulnerability to becoming perpetrators of crime and violence; this is especially true for violent criminal offences (Leoschut & Burton, 2006). Poverty as well high school dropout rates have been found to significantly increase the risk of engaging in antisocial offending behaviour for young people (Langana, 2004; Tabrizi, 2013). As shown in chapter one, South Africa has alarmingly high rates of antisocial offending behaviours. The Western Cape Province of South Africa has also shown significant increases in crime rates. According to Statistics South Africa (2017) found that the Western Cape had the highest proportion of households victimised by crime in the country. The province has also been marred by gang violence, drug- related crime and delinquency; this is particularly true for Cape Town (Kinnes, 2000; Monaghan, 2004; Nina, 2000; Standing, 2003; Wijnberg & Green, 2014). These harsh realities made the Western Cape and in particular, Cape Town a fitting setting for the present study. To address some of these problems a number of non-governmental organisations work with communities in and around Cape Town. Some of these organisations were approached to provide assistance in order to access participants.

The NGOs included: the South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders' (NICRO) clinical unit; Sonke Gender Justice and Camp Agape restoration centre were all

approached. The clinical unit of NICRO, which provide psychological and support services to self-referred clients in order to assist clients with offending histories with re-integration and crime prevention. Sonke Gender Justice is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation that works for just, democratic societies and equitable, healthy relationships between men, women and young people. Camp Agape restoration centre is a non-profit community based organisation, which specialises in family restoration. Their focus is drug addiction and families affected by it. Permission was sought from these organisations to approach their clients and/or young people involved in their projects and/or to gain access to communities in and around Cape Town. These NGOs were therefore ideally situated to access emerging adults who have engaged in antisocial offending behaviours.

### 3.5 Data Collection



Data for the study were collected through in-depth semi-structured individual interviews. All interviews were conducted in English as this was the language most participants felt comfortable in sharing their experiences. However, one participant responded using Afrikaans for some of the questions such responses were translated by the researcher who is fluent in this language. Translations from Afrikaans were also verified (anonymously- participants' identifying information was withheld) by a reviewer who was not involved in the research; the reviewer studied Afrikaans at university level and taught the language as a teaching subject in high schools. The existing research and body of literature on antisocial offending behaviour was used as a guide to develop interview questions. Previous studies including qualitative and quantitative such as those conducted by Tyson and Stones (2002), Tyson and Hubert (2000), given these studies' direct focus on self-explanations and theory in the area of antisocial offending behaviours in context were also consulted to inform and guide the formulation of questions. Moreover, questions changed during the study especially those that

participants felt were too direct and made participants apprehensive to answer questions. This was also in keeping with inductive reasoning which is implicit in qualitative research. Inductive reasoning approach is typical in qualitative in nature; an inductive approach does not imply a disregard of theories and literature theories when formulating research questions and objectives (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Interview guides (Appendix B); were created and included for this purpose. This guided the interview and questioning of the participants in order to explore and delineate experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour of group South African emerging adults. The semi-structured interview method was used because it is relatively open; it allowed the interviewer to adjust questions according to participant responses (Wenger, 2001). The personal dimension of semi-structured interview method also enabled the interviewer to establish rapport and trust between the interviewer and the interviewees, which in turn facilitated more truthful responses, thereby making personal interviews the method of choice for sensitive topics such as the one under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Huck, 2012). These qualities made the semi-structured method the ideal and appropriate method to explore experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour among a group of South African emerging adults. All the interviews were scheduled at times, which were convenient for participants. Each interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes. Interviews were conducted at places convenient for participants. This included sites where NGOs were actively working with those involved in their community projects or just in the communities where participants lived. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed by both the researcher and an independent scribe. All of the transcriptions were checked for accuracy by the researcher and then amended where necessary.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

The data gathered from the transcriptions were analysed using thematic analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a qualitative method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns in data. Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas (2013) argued that thematic analysis is an independent and reliable approach to analysis. Furthermore, Buetow (2010) noted that thematic analysis attempts to reveal core consistencies and meanings in data by identifying and analysing themes, which are large, abstract categories of meaningful data segments. In thematic analysis, these segments, which are known as codes, recur and repeated codes are similar or connected to each other in a patterned way while noting that the mere recurrence of codes is not necessarily a sufficient criterion of their importance (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Buetow, 2010). These authors also noted that thematic analysis has the benefit of being flexible in that it is essentially independent from theory and epistemology (Braun & Clarke 2006). These aspects allow thematic analysis to be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches, which in turn allows the researcher to recognise, evaluate and report on patterns and themes within data. Thematic analysis therefore seemed well suited for the present study especially given its flexibility and emphasis on ensuring authentic analysis of data. Braun and Clarke (as cited in Braun & Clarke, 2013), suggested six phases of thematic analysis. The authors also noted that these phases ought not to be viewed as a linear model, where one cannot proceed to the next phase without completing the prior phase (correctly); but rather that analysis was a recursive process. The six phases are as follow:

(1) *Familiarisation with the data* is common to all forms of qualitative analysis- the researcher must immerse him in, and become intimately familiar with the data. This can be achieved by reading and re-reading the data as well listening to audio-recorded data at least once if relevant while noting any initial analytic observations. In this phase, the researcher conducted the interviews, transcribed the data and

engaged in a continuous process of reading and re-reading (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This was done to gain familiarity with and immersion in the data. Since, the researcher had conducted the interview himself; he was able to establish early awareness of the content of the data. Ideas and notes were written down during the interviews while reflections were also written down after listening to audio recordings following interviews. This enhanced the researcher's understanding and provided him with valuable information pertaining to participants' views, beliefs, attitudes, understandings and explanations of antisocial offending behaviours.

(2)*Coding* is also a common element of many approaches to qualitative analysis which involves generating pithy labels for important features of the data of relevance to the (broad) research question guiding the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). Here, coding is not simply a method of data reduction but is also an analytic process; codes capture both a semantic and conceptual reading of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher coded every data item and ended this phase by collating all the codes and relevant data extracts. 63 codes were initially identified. Following more re-reading of transcripts and listening to audio-recordings these were reduced to 58 codes. These were then compiled in a table format in order to list the various codes as well as to attach broader categories and themes to subsets of codes.

(3)*Searching for themes*: entail that codes are viewed as the bricks and tiles in a brick and tile house, themes are the walls and roof panels (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Searching for themes is a bit like coding your codes to identify similarity in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Braun & Clarke (2006) *searching* is an active process; themes are not hidden in the data waiting to be discovered by the intrepid researcher, rather the researcher constructs themes. The researcher then coded the data relevant to each

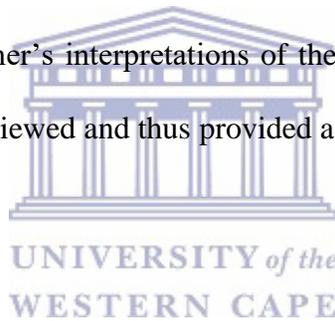
theme. A number of codes were changed to themes and other themes to codes. This resulted in the identifications of 23 potential themes.

(4)*Reviewing themes*: Involves checking that the themes *work* in relation to both the coded extracts and the full data-set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). Accordingly, the researcher should reflect on whether the themes tell a convincing and compelling story about the data, and begin to define the nature of each individual theme, and the relationship between the themes. It may be necessary to collapse two themes together or to split a theme into two or more themes, or to discard the candidate themes altogether and begin again the process of theme development (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). The 23 potential themes identified previously underwent extensive review and were later combined due to overwhelming similarities. These were then reduced to 14 potential themes. This reduction in themes came as a result of checking and reviewing for coherent pattern among themes.

(5)*Defining and naming themes* required the researcher to conduct and write a detailed analysis of each theme (the researcher should ask, *what story does this theme tell?* and how does this theme fit into the exploration of experiences and self-explanations of a group of South African emerging adults? Here the researcher identified the *essence* of each theme. This meant that appropriate names had to be assigned to each theme. The researcher then reviewed transcripts again to ascertain appropriate names that would capture the function, nature and content which each of the themes identified. At this phase, consideration was given to the possibility of the existence of sub-themes. Sub-themes meant that even closer attention had to be paid to the transcripts and audio-recordings. This meant that the sub-themes had to be continuously refined. A detailed analysis was conducted on each primary theme and each sub-theme in order to avoid overlap. This resulted in seven primary themes and subthemes were also

identified. With the help of the researcher's supervisor; the primary and sub-themes were reviewed and verified.

(6) *Writing up* is an integral element of the analytic process in TA (and most qualitative research). Writing-up involves weaving together the analytic narrative and (vivid) data extracts to tell the reader a coherent and persuasive story about the data, and contextualising it in relation to existing literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). These phases and considerations make thematic analysis an appropriate data analysis tool for this present study. This last phase entailed the writing of the academic report or thesis. For the purpose of the report, all the relevant extracts were tabulated, used as examples to illustrate and substantiate the primary themes as well as the sub-themes. Such data, in the form of illustrative quotes and the researcher's interpretations of these; were then related back to the analysis, the research question, literature reviewed and thus provided a comprehensive report of the analysis.



### 3.7 Methodological Rigour

Given that the present study was of a qualitative nature, the researcher had to be aware of the following procedures implicit in methodological rigour of a qualitative study: credibility, transfereability, dependability, confirmability and reflexivity. The methodological rigour refers to the *trustworthiness* of the research process and its findings (Cutcliffe & McKenna, 1999; Golafshani, 2003; Rodwell & Byers, 1997). The purpose of establishing trustworthiness was to increase the rigour of the methodology and to enhance the credibility of the study in order to ensure that the findings, interpretations as well as the conclusions were ultimately, supported by the data. Rodwell and Byers (1997) suggested that trustworthiness has a number of elements, which include: credibility, transfereability, dependability, confirmability and reflexivity. These elements assess the quality of the research product for truth-value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). According to Lincoln & Guba (1985) *credibility* is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a credible conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data and *confirmability* is a measure of how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For the purpose of the present study, trustworthiness ensured that the researcher was reflexive and not bias. To this end, the researcher's prior experience in working in student support and development assisted the researcher to remain conscious of the sensitive nature of interview data and participants' subjective experience while remaining aware of his own subjectivity. This was achieved by ensuring that this research is based on adequate consideration of the ethical practice guiding the research process as well as ensuring that this research is based on reliable information gathered in an appropriate manner. Additionally, the researchers previous work experience in higher education academic administration assisted him to remain aware of the precepts, which govern research practice and work with human participants. The researcher continuously and interrogated, examined his personal feelings and subjectivity in order to ensure that objectivity and therefore, the integrity of the present study was maintained. This is in keeping with Aguinaldo's (2004) assertions that trustworthiness of qualitative research ought to consist of a process of continuous interrogation of the multiple and at times often varied readings of research representation.

In addition, and in order to enhance the trustworthiness of the data, a second reviewer an academic with over 20 years of teaching experience in research methods and supervision experience in psychology also reviewed the data (participants' identifying information were kept confidential). The research supervisor conducted external auditing. These techniques facilitated greater rigour thereby increasing trustworthiness that was in keeping with the recommendations made by methodologists concerning the evaluation criterion for qualitative research (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008; Creswell et al., 2007).

### 3.8 Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the present study and ethics clearance (15/6/25) was granted by the Senate Research Committee (Appendix A) of the University of the Western Cape and remains subject to the ethical considerations stipulated. Permission was sought and obtained from a number of Non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) access and/or receive assistance to access their clients or community members involved in their programmes. NGOs approached included: the South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO); Sonke Gender Justice and Camp Agape restoration centre were all approached. All participants' participation in the study was voluntary and all participants were informed of as this and as to the aims of the study both verbally and via an information sheet (Appendix C). The consent forms (Appendix E) were explained by the researcher, and signed by participants before the interviews took place. The researcher informed participants of their rights in the research process. These rights included not being obligated to reply to any question that the participants are not comfortable with and that they may withdraw from the research process, at any time, without consequence. As mentioned before, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The audio files of all interviews were at all times kept in a safe and secure location especially when it was not in the hands of the researcher. In cases where a reviewer was consulted, participants' identifying information was not disclosed. The confidentiality of the participants was therefore always ensured. Additionally, where concerns or problems may have arisen because of the research study; a referral to counselling services would have been made for the participants; this was also indicated on the information sheet (Appendix C). No such concerns were reported by the participants of the present study. Participants were also informed of the Protection of Personal information (PoPi) Act of 2013 as it applied to

the research. The Act promotes the protection of personal information processed by public and private bodies (Government Gazette, 2013). The Act recognises and provides the right to privacy to everyone. The right to privacy includes: a right to protection against the unlawful collection, retention, dissemination and use of personal information. Participants were also informed of the dissemination protocol that includes 1) an unpublished thesis; 2) conference presentation and 3) peer-reviewed manuscript/s; on the basis that their identities would remain anonymous.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

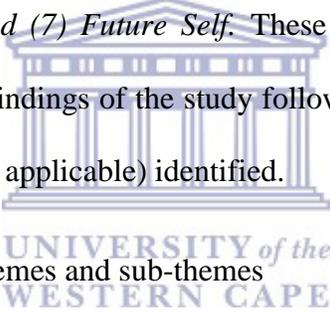
This chapter has described the methods of the research study. A detailed description of the research design supported by the aims and objectives of the study was made explicit. Furthermore, the participant selection process, data collection and data analysis techniques as well as reflexivity and trustworthiness of the data were also described. Furthermore, ethical concerns were also discussed which were maintained throughout the research process. Chapter Four of this thesis will proceed to present and delineate the findings of the study in terms of the literature reviewed and theoretical framework considered.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents the themes, which emerged, from the data analysis process as well as a brief discussion of each theme. This study aimed to explore experiences of a group of South African emerging adults who have engaged in antisocial offending behaviours. Seven primary themes each with its own sub-themes emerged from the data analysis of the transcribed interviews. The primary themes identified were: (1) *Home Environment*, (2) *Labeling and Stigmatisation*, (3) *Emotional Adjustment*, (4) *Moral Reasoning*, (5) *Unemployment*, (6) *Substance Abuse* and (7) *Future Self*. These themes and sub-themes are substantiated using extracts from the interviews. The findings of the study follow in this chapter. Table 2, presented below shows the primary and subthemes (where applicable) identified.

**Table 2:** Primary themes and sub-themes



<b>Primary themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
<b>Theme 1 <i>Home environment</i></b>	Family structure Overindulgent and liberal parenting Modeling
<b>Theme 2 <i>Labeling and Stigmatisation</i></b>	Undue blame
<b>Theme 3 <i>Social-emotional adjustment</i></b>	Inept social skills Peer pressure and group conformity Impulsivity

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	Compassionate care
<b>Theme 4 Moral Reasoning</b>	Understanding of good versus bad behaviours
	Experience of legal detention and incarceration
	Perceptions of punishment
<b>Theme 5 Future self</b>	
<b>Theme 6 Unemployment</b>	
<b>Theme 7 Substance abuse</b>	

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#### 4.2 Primary theme 1: Home environment

The first primary theme was termed home environment. Participants elucidated that antisocial offending behaviours have their origin in the home environment. Home environment included three sub-themes, which included: family structure, parenting styles and modeling. The home environment was thought to include a number of factors, which was mostly driven by parental influences, which in turn contributed, to participants' antisocial offending behaviours. The quotes substantiating these factors are shown below.

**Table 3:** Primary theme 1; Home environment

Theme	Illustrative quote/s
<b>4.2 Home environment</b>	<p><i>"It starts in the house. Where you grow up"</i> Participant 1</p> <p><i>"In the house"</i> Participant 2</p> <p><i>"Like some of them they come out of different homes uhhhm they went through"</i></p>

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*different things” Participant 4*

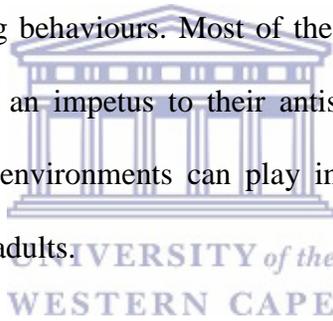
*“Like their environment at home probably like his mother doesn’t care or his mother’s a alcoholic or his daddy’s never there for him and then.” Participant 5*

*“Ja, it start by the house” Participant 7*

*“But you coming out of a broken home you gonna act out a manner that you learned in the house” Participant 9*

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From participants’ responses, it is apparent that their home environments played a catalytic role for their engagement in antisocial offending behaviours. Most of the participants involved in the present study cited their home environments as an impetus to their antisocial offending behaviour. It is therefore worth exploring what role home environments can play in initiating and maintaining the antisocial offending behaviours of emerging adults.



The role of home environments of offenders has had a long-standing history in the literature on antisocial offending behaviours. This is especially true because home environments are thought to include a number of factors, which directly impact the development of individuals and potentially predict offending behaviours (Smith & Stern, 1997). In their review of the literature on family processes and interventions for delinquency and antisocial behaviours, Smith and Stern (1997) concluded that children who grow in homes characterised by lack of warmth and support are likely to be delinquent. According to Prior, Sanson, Smart and Oberklaid (2001) the temperaments of children who are withdrawn can be moderated by a warm, nurturing home where parents do not push children to early independence. Theobald, Farrington and Piquero (2013) also found that self-reported violence act as a possible mediator on the effect of a broken home on later violent convictions. Individuals’ home

environments can therefore serve as both a propagator and mediating factor of antisocial offending behaviours. Majority of the participants in the present study characterised their home environments as involving dysfunction. Home environment emerged as an important theme, which participants were of opinion served as the earliest location for where antisocial offending behaviours have their origin. The importance of the home environment as a point of departure for participants' antisocial offending behaviours can therefore not be ignored and find agreement in past and contemporary literature. As stated earlier, the home environment includes a number of factors, which may contribute to antisocial offending behaviours. A number of sub-themes exploring possible factors emerged from the data analysis. The sub-themes are discussed below.

#### **4.2.1 Family structure**

All participants involved in the study reported still living at home with their parents or a close family member. Participants further reported a number of features, which characterised their families of origin. The most reported family structure the nuclear family in which; both parents raised participants. However, most participants indicated that their family structure changed either dramatically because of an absent parent or because of long distance work, marital breakdown or incarceration of one parent. The illustrative quotes related to this sub-theme are shown in Table 4, below.

**Table 4:** Sub-theme; Family structure

Sub-theme	Illustrative quote/s
4.2.1 Family structure	<p data-bbox="802 268 1373 380">“I was raised by my mother and father, but just that section where my father wasn’t always there because he worked away”</p> <p data-bbox="802 422 1373 533">“He’ll come he’ll come and stay a few months and then he leaves again because he has to go work”</p> <p data-bbox="802 575 1373 770">“So my mommy was always the one that was the mommy and the daddy yes he was there. He’ll come he’ll come and stay a few months and then he leaves again because he has to go work” Participant 4</p> <p data-bbox="802 812 1373 884">“So I brought up with like my grandma and grandpa” Participant 5</p> <p data-bbox="802 926 1373 1037">“Cause my parents, the few years that we’ve been living together I showed them a part of me they can’t believe...” Participant 8</p> <p data-bbox="802 1079 1373 1146">“I was with my mother for a few months...” Participant 9</p>

The importance of the family and family structure cannot be underscored especially because families share a number of features, which may include: interdependence; relative stability over time, a sense of family identity, and the performance of certain tasks directed toward socio-emotional, moral, material, spiritual and economic functions (Amoateng et al., 2004; Sewpaul & Pillay, 2011). Families are generally distinguished by their productive, reproductive and protective functions and family households consist of a number of individuals, not necessarily relatives who reside in the same residence (Belsey, 2005; Krekula, 2002). The concept of family does not necessarily equate to household structure since as families may also extend across two, three, or more households and households may contain two or more families (Donahue et al.,

2004). Family units present as one of the most basic units in societies and exist in a variety of forms. Families may exist as nuclear (consisting of both parent and children), inter-generational extended as well as single-parent structures (Amoateng, et al., 2004). The participants of the present study recorded a number of features which characterised their home environments. The first of which was family structure. Participants of the present study reported a number of different family structures. The most common family structure cited by participants was the single parent family as a result of an absent parent due to long distance work and/or marital breakdown. Family structure has been posited as an important factor in elucidating delinquency (Price & Kunz, 2003). Both family structure as well as child-parent relationships have been highlighted two crucial factors thought to influence juvenile delinquency and criminal behaviour; this is especially true during adolescence (Apel & Kaukinen, 2008; Leiber, Mack & Featherstone, 2009; Petts, 2009; Price & Kunz, 2003). Dramatic shifts in the family structure during adolescence have also been found to contribute to antisocial offending behaviours; a number of studies have highlighted this relationship for adolescents and adults (Farrington, Coid, & Murray, 2009; Farrington, Coid, & West, 2009; Juby & Farrington 2001; Kierkus, Johnson & Hewitt, 2010). Broken homes characterised by family breakdowns have been cited to increase antisocial offending rates by as much as 15% (Wells & Rankin, 1991). Furthermore, marital breakdown similar to what was reported by participants in the present study may highlight the need for greater parental involvement during early childhood, adolescent periods to counteract offending behaviours in later periods such as emerging adulthood (Burkea et al., 2014). Single parent family structures seem to exhibit additional barriers to maintain stable family environments in which good parent-child relationships are fostered making antisocial offending behaviours likely outcomes (Astone & McLanahan, 1994; Downey & Powell, 1993; Mandara

&Murray, 2006; Rebellon, 2002; Theobald, Farrington & Piquero, 2013; Wells & Rankin, 1991; Wu, 1996). The supervision of children, which may be an important mediator between family structure and delinquency, is one such barrier. Additionally, factors such as working long hours especially by single parents have been found to lead to harmful future outcomes including antisocial offending behaviours (Rebellon, 2002). While, disruptions in the family structure are well supported by research evidence, conflict in families may yield similar outcomes for antisocial offending behaviours as reported by Juby and Farrington (2001) in the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development. Similarly, Haas et al., (2004) found that disrupted families predicted offending high-conflict families predicted the same prevalence of offending as disrupted families in a sample of Swedish males. Marital breakdown especially because of divorce can yield a number of negative implications for the structure of the family and ultimately children and adolescents (Amato, 2000). These implications can include moving out of the family home early sexually active earlier and to form inappropriate relationships that lead to early marriage and/or childbirth and the cycle of broken homes (Armour & Haynie, 2007; Hill, Yeung, & Duncan, 1996; McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988). The family structures reported by participants resembled close similarities to those, which the literature has found to increase the likelihood of antisocial offending behaviours. However, what remains lacking is whether the family structures identified in the literature discussed above, hold relevance for the participants' South African context.

South Africa exhibits relatively low divorce rates compared to developed countries but these rates have seen significant increases in recent times (Amato, 2000; Cherlin, 2004; Statistics South Africa, 2016a). According to Amato (2000, 2004) children who are raised by happy married parents have the best opportunity to develop into successful and competent adults.

However, this does not deny that, children raised by other types of family structures do not develop into well-adjusted adults. This relationship has been consistently supported by the research on antisocial offending behaviours. Such research also consistently seem to support the idea that children with two happily and securely married parents have an advantage over children raised in other family groups (Amato, 2004; Coughlin & Vuchinich, 1996; Fergusson, Dimond & Horwood, 1986; Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Juby & Farrington, 2001; Kolvin et al., 1988; Mednick, Baker & Carothers, 1990; West & Farrington, 1973). It would therefore seem that the significant influence which participants’ reported family structures is well supported by the literature.



#### 4.2.2 Overindulgent and liberal parenting

Most of the participants described their experiences of being parented as overindulgent and liberal. To this end, majority of participants recalled a lack of disciplinary and punitive strategies being imposed upon them when family norms and/or house rules were transgressed. Moreover, participants also were of the opinion that their parents took a liberal parenting approach, which they were of the opinion, involved little restraint and little parental discipline being exercised over their (participants’) behaviours.

**Table 5:** Sub-theme; Overindulgent and liberal parenting

Sub-theme	Illustrative quote/s
<b>4.2.2 Overindulgent and liberal parenting</b>	<i>“I use to get everything I wanted so my behaviour I was spoiled” Participant 4</i>
	<i>“Well, (pause) you were born a baby, so how</i>

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*can I put it now I didn't know I was gonna end up in a gang because I was brought up in a ...a wealthy family, I always had everything I wanted" Participant 5*

*"I must still, I didn't have like a punishment through my..." Participant 8*

*"And, and stuff she couldn't really take control of me because she wasn't at home all the time she was at work"*

*"I was one of them... my mother never held me back my mother like put me out there so that I could experience so that I could learn from it and then...then when I started getting older like like 12, 13" Participant 9*

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From the responses above, it is apparent that participants' senses of how they were parented reflect a number of qualities. These qualities included: lack of punishment, poor or a lack of parental control and as well as poor parental supervision. These qualities are implicit in parenting styles adopted by parents. To this end, lack of punishment, poor or a lack of parental control and as well as poor parental supervision have been associated with parenting styles adopted by parents.

Baumrind's (1991, 1996) work on parenting which was largely based on the quality of parental control identified three different parenting styles namely: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles. According to Baumrind (1996), parental behavioural control can be referred to as the management of adolescent behaviour and activities in an attempt to regulate their behaviour and provide them with guidance for appropriate social behaviour and conduct. Behavioural control has been found to protect against problem behaviours such as problem drinking in young adulthood among males, adolescent truancy, alcohol and marijuana use, and

engagement in early sexual intercourse (Barnes et al., 2000; Roche, Ensminger & Cherlin, 2007). According to Baumrind (1991), parental control also involved the claims parents make on children, which are to become integrated into the family as a whole through their maturity demands, supervision, and disciplinary efforts as well as willingness to confront the child who disobeys. Participants' reported parenting behaviour closely resembles the permissive parenting style as identified by Baumrind (1996). High levels of responsiveness and low levels of demandingness have characterized the permissive parenting style (Baumrind, Larzelere & Owens, 2010; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). According to Baumrind, Larzelere and Owens (2010) permissive parents do not set rules, avoid engaging in behavioural control, and set few to no behavioural expectations for adolescents. These features seem to align very closely to the characteristics which participants noted in as far as their experiences of being parented were concerned. In other words, participants mostly reported being parented in liberal or permissive ways. According to McKinney, Milone and Renk (2011), parenting styles are related to the types of discipline parents utilise and that the coupling of parenting styles and discipline techniques are related to child behavioural outcomes. In a study on parenting and trajectories of maladaptive behaviours, permissive parents showed steep decreases in monitoring once their children reached adolescence and these children increased their levels of externalising behaviour (Luyckx et al., 2011). Hoskins (2014) noted that researchers commonly define externalizing behaviours as aggression, deviant behaviour, drug use, underage drinking, deviant peer affiliation, and opposition; in other words antisocial offending behaviours. On the other hand, internalising behaviours have typically been defined as behaviours such as, depression, self-esteem, and fearfulness (Hoskins, 2014; Luyckx et al., 2011). Further, Querido, Warner & Eyberg (2002) also argued that adolescents from permissive families report a higher frequency of antisocial

offending behaviours such as substance use and school misconduct. The authors also reported that such children tended to be less engaged and less positively oriented to school compared to individuals from authoritative or authoritarian families (Querido, Warner & Eyberg, 2002). Permissive parenting has also been associated with internalising behaviours such as low self-esteem and extrinsic motivational orientation among adolescents (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993). Adolescence has been identified throughout the literature on parenting as an important period in which parents ought to consistently provide guidance, supervision and effective discipline. It can therefore be argued that emerging adults in the present study highlighted the need for such practices during late adolescence. While research examining the effects of parenting styles and discipline on child and early adolescent adjustment appears very popular, less is known about adjustment in late adolescents who transition into emerging adulthood (McKinney, Milone & Renk, 2011).



Overindulgent parenting practices are also not new to the literature on antisocial offending behaviours. Participants of the present study highlighted that they were often overindulged. In addition, these participants also reported that they were from mostly middle socio-economic status families. According to Hoskins (2014) parenting, practices among higher socio-economic status families have also been associated with negative adolescent outcomes when overindulgent parenting occurs. Bredehoft, Mennicke, Potter & Clarke (1998) noted that overindulgent parents inundated their adolescents with family resources such as material wealth and experiences at developmentally inappropriate times. These authors further found that individuals who self-identified as overindulged children reported experiencing negative effects such as not having

emotional needs met as a result of the indulgence, not only while it was occurring, but into adulthood (Bredehoft, Mennicke, Potter & Clarke, 1998).

In South Africa, Roman, Human & Hiss' (2012) study revealed a positive relationship between parental (particularly maternal) psychological control and the antisocial behaviour of a sample of emerging adults; those between the ages of 18-25 years. Furthermore, parenting has been highlighted as a crucial factor, which can predict antisocial offending behaviours in South African young people (Dawes, de Sas Kropiwnicki, Kafaar & Richter, 2005; Denis & Ntsimane, 2006; Hamber & Lewis, 1997; Mokwena, 1991; Muntingh, 2005). From the responses provided it would appear that parenting practices consistent with the literature influenced the antisocial offending behaviour of the emerging adults involved in the present study.

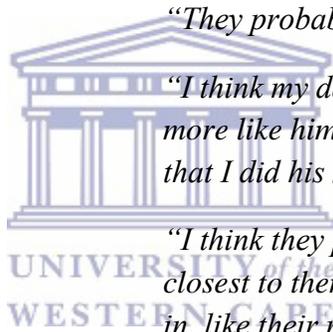


#### **4.2.3 Modeling**

Almost all participants attributed their antisocial offending to learned behaviour. Antisocial offending behaviours such as substance use and abuse, gang affiliation as well other forms of criminal behaviour were thought to be learned from mostly parental and other familial role models. The following excerpts are illustrative of these attributions. Almost all participants were of the opinion that their parents had modeled antisocial offending behaviours to them in their respective home environments; the implication of which was their own antisocial offending behaviours. Parents were identified as highly influential to participants' engagement in antisocial offending behaviours outside of the home environment.

**Table 6:** Sub-theme; Modeling

Sub-theme	Illustrative quote/s
4.2.3 Modeling	<p data-bbox="802 264 1219 294"><i>“Their parents drink and drugs”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 333 1357 407"><i>“By showing...seeing how other people are and they wanna be like that.” Participant 2</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 447 1373 604"><i>“I think a lot, alot then I do underline that a, that a (sigh) that it’s about certain facing, facing, facing certain circumstances where that happens where that looks cool.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 644 1349 802"><i>“Sometimes you can see you see someone else’s prerogatives may even take effect of what you do surprising you, you know, you see.” Participant 3</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 837 1317 867"><i>“They probably see it from the parents”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 907 1382 1020"><i>“I think my daddy because I wanted to be more like him. Because he did the same thing that I did his still a gangster” Participant 5</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1060 1349 1176"><i>“I think they pick it up from the ones that’s closest to them the people that they believe in, like their role models.” Participant 8</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1211 1357 1325"><i>“But you coming out of a broken home you gonna act out a manner that you learned in the house”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1360 1317 1476"><i>“Uhhh (pause) the criminal behaviour (pause) look they what they see on tv as well” Participant 9</i></p>



The responses above are illustrative of the power of social learning processes in the home environment. Social learning theory has long been used to characterise antisocial offending behaviours (Akers, 1985; Akers et al., 1979; Bandura, 1971, 1973, 1977a, 1977b; Bandura & Walters, 1963; Conger, 1976; Krohn, Massey, Skinner, 1987). Social learning theorists have

posited that problematic behaviours are learned as a result of interactions with various reinforcing and/or socialising agents; through these interactions, rewarded behaviours (direct contact) are adopted, reinforced behaviours (modeling or indirect contact) are maintained and punished behaviours are extinguished (Golden & Prather, 2009). One example of such a theory is that of Albert Bandura (1969), Bandura was interested in the principles of modifying behaviour using social learning theory. His theory was later labeled social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). Social learning theory included interaction of the following elements: (1) observation, symbolic representations and self-generated stimuli and self-imposed consequences, (2) environmental conditions and (3) behaviours in determining behaviour (Bandura, 1989; Moore, 2011). Simply put, individuals learn from each other through processes of observation, imitation, and modeling. Social learning theorists maintain that the conditions by which behaviour is shaped include internal and external forces, and that behaviour itself is a determinant of future behaviour (Bandura, 1969; Moore, 2011). The central tenet of social learning theory entails that parents are important models who play a crucial role in children's antisocial offending behaviour (Golden & Prather, 2009). According to Bandura (1971), people often replicate behaviours, which have been learnt either intentionally or unintentionally. The participants of the present study strongly held the view that antisocial offending behaviours witnessed in the home environment, perpetrated by parents was a direct cause of their engagement in such behaviours. According to Lutya (2012), antisocial offending behaviour is a likely outcome when children continuously witness dysfunctional behaviour displayed by authority figures that children trust: especially if that behaviour is not sanctioned or punished. Moreover, parenting serves the role of a root mechanism through which children learn appropriate and inappropriate behaviour as well come to understand the roles and norms of the communities (Pérez & Cumsille, 2012). Thus,

parenting plays a vital role in the socialisation of children (Latouf & Dunn, 2010). The views regarding the influence of parental modeling and social learning as expressed by participants of this study is therefore well supported by the literature on antisocial offending behaviours. However, more research on the effects and outcomes associated with parenting styles for emerging adults remain lacking.

#### 4.3 Primary theme 2: *Labeling and stigmatisation*

The second primary theme, which emerged from the data analysis, was called labeling and stigmatisation. As part of this theme, participants attributed undue blame to labels and stigma imposed on them by peers, community and family members. Participants reported continuously being labelled and judged based on their previous antisocial offending behaviours. The illustrative quotes in the table below show these responses.



**Table 7:** Primary theme 2; Labeling and stigmatisation

Theme	Illustrative quote/s
<b>4.3 Labeling and stigmatisation</b>	<p><i>“Not convince them but only show them that I’m not the kind of person that they think I am you see because most of the things they blame me for it’s not even me, I’m it’s not even me. Maybe there’s something can help me, to keep me busy so I’m not in their eyes all the time you see.” Participant 1</i></p> <p><i>“Af geval it... toe blame hulle, het my baie seer gemaak ek het hartseer gevoel ja...” [Fell off it and then they blamed me it hurt me alot and made me very</i></p>

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*sad]Participant 6*

*“Like you understand and, and people label us”*

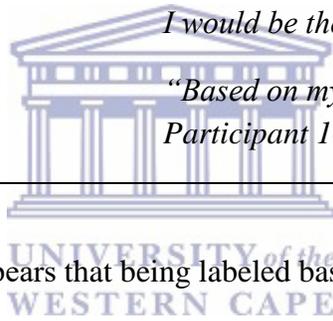
*“Ja, ja, because of because of me being this because of me being labeled as a gangster because of me being labeled as a drug addict because of me labeled of being in no regard for my neighbor.”*

*“For me for me it was wrong because you can’t judge me .you don’t know what’s going on in my mind understand?” Participant 9*

*“They have blamed me on numerous amount of times things I know I haven’t done because I would be the first suspect” (laughs)*

*“Based on my previous behaviours, ja.” Participant 10*

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From participants’ responses, it appears that being labeled based on their offending histories amplified their antisocial offending behaviours. To this end, labeling perspectives on antisocial offending behaviours may prove useful. Karimu (2015) stated that the labeling theory of crime deals with the results of labels, or strain on people (stigmas) and how it affects the development of criminal behaviour. According to labeling perspectives people’s behaviour are influenced by the label attached to them by society (Becker, 1967; Scheff, 1974, 1984). Borrowed from radical criminology but derived from interactionism in sociology, labeling theory has long served as an important theory used to expound criminal behaviour in particular (Karimu, 2015). According to Bernard, Snipes & Gerould (2009) an individual is more likely to engage in antisocial offending behaviours if he/she has been labeled in such a way. Finally, youths who are labeled as criminals or delinquents may hold these as self-fulfilling prophecies; believing the labels that others assign

to them are true and act in ways consistent with such labels. Applying this tenet of labeling theory to the responses of the participants of the present study reveals an impending danger; continuous labeling and stigmatisation may perpetuate and/or maintain their antisocial offending behaviours. Several role players have been implicated in the development of labels and stigma assigned on those who engage in antisocial offending behaviours. This means that role players such as parents, peers as well as community members may be implicated in labeling and stigmatisation of young people with negative consequences for emerging adults. This seems to be the case for participants of the present study. Some theorists have through a number of studies and examples illustrated these outcomes. For example, a court of law as well as other empowered agencies including a youth's family and supervisors, peers may assign labels to offending youth. This may occur in often humiliating ceremonies such as a suspension or dismissal hearing with the principal or other school staff, a court trial, or a home punishment; such labels are then internalised and acted out, leading to antisocial offending behaviours (Kubrin, Stucky & Krohn, 2009; Karimu, 2015). Participants' experiences of being labeled and stigmatised are there in keeping with findings from the literature.

#### **4.3.1 Undue blame motivated by offending histories**

Participants highlighted undue blame as a significant factor thought to contribute to the experience of interpersonal pressures, which led to the antisocial offending behaviours. This undue blame participants reported was purported by family, friends (peers) and members of the community. The undue blame experienced by participants included being falsely blamed for theft of cellular phones and other valuables, which went missing. For participants undue blame

resulted in feelings of sadness, disappointment and interpersonal pressure. These feelings were identified as factors, which contributed to their antisocial offending behaviours. Instances of undue blame are illustrated in the table below.

**Table 8:** Sub-theme; Undue blame motivated by offending histories

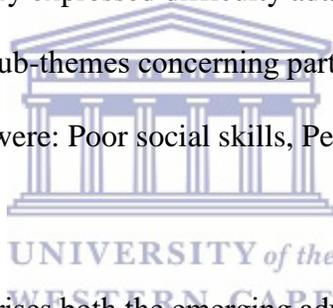
Sub-theme	Illustrative quote/s
<b>4.3.1 Undue blame motivated by offending histories</b>	<p data-bbox="797 604 1396 724"><i>“They putting a pressure on you. They just pointing anything, anything when they see you it’s just you, you see.” Participant 1</i></p> <p data-bbox="797 756 1396 875"><i>“I have been blamed for things that was not my fault, the feeling of that is really not nice.” Participant 10</i></p> <p data-bbox="797 907 1396 1165"><i>“Yah. Uhhhm there has been such, such instances and also, also they get there’s what you feel there’s the way you feel someone comes and especially if they, they blame you. There is effect there is effect long term effects you see.” Participant 3</i></p>

Undue blame as a component of labeling and stigmatisation experienced by participants hold potentially similar outcomes to those highlighted earlier. Accordingly, Cullen & Agnew (2011) argued that labeling theory further holds that: by society placing labels such as delinquents, criminals on individuals it, stigmatizes them thereby leading to a negative label and the development of a negative self-image. Participants’ experiences of undue blame appeared to be marked by the stigma derived from their previous offending behaviours. The undue blame placed on individuals may reinforce the labels and negative self-image, which could serve to heighten the possibility of engagement in antisocial offending behaviours. While a substantial body of

research on labeling and stigmatisation is available. There are no studies, which have explicitly investigated the conceptualisation of undue blame in emerging adulthood. A need for such research therefore exists. Research on this topic may prove useful especially given its relationship to labeling and stigmatisation and its effect on antisocial offending behaviours as posited by participants in the present study.

#### **4.4 Primary theme 3: Social-emotional adjustment**

All participants involved in the study expressed difficulty adapting and fostering peer and interpersonal relationships. Three sub-themes concerning participants' social-emotional adjustment were identified. These were: Poor social skills, Peer pressure and Group Conformity and Compassionate Care.



Social-emotional adjustment comprises both the emerging adults' adaptation to peer groups, close relationships as well as the greater societal cultures (Baker & Siryk, 1999; Crede & Neihorster, 2012). The role of attachment cannot be separated from emotional adjustment. While attachment was not the focus of the present study, it remained necessary to explore especially given the link drawn between parental attachment and social-emotional adjustment. Parental bonding has been found to decrease adolescent involvement in delinquency (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1987; Hirschi, 1969; Warr, 1993). Attachment bonds with early caregivers are formed during early childhood and are thought to provide children with templates for later relationships (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1982). According to Bowlby (1982), children construct internal working models of the self (cognitive frames encompassing mental representations for

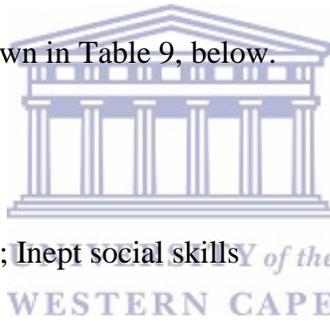
understanding the world, the self and others) and what they can expect from others in later peer and romantic relationships. Attachment theory further postulates that attachment organization based on early attachment experiences with caregivers prove imperative to the development and management of close relationships throughout adolescence and adulthood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Ross & Fuertes, 2010; Simpson & Rholes, 1998). Children's attachment experiences with parents affect their subsequent functioning in peer and romantic relationships as well as their emotional adjustment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Connolly & Konarski, 1994; Engels et al., 2001; Engels, Finkenauer, Meeus, & Dekovic, 2001; Kerns & Stevens, 1996; Rice, Cunningham, & Young, 1997). Engels et al. (2001) provided a theoretical model of adolescent emotional adjustment. In their model, emotional adjustment was linked to parental attachment; this relationship was thought to be mediated two factors namely, social skills and relational competence. According to Arrindell, De Groot and Walburg (1984) these social skills referred to negative assertions as well as expressions of and dealing with personal limitations, initiating assertiveness, and positive assertion. For the participants of the present study such negative assertions, expressions of and dealing with personal or relational limitations, initiating assertiveness, and positive assertions were manifested as: inept social skills, conforming to peer group pressures, impulsivity as well as a perceived lack of compassionate care. Furthermore, Arrindell, de Groot and Walburg (2011), assessed such social skills across two domains namely, anxiety to perform and frequency of performing social skills. For these authors, relational competence referred to individual's perceptions of his or her competence in the domains of peer and romantic relationships including those with family and community members just as was reported by participants of the present study. In other words, the sentiments expressed by participants of the present study appeared similar to those found in previous studies. Engels et

al.'s (as cited in Ross & Fuertes, 2010) model further mapped out a relationship between parental attachment. This parental attachment was defined as the affectively toned cognitive experiences associated with internalized representations of attachment to each parent while emotional adjustment was defined as one construct composed of both self-esteem and the absence of depressive mood (Engels et al., 2001). Social skills and relational competence were thought to act as mediators, which elucidated the link between parental attachment and emotional adjustment in adolescents. Ross and Fuertes (2010) extended this model to emerging adults between the ages of 18-22 years. The results showed parental attachment when conceived as a two-factor construct of mother and father attachment directly predicted emotional adjustment. In addition, although attachment to both mothers and fathers predicted emotional adjustment, the mechanisms that mediate these relationships differed (Ross & Fuertes, 2010). For example, while attachment to fathers were found to be predictive of better social skills and in turn promoted greater relational competence, better emotional adjustment; attachment to mothers was found to be predictive of better conflict resolution behaviours and in turn promoted greater relational competence, and better emotional adjustment (Ross & Fuertes, 2010). Thus, confirming that parental bonding or attachment can play an important role in young people's emotional adjustment, which may reflect in their social skills and/or relational competence. The results of the present study yielded invaluable insight into the way in which emerging adults' parental attachment bonds can provide predictive models for their present relational competence. This is especially useful given the lack of research conducted with emerging adults on this topic. Furthermore, the results of Ross and Fuertes' (2010) study may also help to better understand how the emerging adults of the present study's social skills and relational

competence relates to their antisocial offending behaviours especially given their relationships with caregivers in the home environment.

#### 4.4.1 Inept social skills

Participants noted that poor or a lack of communication led to poor managing of personal relationships. A lack of disclosure in as far as emotional issues were concerned was attributed to the perception of not having someone to listen to even though most participants also reported having had ample opportunities to share personal and emotional difficulties. The relevant responses from participants are shown in Table 9, below.



**Table 9:** Sub-theme; Inept social skills

Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
4.4.1 Inept social skills	<p data-bbox="802 1241 1390 1409"><i>“You see and then my mother don’t want give me money man, she don’t want to give me money I starts to talk like I want to talk to her.” Participant 1</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1440 1390 1514"><i>“I didn’t know how to put it out” Participant 4</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1545 1390 1671"><i>“I never told them anything. There were lots of lots of opportunity I was just a little bit shy” Participant 6</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1703 1390 1818"><i>“I never even took the chance. Most of the time, I wouldn’t. No, I would be quiet” Participant 8</i></p>

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*“It’s like something, something that you have that you want to speak out to somebody, if you don’t have somebody to speak it out to”*  
*Participant 10*

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The inept social skills reported by participants pointed to a difficulties relating to social-emotional adjustment. Participants reported poor communication skills, which included difficulty in dealing with negative emotions and lack of disclosure regarding emotional difficulties. In the literature on antisocial offending behaviours such difficulties in social-emotional adjustment including poor social skills have often been link to poor parent child or poor parent-adolescent communication. As stated, earlier interactions in adult relationships have been linked to internal working models developed in early childhood. The mental representations cognitive frameworks and their mental representations for understanding the world help children to regulate emotions these have their origin in healthy parent child interactions (Bowlby, 1982). Little is still known about the emotional regulation and/or social-emotional adjustment of emerging adults as well as how these processes relate to their social skills. It would therefore be reasonable to consider the role of parenting in as far as emotional regulation is concerned. There is evidence to suggest that a parent's ability to regulate his or her own emotions, particularly in distressful situations correlate with their children's ability to recognize one’s own and others’ emotional states. Evidence reflecting these findings have indicated that children who are knowledgeable of their own emotional state tended to have parents who encouraged emotional expression (Perlman, Camras & Pelphrey, 2008). Children who did not, did not exhibit empathy for the feelings which their behaviour had on those whose they transgressed (Vaish, Grossmann & Woodward, 2008). Emotional regulation is thought to develop during infancy, it may therefore be justifiable to

speculate that participants of present study did not present with the transmitted emotional regulation skills to recognise their own and others' emotional states especially how these states were affected by their antisocial offending behaviours. This may possibly be related to participants' experience of empathy, moral reasoning and ultimately their moral development.

According to Rodriguez, Tucker and Palmer (2016) the ability of youths' emotion regulation skills to mediate outcomes in emerging adults have not been fully explored. This is a crucial point especially given that deficits in emotion-regulation skills have widely been shown to be associated with poor emotional adjustment (Berking et al., 2008; Páez et al., 2013). Garnefski et al. (2007) also noted that poor parent-child and parent-adolescent communication has been highlighted to exert significant negative outcomes for later adolescent and adult development especially with regard to antisocial offending behaviours. To this end, a number of studies on parent adolescent communication have reported the pivotal role played by parental communication. Such studies have reported a significant relationship between the wellbeing of the adolescent and the lack of closeness with parents as well as that lower levels of parental influence correlates with a higher degrees of behavioural problems in adolescents (Chrispin, 1998; Greenberg, Siegel & Leitch, 1983; Kandel & Davies, 1982; Parker, Tuplin & Brown, 1979; van Staden, 2015). However, a gap remains with regard to literature on antisocial offending outcomes for emerging adults because of parent-child and parent-adolescent social skills. While participants' inept social skills and in particular, their difficulties in communication can be extenuated by parent-child and parent-adolescent interactions; it may be worthwhile to conduct more studies on these interactions with emerging adults.

#### 4.4.2 Peer pressure and group conformity

The influence of friends and peer groups were noted as having a significant impact on participants' engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. Participants reported that negative influences from friends and peers amounted to pressures to conform to group antisocial offending behaviours.

**Table 10:** Sub-theme; Peer pressure and group conformity

Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
<b>4.4.2 Peer pressure and group conformity</b>	<p data-bbox="802 976 1377 1220"><i>“Walking the with the wrong friends and when walking with the wrong friends things go out of hand and when your family want to come and like talk to you then its already too late. Because then you already in this thing you see.” Participant 1</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1255 1295 1331"><i>“I think, I think that it would be due to having social groups” Participant 3</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1367 1369 1484"><i>“No I didn't do it by myself I had my friends with peer pressure they were a lot” Participant 6</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1520 1377 1722"><i>“What do I think many people peer pressure amongst friends so they do it uhohm coming from a broken home so when they don't have food at home they have no choice but to go out and rob people and steal.” Participant 9</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1757 1268 1829"><i>“Yeah, there could be influences via friends.” Participant 10</i></p>

Recent and past literature on antisocial offending behaviour has served well to highlight the role of deviant peers and group conformity in the antisocial offending behaviour of young people. Peers continue serve as an important socialization agent during adolescence (Hoskins, 2014). A peer group typically refers to persons that belong to the same age (or about the same age) and/or status (Esiri, 2016). Examples of peer groups include, age peer group, school or educational peer group as well as social peer group to mention a few. It is therefore not surprising that participants reported huge spikes in antisocial offending behaviours during adolescence. Peer pressure has been defined as the social pressure to adopt certain behaviours in order to fit in with others (Santor, Messervey, & Kusumakar, 2000). According to Esiri (2016) peer pressure is a reoccurring phenomenon in criminal or deviant behaviour especially, as it pertains to adolescents. Peer pressure and group conformity has proven particularly problematic for schooling practices of children and adolescents. In a South African study by van Staden (2015), parents of children who had engaged in delinquency indicated that their children's association with deviant peers led to them under perform, be temporarily expelled from school and permanently dropped out of school. Drop-out rates were attributed to the influence and role of deviant peers have been a popular topic in the literature on peer pressure. Studies have suggested that deviant peers directly influence children, adolescents' decision to leave school; peers cluster together and encourage each other to leave school (Beauvais et al., 1996; Janosz, Blanc, Boulerice & Tremblay, 1997; Dizon-Luna, 2013; Mnguni, 2014). While peer pressure has often been viewed as operating in a one directional way, (peers exert pressures to conform onto individuals); a number of studies have also found that youths may project their own behaviour onto their peers (Young et al., 2011; Zhang & Messner, 2000). Thus, while participants of this

study posited the influences of peers as pressure, which was exerted on them by, peers; it may also be true that their own behaviours may have been projected onto others.

According to Monahan, Steinberg & Cauffman (2009) developmental theories have long suggested an affiliation with deviant peers and susceptibility to peer influence are important contributors to adolescent delinquency. However, it remains unclear how these variables such as, affiliation with deviant peers as well as susceptibility to peer influence impact antisocial behaviour during the transition to adulthood (emerging adulthood), a period when most delinquent individuals decline in antisocial behaviour (Monahan et al., 2009). Research has found that antisocial offending behaviours have a significant social component (Erickson & Jensen, 1977; Kreager, Rulison & Moody, 2011; Shaw & McKay, 1931). Antisocial offending behaviours committed by teenagers and/or adolescents often occur in peer groups (Kreager, Rulison & Moody, 2011; Warr, 2002; Zimring, 1998). Peer pressure has long been hypothesized to be an important contributor to all sorts of deviant and risky behaviour in adolescence, including minor delinquency, serious offending, reckless driving, and drug and alcohol use (Chassin et al., 2004; Monahan, Steinberg & Cauffman, 2009; Simons-Morton, Lerner, & Singer, 2005). Participants of the present study overwhelmingly emphasised the social aspect or component of engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. From participants' responses, it would seem that pressure to conform to antisocial group norms has had a significant influence on their decision to offend.

#### **4.4.3 Impulsivity**

Majority of participants were of the opinion that they engaged in antisocial offending behaviours in order to impress their friends. In addition, participants expressed the view that engaging in antisocial offending behaviours in an attempt to raise their status among their group of friends. Participants expressed the view that friends easily influenced them as the influence of friends led to unplanned, spontaneous antisocial offending behaviours.

**Table 11:** Sub-theme; Impulsivity

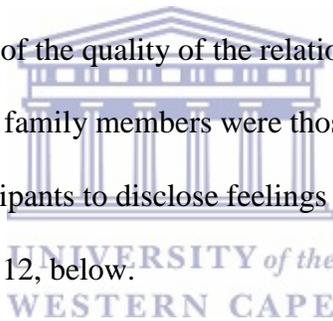
Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
4.4.3 Impulsivity	<p data-bbox="802 758 1382 835"><i>“I was thinking that today wasn’t the day for me to go to school”.</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 869 1333 989"><i>“Because they wanna to keep them kwaai [cool] and be a big man, big man, yah.”</i> Participant 2</p> <p data-bbox="802 1022 1382 1268"><i>“To get credit you know. All sorts of things are like. I think alot. Alot then I do underline that uhhh that uhhh (sigh) that it’s about certain facing, facing, facing certain circumstances where that happens where that looks cool.”</i> Participant 3</p> <p data-bbox="802 1302 1333 1329"><i>“They want to be cool they want to fit in”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1371 1360 1449"><i>“Ja that’s one of the examples they want to fit in”</i> Participant 5</p> <p data-bbox="802 1482 1360 1560"><i>“Money to (pause)satisfy my, my needs and all that stuff”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1593 1377 1713"><i>“And maybe have a family that is hungry at home. Now his gonna steal the car to sell the car just to feed him”</i> Participant 7</p> <p data-bbox="802 1747 1349 1774"><i>“Yes I’m gonna be like the main ou [guy]”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1816 1360 1843"><i>“I’m gonna get more respect from my other</i></p>

Various factors, which participants attributed to their engagement in antisocial offending behaviours, may be related to peer pressure. Their (participants’) perceived social pressure to adopt certain group behaviours were largely driven by a need or desire for participants to fit in, gain the approval and respect of their peers as well as prove that they are brave and strong. On a whim, participants would decide to engage in antisocial offending behaviours. This meant no considerations were contemplated in as far as the consequences of such behaviours were concerned. Accordingly, in Psychology, impulsivity has been defined in a number of commonly understood ways. These include, as the character of being impulsive or acting on impulse, without reflection or forethought; the tendency to respond quickly and without reflection or the inability to sustain attention (Douglas, 1972; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1977; Murray, 1938; Plutchik & van Praag, 1994). Therefore, psychological definitions of impulsivity have all stressed the lack of planning and loss or suppression of inhibitions. The overwhelming point of departure remains that impulsivity seems to be related to antisocial offending behaviours. Luengo et al., (1994) found that high levels of impulsivity correlated with antisocial offending behaviours (rule breaking, vandalism, theft, aggression, and drug taking) among adolescents. Research has also shown that impulsivity is related to various forms of psychopathology including conduct and as well as substance-use disorders (Moeller et al., 2001). High levels of impulsivity have also been found among men who struggle with aggression and adjustment problems (Barratt, Stanford, Kent, & Felthous, 1997; Fornells, Capdevila, & Andres-Pueyo, 2002; Moeller et al., 2001; Wang & Diamond, 1999). Thus, it would seem that the impulsivity reported by participants of the

present study led to a number of antisocial offending behaviours and that these have already been extensively explored in the literature on antisocial offending behaviours.

#### 4.4.4 Compassionate care

All participants expressed the need to be listened to by parents as an important component of their close relationships. The need to be listened to translated into a desire for care and compassion, which participants felt, played a significant role in the decisions to offend or engage in antisocial offending behaviours. In addition, participants identified the ability to be listened to by parents as a crucial determinant of the quality of the relationship that they shared with their parents. In this regard, their closest family members were those who listened or provided the most ample opportunities for participants to disclose feelings and opinions. Responses applicable to these factors are shown in Table 12, below:



**Table 12:** Sub-theme; Compassionate care

Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
4.4.4 Compassionate care	<p data-bbox="802 1461 1341 1539"><i>“Because she listens and sometimes when I’m sad she talks to me.” Participant 2</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1570 1341 1692"><i>“Like respect (pause) I can say something and I can also listen. Like listen to an opinion.” Participant 3</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1724 1195 1801"><i>“It’s their parents that are not communicating with them”</i></p>

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*“The one you could always talk to”*  
*Participant 4*

*“They won’t listen” Participant 5*

*“They did listen to me” Participant 6*

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Participants’ need for compassionate care seemed to translate into a need to be regarded with empathy by their parents in particular. However, participants’ earlier responses indicated that role models in the home environment might not have modelled empathy to them. This may mean that participants, based on the responses cited above, may struggle to show empathy to those who they have transgressed with their antisocial offending behaviours. Empathy and lack thereof has been identified as an important construct in explanations of the most appalling aspects of human behaviour (Dadds, Atkinson, Turner, Blums & Lendich, 2008). Empathy is commonly defined as the ability to relate to others, the ability to perceive, share, and understand the affective states of others, which presents as a crucial tool for navigating the social world (Decety & Jackson, 2006; Decety & Svetlova, 2012; van Staden, 2015). The lack of empathy perceived by participants may provide further insight into why participants engaged in antisocial offending behaviours. Empathy has been found to fulfil a number of pivotal functions in behaviour as play a central role in moral development (Belgrave et al., 2011). Such functions include: associations with prosocial behaviours (defined as voluntary actions which benefit other individuals) such as helping behaviour, sharing, cooperation, caring and perspective taking; as well as the inhibition of aggressive and/or antisocial offending behaviours (Decety, 2010; Decety & Jackson, 2006; Eisenberg, 1986; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Eisenberg, Eggum & di Giunta, 2010). Moreover, several studies have reported a significant relationship between empathy and antisocial offending behaviours (Gibbs, Basinger & Fuller, 1979, 1992; Gibbs, 2003; Gibbs, Basinger, Grime, &

Snarey, 2007; Hoffman, 2000). For participants of the present study, listening proved to be a sign of care and compassion. In other words, when parents listened to participants, they felt cared for and regarded. Participants' lack of empathy received from parents may have registered a lack of empathy for others. Having an empathic ear seemed important. However, it did not seem to deter participants from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. This supported the finding of studies where the role of empathy in antisocial offending behaviour was thought to exist (Barnett & Thompson, 2001; Feshbach & Feshbach, 1969; Hinant & O'Brien, 2007). While the results of some these studies have proved inconsistent, empathy or lack thereof learned and gained from parents as part of internal working models still presented as an important component in participants' decision to engage in antisocial offending behaviours.



#### **4.5 Primary theme 4: *Moral reasoning***

Moral reasoning was identified as the fourth primary theme. Participants distinguished between various forms of behaviours and their beliefs on whether such behaviours are to be considered good and/or moral or bad and/or immoral. As part of this theme, participants portrayed their understandings of good and bad behaviours while also indicating what deterred them from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. Participants also elaborated on their understanding and experiences of punishment for antisocial offending behaviours as well as whether their own punishments and punitive strategies were, appropriate to deter them from involvement in antisocial offending behaviours.

A number of studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between moral reasoning and antisocial offending behaviours, including both crimes and antisocial behaviour amongst young offenders (Blasi, 1980; Langdon, Clare & Murphy, 2011; Nelson, Smith & Dodd, 1990; Stams, Brugman, Deković & van Rosmalen, 2006). Some studies have also reported lower levels of moral reasoning among delinquent adolescents compared to non-delinquents, with a large effect sizes (Stams et al., 2006). Furthermore, According to Langdon et al. (2011) there is some empirical evidence to suggest that the relationship between moral reasoning and illegal behaviour may be curvilinear, such that lower and higher moral reasoning relates to lower rates of illegal behaviour and inappropriate conduct (Langdon et al., 2011). Based on such findings an exploration of what participants deemed to be right and wrong behaviour may assist in understanding how participants make moral judgments. These perceptions are represented in the sub-themes of moral reasoning. The primary theme of moral reasoning therefore included of four sub-themes. These were: understanding of good versus bad behaviours, experience legal detention and incarceration and perceptions of punishment. These sub-themes were explored in further detail below.

#### **4.5.1 Understanding of good versus bad behaviours**

Participants reported a number of behaviours, which they considered right or wrong. Good behaviours were reportedly those associated with performing tasks, which uplifted the community thus serving the greater good. Such behaviours were thought to be consistent with what the community and parents valued as socially acceptable. On the other hand, participants identified bad behaviours as those defying parental and community norms or standards of good

behaviour. Participants' understanding of good and bad behaviours involved a social dimension; what was considered right or wrong were depended on what parents and community deemed to be socially acceptable forms of behaviour.

**Table 13:** Sub-theme; Understanding of good versus bad behaviours

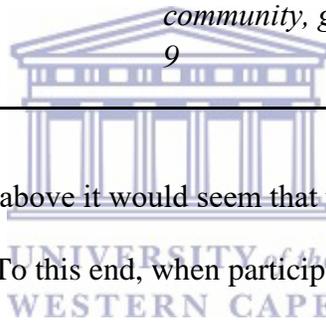
Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
<b>4.5.1 Understanding of good versus bad behaviours</b>	<p data-bbox="802 611 1386 1024"><i>“A good thing is to listen what your mother say and what your father say so you can follow the instructions or rule at home. You must not leave school you must just be good. So that when they look you good when they look at you. A bad thing is you must not smoke drugs because when you smoke drugs anything goes out of hand you just do bad things anything that comes in your mind is bad, you just think to mess.” Participant 1</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1058 1386 1136"><i>“Like, like good behaviours reading books at a library, being active in the community.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1169 1386 1247"><i>“Also, doing things, like abusing relieving yourself outside of the toilet.” Participant 3</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1281 1386 1440"><i>“Me...Bad ones I was I didn't listen to my mom them when they said. I mustn't sleep out of the house and stay away from certain friends” Participant 4</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1474 1386 1633"><i>“Okay good behaviour is like going to youth every Friday weekends I mean and uhhhm, let me think okay like they going without telling their parents.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1667 1386 1787"><i>“Bad behaviour is like going to the clubs every weekend uhhhm if you selling alcohol under age” Participant 5</i></p>

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*“I would say good things that you do maybe if you do community work. It’s good thing maybe because on my side because we really need people who can do community work. There on my side where we live we don’t do community work”*

*“Like going around and breaking in peoples’ houses that is bad behaviour.” Participant 6*

*“You are, you are rude and you swear loud standing with your friends. That’s bad behaviour you, you, you uhhh, and, and, and like you just vandalism. And, and, and, and maybe ja, ja I’ll list a few good ones it’s like uhhh (pause) helping people in the community, greeting the elderly” Participant 9*



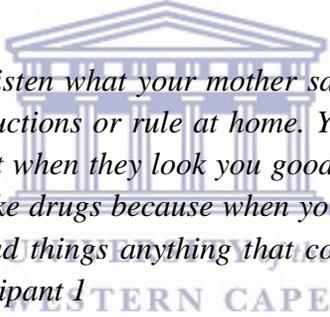
Based on participants’ expressions above it would seem that their moral reasoning related to their understanding of right and wrong. To this end, when participants engaged in antisocial offending behaviours, they were in fact cognisant of their own understandings of which behaviours were acceptable or unacceptable to themselves and the community at large. This means that participants essentially knew that the behaviours, which they were taking, part in were defying and/or violating civil laws and societal norms. From this vantage point, it may be necessary to consider where participants’ perceptions located them on a trajectory of moral development. To better understand moral reasoning and the development of moral judgment it may be beneficial to use a theoretical lens. To this end, Lawrence Kohlberg’s theory of moral development may prove helpful. Kohlberg (1969, 1974) proposed a stage theory of moral development; this theory was thought to extend beyond childhood and into adolescence and adulthood. Kohlberg’s theory of moral reasoning was originally composed of six stages, spread across three levels. Kohlberg

(1969) based his theory on the work of Jean Piaget. Piaget (1932), known for his constructivist theory of cognitive development. Piaget (1932) argued that moral development occurs alongside and is largely dependent on logical reasoning; moral development could not occur without cognitive development. This meant that based on Piaget's theory; there exists a link between cognitive ability and moral reasoning. Like Piaget, Kohlberg thought that children and adults' moral development proceeds through a number of sequential stages, into adulthood. Kohlberg differed from Piaget in that he (Kohlberg) did not believe that moral stages necessarily corresponded with age. Nevertheless, Kohlberg maintained that Piaget's cognitive developmental stages ought to serve as a basis for understanding moral development.

Kohlberg (1969, 1984) divided his three levels of moral development into two stages each. The stages were: *obedience and punishment, naïve egoism, good-boy or good-girl orientation, authority and social-order maintenance, contractual legalistic* as well as *conscience or principle*. Practically the stages entailed that individuals at the lower stages were overwhelmingly concerned with their own needs or interests, placing these above those of any others when making moral decisions while individuals at the higher stages relied on several universally accepted moral principles (Kohlberg, 1969). The answers provided by participants of the present study seem even more significant when considered using Kohlberg's theory. First, collectivist notions of good or the greater good overwhelmingly determined participants' sense of right or morally and socially acceptable behaviour (Kohlberg, 1984). Here, participants considered good act to be those accepted by and which improved the community. This, in line with Kohlberg's theory would place participants' moral reasoning at the middle stages of the theory; these stages are known as the *good-boy or good-girl orientation morality* (stage three) and the *authority and social-order-maintaining morality* (stage four). According to Kohlberg

(1984), in these stages good consists of what pleases, helps, or is approved by others (such as parents and the community). In addition to this, what was also considered morally right is therefore from participants' points of view what conforms to the rules of authorities, maintaining the social order and rules of society; thereby implying dutifulness as well as a respect for order. For the participants of the present study, it implies that when they were engaged in antisocial offending behaviours that they merely disregarded the rules and norms of society. The curvilinear relationship between moral reasoning and antisocial offending behaviour, referred to earlier can be explained by examining the stages of moral reasoning theory: reasoning at *Stage 1* is associated with obeying rules, leading to low levels of illegal behaviour. *Stage 2*, which is associated with an egocentric view characterised by meeting the individual's own needs and leads to an increase in disruptive behaviour (Langdon et al., 2011). Keeping in mind, that participants reported that their antisocial offending behaviours were particularly heightened during adolescence might lend more credence to the latter mentioned assertions. However, the challenge to such assertions include that majority of the studies including Kohlberg's studies were conducted with only either, children or adolescent participants and that adult studies have yielded mixed results (Blakey, 1973; Griffiore & Samuels, 1978; Watt, Frausin, Dixon & Nimmo, 2000). This means that more evidence of studies conducted with emerging adults are required and that more formal measures would be required to assess the moral reasoning of participants given the lack of consistent evidence. It would therefore seem that although Kohlberg's theory may be useful to help understand participants' moral reasoning/ moral judgments it does also prove inadequate when considering that there is little evidence to substantiate his claims. A contextual perspective of the development of moral reasoning and/or moral judgements for South African emerging adults may be required. While evidence have been mixed; an overwhelming

body of evidence have demonstrated that delinquent adolescents tend to make more use of *Stage 2* moral reasoning with regards to concepts such as justice and the law (Blasi, 1980; Campagna & Harter, 1975; Chandler & Moran, 1990; Gavaghan, Arnold, & Gibbs, 1983; Gregg, Gibbs, & Basinger, 1994; Nelson, et al., 1990; Trevethan & Walker, 1989). In contrast, *non-delinquent* adolescents tend to give *Stage 3* reasons for obeying the law (Gibbs, 2003). *Stage 3* moral reasoning is associated with the development of moral reasoning based on maintaining relationships and a shift away from an adolescent ego-centrism with decreased illegal behaviour. Secondly, participants' descriptions of bad behaviours overwhelmingly involved the transgression of parental norms. Such responses can be seen below:



*A good thing is to listen what your mother say and what your father say so you can follow the instructions or rule at home. You must not leave school you must just be good. So that when they look you good when they look at you. A bad thing is you must not smoke drugs because when you smoke drugs anything goes out of hand you just do bad things anything that comes in your mind is bad. You just think to mess. Participant 1*

*“Me...Bad ones I was I didn't listen to my mom them when they said, I mustn't sleep out of the house” Participant 4*

*“Uhhhm, let me think okay like they going without telling their parents”  
“Bad behaviour is like going to the clubs every weekend” Participant 5*

*“Good behaviour, I would say how can I explain, uhhhm good behaviour like doing things at home, your chores that you suppose to do stuff like that. Bad behaviour I think would be not doing those things.” Participant 10*

From the extracts quoted above, it is apparent that participants were of the opinion that a violation of the parental norms particularly in the home environment was instrumental in their early antisocial offending behaviours. Participants consequently, drew a link between the

violations of societal norms and criminal behaviours. Their understanding of right and wrong was therefore indicative of what their parents and the community deemed morally acceptable. However, while exhibiting an understanding of what the norms of society was not enough to deter or prevent participants from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. Participants' morality was therefore entrenched in common understandings (amongst parents and their communities) of right and wrong.

#### 4.5.2 Experience legal detention and incarceration

Almost all of the participants involved in the present study have been legally detained or were incarcerated for antisocial offending behaviours at one point or another during the last 36 months preceding interviews. For some participants court cases were still pending and the reality of being detained or incarcerated was still a real possibility. Participants' reflections of being legally detained and/or incarcerated largely included feelings of apprehension and anxiety. The holding cells and prisons or detention centres were evaluated negatively and participants reported that they did not wish to go back to the holding cells, prisons nor detention centres.

**Table 14:** Sub-theme; Experience legal detention and incarceration

Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
<b>4.5.2 Experience legal detention and incarceration</b>	<i>“Because maybe when, when we maybe when, when, when we go to prison or maybe it comes that we you go to prison and you come back from prison. In your house your family is not the same with you. They don't trust you anymore, they think all such a things of you, bad things, then you start</i>

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*going outside, don't sleep in the house".*

*Participant 1*

*"Uhhh. Expectation was didn't know what was going to happen next."*

*"Afraid, afraid..."*

*"That experience was like uhhh, not what I wanted to experience." Participant 3*

*"They will be frightened yoh, yoh then they don't know what is going on here. So the first time you gonna go there. You gonna see the stuff that is going on there. It's, they not gonna go... want to go back again"*

*Participant 7*

*"Oh the worst experience in the world..." Participant 8*

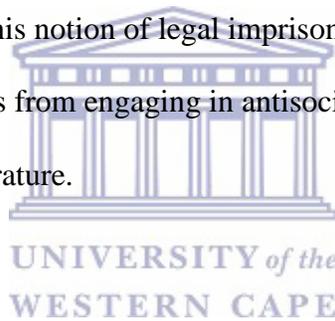
*"The experience was just a day or two ja. But the experience there I didn't have trouble*

*coming in no one no one like held me up I wasn't I wasn't scared in a way I was just anxious as to I didn't know what to expect ja" Participant 9*

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There is evidence to suggest that an individual's experience of incarceration, particular as a punitive measure plays a significant role in young people's decision to refrain and/or to continue to engage in antisocial offending behaviour. A number of studies conducted in criminal justice, criminology and psychology have explored these links (Chalfin & McCrary, 2017; di Tella & Schargrotsky, 2004; Drago, Galbiati & Vertova, 2009; Helland & Tabarrok, 2007; Katz, Levitt & Shustorovich, 2003; Klick & Tabarrok, 2005; Levitt, 1996; Levitt, 1997; Levitt, 1998). As reflected earlier, the incarceration and detention rates of emerging adults are extremely high

especially in South Africa (DCS, 2013). Despite high incarceration and detention rates; some studies suggests that popular assumptions regarding punishment and deterrence such that stricter punishments or longer sentences are effective deterrents; may not be entirely accurate (Drago et al., 2009; Helland & Tabarrok, 2007; Levitt, 1998). While participants in the present study reported prison as a gloomy place, this experience did not seem to deter participants from further engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. Almost all of the participants engaged in antisocial offending behaviours post their first incarceration and/or detention experience. Thus, even though participants knew the difference between right and wrong, even punitive measures such as incarceration and legal detention were not enough to deter participants from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. This notion of legal imprisonment and detention as insufficient to adequately deter emerging adults from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours is therefore well supported in the literature.



#### **4.5.3 Perceptions of punishment**

Concerning their perceptions of punishment, participants made two major distinctions about their perception of punishment. The two distinctions were between punishments which exist and those which ought to exist for societal norm violations and those which ought to and do exist for criminal behaviours. Majority of participants agreed that there was an existing punishment for criminal behaviours, which involved being arrested by law enforcement officials, subsequent detention and/or incarceration once a person has been found guilty. Participants were of the opinion that this form of punishment particularly detention and incarceration was not enough to deter them from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. Prison was especially thought to

exacerbate antisocial offending behaviours rather than deterring it. Participants also reported having had very little experiences of being punished for violating societal norms; these included parental norms in the home environment. Furthermore, participants largely agreed that the violation of societal (including parental norms in the home environment) ought to be punished by parents. Suggested strategies to punish societal norm violations overwhelmingly involved taking away of cellphones and other privileges such as pocket/spending money. Finally, participants indicated that had such punishments been imposed upon them consistently that it would have deterred them from engaging in violating norms and later civil laws.

**Table 15:** Sub-theme; Perceptions of punishment

Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
<b>4.5.3 Perceptions of punishment</b>	<p><i>“There is a punishment for that behaviour mos man. If you mess you go to prison you see now that’s punishment is very hard and it’s not nice you see. Is not enough. Because when they, they when you get that punishment you get out they go back. Most the people they come out and they do it again and they go back. Because you see that punishment is not enough.” Participant 1</i></p> <p><i>That the school should expel you for a week or so. Participant 2</i></p> <p><i>“Prison, prison doesn’t help because prison just make them worse.” Participant 5</i></p> <p><i>“I just think family, parents must take all their privileges away. Maybe, maybe they were like take away chatting on their phones. Cellphone must be taken away and they mustn’t pocket money.” Participant 6</i></p>

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*“I must still, I didn't have like a punishment through my sleeping out and so.”*

*“Could be, could be. I would have learnt my way out of that situation...” Participant 8*

*“And going into prison holding cells and being sentenced that's also a punishment”*

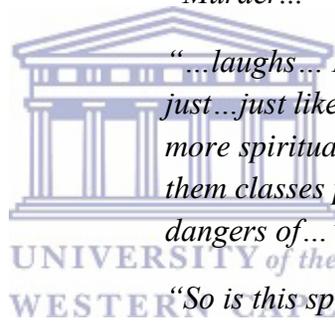
*“Because I personally think people should bring back in the death penalty...laughs... understand?”*

*“Strictly murder... and rape and...”*

*“And human trafficking and drug...”*

*“Murder...”*

*“...laughs ... Being caught with possession just...just like people should do like...like more spiritual healing, people should give them classes people should give them the dangers of...”*



*“So is this speaking of the punishment coming from your parents? I think if, if me personally or punishment or for other out there be like violating the society norms uhhhm, uhhhm, uhhhm just like, like it's, it's a you get a spiritual punishment and...and speaking in scientific terms now like the punishment for that should be like uhhhm mainly just like, like house arrest being under house arrest...”*

*“Ja like being grounded and having firm rules in the house...” Participant 9*

*“They would obviously give that person a sentence. I don't...I don't think they would*

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*really go to severe punishment lengths if it something simple like stealing an apple or something.”*

*“Ja, I think for a criminal behaviour a punishment obviously you will be arrested.”*

*“It could be something like taking away a cellphone or giving them more chores.”*

*Participant 10*

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All participants recognised that there existed current punishment or punitive strategies for engagement in antisocial offending behaviour. To this end, participants highlighted that being sentenced to prison and serving a prison term was the main form of punishment. According to Crank (2010), prison is not a particularly effective punishment and both quantitative and qualitative studies have supported this assertion. Some studies have found a disjunction between offender perceptions and public perceptions of the severity of sanctions (May, Wood & Eades, 2008). In other words, while the public may view prison as the severest form of punishment for engagement in antisocial offending behaviours, offenders themselves may not share this perception (May et al., 2008; Petersilia, 1990). This is apparent in the responses provided by the participants of this study. Rather than perceiving prison as a deterrent, participants perceived this as an exacerbating mechanism. That is, when participants go to prison, their antisocial offending behaviours worsen. Such perceptions have been attributed to two main reasons, these include: (1) that offenders typically do not abide by the same conventional norms and standards as the public, which is indicated in offenders' deviant and criminal behaviours and (2) offenders typically do not have the same standard of living as middle-class individuals (Gibbs, 1975; Petersilia, 1990).

This means that both the internalisation of antisocial attitudes as well as offenders' experiences of life outside prison and detention may influence their perceptions of punishment. Keeping these reasons in mind, might therefore require taking into account offenders' perceptions when assessing the deterrent effect or potential of various sanctions (Gibbs, 1975; Crank, 2010). This means that an effective deterrent to antisocial offending behaviour ought to perhaps be based on whether the punishment associated with particular behaviours are perceived to be severe by offenders. To this end, those who engage in antisocial offending behaviours have been found to favour short term, immediate punishments over long term, delayed sanctions such as being suspended from school, having a criminal record, social exclusion, and stigmatization (Farrington, 1995; Loughran, Paternoster & Weiss, 2012; Nagin & Pogarsky, 2001; Steinberg et al., 2009; Tangney, Baumeister & Boone, 2004; Topalli & Wright, 2014). Therefore, delayed processes such as suspensions, drawn out court proceedings may play a role in whether participants perceive a punishment to be severe enough to deter them from engaging in antisocial offending acts. The literature on incarceration and detention present similar findings to those made explicit by participants of the present study, especially those that suggest that incarceration and detention are not sufficient deterrent mechanisms.

In relation to parenting, punishment plays an integral role in discipline children and adolescents. According to participants of the present study, their experiences of having been disciplined entailed either inconsistent strategies or no strategies at all. Social learning perspectives has long held that parents' use of consistent and inconsistent discipline strategies play a crucial role in children and adolescents' behaviour (Bandura & Walters, 1959). Inconsistent discipline can be defined as the lack of follow-through in maintaining and adhering to rules and standards of conduct for children's behaviour (Melby et al., 1998). A large body of research have found that

inconsistent discipline leads to antisocial offending outcomes in adolescence (Edens, Skopp & Cahill, 2008; Patterson, 1982; Loeber, Green, Keenan, & Lahey, 1995; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Simons, Wu, Conger, & Lorenz, 1994; Stouthamer-Loeber & Loeber, 1986). Moreover, a number of studies have also reported that inconsistent disciplinary practices by parents, yielded antisocial offending outcomes in later years (Manongdo & Ramirez, 2011; Simons et al., 1994; Tildesley & Andrews, 2008). On the other hand, consistent discipline has yielded positive outcomes concerning adjustment in adolescence (Leidy et al., 2011). In addition, consistent discipline has been found to buffer the effects of a number of negative events such as peer group affiliation on girls' alcohol use (Marshall & Chassin, 2000). According to Marshall and Chassin (as cited in Hoskins, 2014) adolescents who experience high levels of consistent discipline are more resilient to peer influence because the imposition of parental norms and values discourages adolescents from subscribing to the values of their drug-use promoting peers. Consistent discipline seems to play a pivotal role in the extent to which participants felt parental punishment strategies were severe enough to deter them from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. While participants of the present study perceived prison as an ineffective deterrent to engaging in antisocial offending behaviours, the way in which they were disciplined by parents was also cited as ineffective. Participants also provided disciplinary strategies, which they thought, would have been effective to help them refrain from engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. Furthermore, participants made clear distinctions between the punishments for criminal behaviours as well as what they thought the punishment ought to be for societal norm violations. Overwhelmingly, participants were of the opinion that punishment ought to be consistent throughout childhood and adolescence. Additionally, participants reported that societal norm violations ought to be punished by having privileges such as late curfews, going out with friends

and mainly cellphones taken away. In an age where technology such as cellphones and social media on which youth are the most active have become part of their lifestyles; it comes as no surprise that young people's technology and social media usage have required restraint (Lenhart, Ling, Campbell & Purcell, 2010; Rideout, Foehr & Roberts, 2010). Participants of the present study emphasised the need for cellphone usage to be curbed by parents given the important role that technology and social media play in emerging adults' lives. Associations between technology and parental discipline may therefore prove useful. To this end, technologies have made it increasingly difficult to provide parental monitoring as well as parental behavioural control (Yardi & Bruckman, 2011; Yardi & Bruckman, 2012). The implication is that participants were of the opinion, that for punishment to be effective, it ought to involve the deprivation of key lifestyle tools (such as cellphones, social media, earlier curfews and going out with friends). This presents as an area not yet well studied in the literature on parenting and parental monitoring and may therefore warrant further investigation. Participants' recommended disciplinary strategies as far as technologies are concerned seem to find some support in the literature on technology usage but require further study.

#### **4.6 Primary theme 5: *Unemployment***

Participants cited unemployment as a substantial motivation to engage in antisocial offending behaviour. Being unemployed meant that participants were in want of money, bored and idle and could not support substance abuse habits. Additionally, the belief about participants' prospects of finding employment was reported as a contributing factor to engaging in antisocial offending

behaviours. Furthermore, participants also cited their criminal records as the main barrier to finding employment.

**Table 16:** Sub-theme; Unemployment

Sub-theme	Illustrative quotes
<b>4.6 Unemployment</b>	<p data-bbox="802 537 1380 779"><i>“When there’s work for us people that come out of prison you see. There’s no work for us mos here. When you come out of prison your record and everything it messes up your life you see. Now if maybe they can take that thing away they can give us a work.</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 816 1380 974"><i>Now if maybe they can take that thing away they can give us a work. Then maybe we will start going down again. We will be on, we will step in our feets you see.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1012 1380 1085"><i>“Cause, I don’t work you see and Im here all of the time here, here Im at home.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1123 1380 1239"><i>Yahh, then you can we will not mess up so much. Then we can also be busy it doesn’t matter what kind of work it is you see.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1249 971 1281"><i>Participant 1</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1318 1380 1392"><i>“Yah where, where people are unemployed.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1360 971 1392"><i>Participant 3</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1497 1380 1570"><i>“I can’t find appro, a right job because I got a criminal record”</i> <i>Participant 5</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1608 1380 1841"><i>Exactly ja, because the youngsters of today they, they come in they, they, they drop out of school they finish matric and then they would have this mindset this is my own personal experience. My friends that I had; they would have this mindset of ag man we can’t</i></p>

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*get a job because we coloured other people  
can get a job because of this and that...*

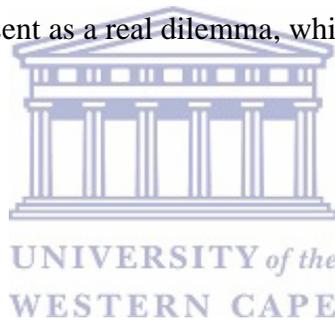
*Participant 9*

*"I think unemployment, unemployment could  
be one. Some people, I actually know some  
people that are unemployed the way they are  
just to get some money I mean, breaking the  
law ja it does..."*Participant 10

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All the participants involved in this study were unemployed and living at home with parents and some cases a close family member. The access as well as the amount of resources present in a community has been found to influence engagement in antisocial offending behaviours (Caspi et al., 2000; de Coster, Heimer & Wittrock, 2006; Ingoldsby & Shaw, 2002). Such studies have often highlighted the importance of structural factors in crime and delinquency. All participants in the present study reported high levels of unemployment, poverty, crime and violence as characteristic of the communities from where they lived. A number of international and South African studies have also concluded that such factors hold common associations with young people's antisocial offending behaviours (Loeber & Farrington, 2000; Osgood & Chambers, 2000; van Der Merwe & Dawes, 2007). The Western Cape Province, the setting of the present study, much like the rest of South Africa has extremely high unemployment rates. The unemployment rates of the country is estimated to be 27.1% while the Western Cape Province exhibits unemployment rates as high as 21.7% (Statistic South Africa, 2016b). Therefore, unemployment existed as both a provincial as well as a national problem and participants of this study are no doubt affected by unemployment to the extent that it may have played a role in their antisocial offending behaviours.

For most of the participants of the present study, finding employment was reportedly made difficult by their criminal records. The stigma (as discussed earlier) faced by former offenders also extends to criminal records; former offenders may find it extremely challenging to find work and may resort to crime to fund their lifestyles (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002). Even when former offenders find employment; it may be complicated by a number of factors, which include: poor working conditions, less pay and other forms of discrimination in the workplace (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2004). Unemployment has been implicated in the initiation as well as the maintenance of antisocial offending behaviours of young people. Thus, participants' apprehensions about finding employment and its role in antisocial offending behaviour present as a real dilemma, which has been explored in the literature.

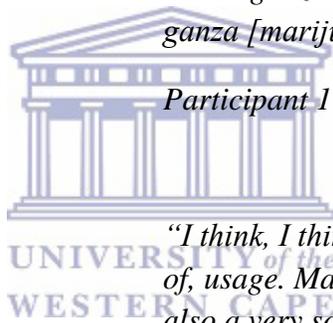


#### **4.7 Primary theme 6: *Substance use and abuse***

The sixth theme to emerge was substance abuse. Almost all of the participants involved in the study reported having abused substances. The most recent instance of substance abuse was reported to have occurred only a few days prior to the interviews. Substances abused ranged from marijuana to methamphetamines. Participants reported that at the height of the engagement in antisocial offending behaviour, they were under the influence of substances. Moreover, participants described losing all inhibitions and being unable to register contemplative thoughts when engaging in antisocial offending behaviours while under the influence of substances.

**Table 17:** Primary theme 6; Substance use and abuse

Theme	Illustrative quotes
<b>4.7 Substance use and abuse</b>	<p data-bbox="802 365 1382 562"><i>“A bad thing is you must not smoke drugs because when you smoke drugs anything goes out of hand you just do bad things anything that comes in your mind is bad. You just think to mess.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 604 1382 884"><i>“Because most, most of their children is starting from 14 years, 13 already. Alot of children leave school now they when they are not even grade six or grade five, because they leave the school they start smoke drugs smoke ganza [marijuana] they start with ganza [marijuana]”.</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 926 967 953"><i>Participant 1</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1058 1365 1171"><i>“I think, I think also, also usage. Usage of, of, usage. Marijuana als [all]. Marijuana is also a very sociable thing, a social thing.</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1192 967 1220"><i>Participant 3</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1325 1365 1438"><i>“Because I was probably using drugs that time. Because I was smoking dagga ...that’s the only thing I smoked”</i> Participant 5</p> <p data-bbox="802 1543 1101 1570"><i>“Using drugs you see.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1612 1084 1640"><i>“Ja I was still using.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1682 1382 1753"><i>“The difference is now that I’m sober minded back then I was intoxicated.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1795 1333 1822"><i>“I couldn’t control myself.”</i> Participant 6</p>



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*“Some of them have parents that’s smoking drugs man; it’s so real that it’s unbelievable.”*

*“Yes drugs, smoking drugs.”*

*“I would smoke tik.”*

*“I wasn’t even thinking, I was like so drugged up.” Participant 8*

*Participant 8*

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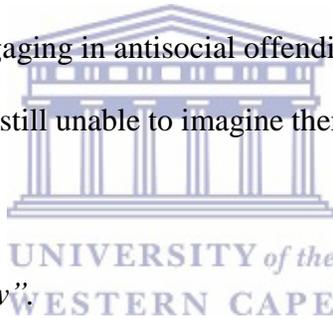
Substance use and abuse has long been thought to play a significant role in the initiation and maintenance of antisocial offending behaviours. Substance abuse refers to maladaptive patterns of substance use, which manifest recurrently and has significant negative consequences (such as being repeatedly late for school, work due to a withdrawal from substance abuse use the previous night). The availability of drugs in community as well as exposure to crime have all been found to significantly contribute to antisocial offending outcomes for young people (Barrett, 2007; van Horn, Hawkins, Arthur & Catalano, 2007; Mrug & Loosier, 2008). According to Yabiku et al. (2007) substance abuse becomes a validated behaviour and emerges as a viable option or coping mechanism for hunger, crime, violence, family issues, health issues, and substandard living conditions in socially disorganized communities where adolescents observe adults misusing drugs and alcohol. In cases where parents are abusing substances as noted by some participants, social learning theory has proven useful. As noted before, social learning holds that antisocial offending behaviours could be learned because of interactions with various socialising agents such as parents; learning therefore occurs through processes of observation and modelling (Bandura, 1977a). According to Morojele, Parry, Brook and Kekwaletswe (2012) substance use

can be referred to as the use of any psychoactive substance regardless of the frequency of use, or any problems associated with the use of the substance. Substance use is often seen as the first stage in a progression towards substance abuse. Substance use and abuse has long been considered an international as well as a national social problem. Both alcohol and cannabis present substantially high prevalence rates especially among young people. According to the United Nations (2012b) alcohol is the most commonly abused substance with prevalence rates as high as 42%, followed by cannabis with a rate of 5%, heroin and cocaine with rates of 0.4 % and 0.5%, respectively. In South Africa, substance use among adolescents is particularly rife and presents as a major public health concern; less studies have shed light on substance use trends for emerging adults (Dada et al., 2012; Plüddemann & Parry, 2012; Resnicow, Omardien, & Kambaran, 2007; Stein et al., 2008; Wechsberg et al., 2008). Additionally, Reddy et al. (2010) reported that as much as 49.6% of a sample of South African school-going adolescents had used alcohol, followed by cannabis (12.8%), heroin (11.2%), cocaine (6.4%) and mandrax (6%). The Western Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa, the setting of the study, is known for high substance use and abuse prevalence rates; this is especially true for young people. Therefore, it is not surprising that participants reported being exposed to substance abuse at home and in their communities. The South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU) in 2013, reported, that patients under the age 20 admitted to treatment centres in the Western Cape have presented with cannabis use rates of 70%. This was followed by methamphetamine use rate of 16%, alcohol use with a rate of 4%, heroin use with a rate of 3% while cocaine use maintained a rate of less than 1% (Dada et al., 2014). Peer and family factors including the role of parents and parenting have all been implicated as contributing to substance use and abuse (Grobler & Khatite, 2012; Russel et al., 2008; Westling, Andrews, Hampson,

&Peterson, 2008). While it is apparent that a wealth of factors have been found to influence young people's substance abuse; for participants of the present study substance abuse was reported as instrumental in their antisocial offending behaviours. Participants also articulated that parental drug abuse, as modelled by parents may have significantly influenced their decision to use and abuse substances.

#### **4.8 Primary theme 7: *Future self***

The future self, emerged as the seventh primary theme. Almost all of the participants involved in the study reported having difficulty being able to articulate, imagine and construct a future self while being engaged in antisocial offending behaviours. This was particularly true for when participants were at the peak of engaging in antisocial offending behaviours. At the time of the interviews, some participants were still unable to imagine themselves in the future. This was apparent in the following excerpts:



*"I don't know. I don't know"*

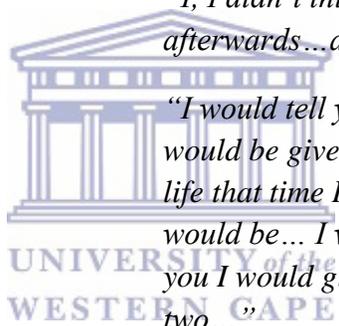
*"I still don't know." Participant 1*

*"Where do I see myself? Jarre my bru, in my instance now really I don't know."*  
*Participant 7*

Moreover, participants mostly indicated that at the height of their offending behaviours, their future self would be in either prison or deceased. Responses illustrating the difficulty of participants being able to articulate, imagine and construct a future self while engaged in antisocial offending behaviours are shown, below.

**Table 18:** Primary theme 7; Future self

Theme	Illustrative quotes
4.8 Future self	<p data-bbox="802 264 922 294"><i>"In jail."</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 331 1365 361"><i>"In out of jail but still doing." Participant 2</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 399 1395 558"><i>"I was a bit scared because I never know will I see tomorrow. I'll, I'll be dead already or in prison one of the two because that's where it goes to." Participant 5</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 596 1252 625"><i>"I would have a negative answer."</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 663 1395 777"><i>"I would see myself I don't know where I would say. I didn't have, I didn't work towards my dream back then" Participant 6</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 814 1252 894"><i>"I, I didn't think of the future but afterwards...after..." Participant 8</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 932 1395 1171"><i>"I would tell you the God's honest truth it would be given to me as I would living my life that time I was still engaged in that I would be... I would, I wouldn't be able to tell you I would give you 1 of 1 of two, one of two..."</i></p> <p data-bbox="802 1209 1354 1239"><i>"It's either death or prison." Participant 9</i></p>



Evidence concerning antisocial offending behaviours suggests that there is a link between offending and how offenders construct both the past negative behaviours and their offending free future selves (Harris, 2011; Markus, & Nurius, 1986). There is also evidence that individuals involved in antisocial offending behaviours tend to overvalue or focus on the more direct consequences of behaviour (Hirschi, 2004; Nagin & Pogarsky, 2004). A large body of research has also found that individuals engaged in antisocial offending prefer living in the present, immediate realities while disregarding more distant, future realities. This tendency is thought to

arise from several concepts such as: self-control, impulsivity, and temporal discounting (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Moffitt, 1993; van Gelder et al., 2015; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985). This means that when individuals are unable to articulate an offending free future self vividly and think through the delayed consequences of behaviours; antisocial offending behaviours are less likely to occur (van Gelder, et al., 2015; van Gelder, Hershfield & Nordgren, 2013). According to Markus & Nurius (1986), the possible self which individuals imagine themselves in the future represents ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and thus provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation. In other words, how individuals think about their past antisocial offending behaviours may provide a motivation for desisting or abstaining from future antisocial offending behaviours. From participants' responses, their future selves were not vivid nor did they think through the consequences of their behaviour when engaged in antisocial offending behaviours. While most participants only had difficulty articulating a future self when they were engaged in antisocial offending behaviours or while reflecting on past offending, a few participants were still unable to do so beyond that point. Most of the interviews took place with participants who were at some point of re-entering and/or re-integrating in the communities. This means, that while participants portrayed themselves as sober and not engaged in antisocial offending acts; the reality was that their abstention from such acts were very brief especially given that some participants' offending behaviours occurred a mere few days, few months, less than a year before the interviews. While this may be the case, abstention or desistance from antisocial offending behaviour is difficult to pin point. According to Maruna (2001), it is difficult to determine when desistance has occurred. Harris (2011) found that recent occurrences of offending may prove potentially challenging for desistance from antisocial offending. On the

other hand, the authors also argued that it may be helpful to view respondents as informants on the desistance process (because they are actively engaged in desistance work) which largely involves interpreting their past behaviours as well as envisioning their future behaviours (Harris, 2011). Thus, when taking into account both the fact that some participants were unable to articulate possible future selves and that their antisocial offending behaviours occurred very recently; it may be that participants of the present study were still very much at risk of offending. It would therefore be worthwhile to discern participants' motivations and how they construct, conceptualise their past behaviours especially given the link between cognition and motivation. The way in which individuals articulate and/or negotiate and talk about themselves have been highlighted as an important component to refraining from antisocial offending behaviour (Giordano, Cernkovich & Rudolph, 2002; Maruna, 2001). The future self can therefore serve as a motivation to abstain or desist from negative behaviours even in instances where individuals possess limited structural resources such as in the case of participants where poverty, crime and unemployment is rife (Bruder, 1998; Granberg, 2006; Mead, 1932). This may be particularly applicable to the participants of the present study, given the structural factors, which have been identified in their context. The way in which and whether participants are able to construct their future selves has been shown to play a crucial role in their decision of whether or not to offend; this seems to find agreement in the literature.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Implications for research

This study has provided a number of rich insights into experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour of a group of South African emerging adults. Overwhelmingly, participants ascribed their offending behaviours as resulting to external factors. Antisocial offending behaviours were reported as externalising behaviours, which have social causes with some links to individual factors. Participants highlighted a number of risk and causal factors which were thought to expose them to antisocial offending behaviours. The risk factors posited by the self-explanations appeared to be dynamic in nature. This means that the risk factors are amenable and can therefore be addressed through existing interventions with added considerations of the findings of research such as the present study. While there was no indication of life-course persistent offending by the participants of this study, some participants exhibited deficits in key self-conceptualising processes such as articulating a future self. This might indicate that such individuals may have resigned themselves to a state of hopelessness, which may make them more vulnerable to developing LCP pathways; however, more investigation is needed to validate such claims. In addition, the findings of this study stressed the importance of both parental, home factors while extricating individual factors, which may help researchers better, understand the development, maintenance and decrease in antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults. Thus, while adding richly to existing

research on antisocial offending behaviours of emerging adults the study also provided new insights into how these behaviours operate, are experienced and described during emerging adults in this context. Keeping the above in mind, the findings of the study may prove useful to institutional stakeholders, parents, emerging adults, policy makers as well as governmental role players. The understandings of the participants' experiences and self-explanations may provide a useful comprehension of young people who offend at the emerging adulthood stage of their lives as well as such young people's offending histories. A greater understanding of antisocial offending of emerging adults, such as which this study provided; may contribute to interventions as well as enhance existing interventions geared toward the addressing the burden of antisocial offending behaviours.



### **5.1.1 Reported Age norms**

All participants reported that their antisocial offending behaviours typically started at the average age of 14 years. At this age norm, participants were reportedly involved in antisocial offending behaviours such as truancy, underage occasional alcohol use as well as experimenting with illegal substance use. Furthermore, all the participants also reported that their antisocial offending behaviours peaked (was at its worse) at the average age 20 years and declined in their early twenties. At its peak, participants reported antisocial offending behaviours included: murder, involvement in gangs, selling illegal substances, committing robberies with deadly weapons, addiction to illegal substances, stabbing, shooting and assaulting people. According to Sweeten, Piquero and Steinberg (2013) age is one of the most robust correlates of criminal behaviour yet, explanations for this relationship are varied and conflicting. Adolescent offending

is considered as the hallmark stage of antisocial offending. A number of developmental theories attribute antisocial offending behaviours to varied sociological, psychological, and biological changes that occur during adolescence and adulthood. The direct link between crime and age has been empirically tested. However, too few direct empirical tests have been conducted to make this link explicit (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). A number of theorists have also found that antisocial offending behaviours peak around age 17 years and declines into adulthood; thus serving as evidence for the so called, *age crime curve* (Farrington, 1986; Farrington, Piquero & Jennings, 2013; Moffitt 1993; Piquero, Farrington & Blumstein, 2003; Piquero, Farrington & Blumstein, 2007). Such theories include the theoretical framework of the present study. Sweeten et al.'s (2013) study, also concluded that the relationship between age and crime in adolescence and early adulthood was largely, explicated though not entirely, attributable to multiple co-occurring developmental changes. For this reason, the authors held that adolescence was therefore found to be a major focus in the study of antisocial offending behaviours. Adolescents' involvement in antisocial offending behaviour and crime in particular was also made explicit in, G. Stanley Hall's (1904) seminal work on adolescence. Hall (as cited in Arnett, 2006) noted the curvilinear relationship between age and crime in which offending was thought to be more common in adolescence rather than before or after. This lends support to the age norms reported by participants. Considering, these results, it may be worthwhile to investigate whether this is also true for other South African emerging adults. The reported age norms provided by participants offer valuable knowledge into the developmental path of antisocial offending behaviour, which in this case seems to be consistent with the literature. However, it is also worth noting that most of the research has been done with adolescents as oppose to emerging adults. While the study of antisocial offending behaviours during adolescence remain crucial to

understanding behaviour in adulthood, more research on such behaviours during emerging adulthood prove much needed.

## **5.2 Limitations of the study**

The present study was accompanied by a number of limitations. First, several delays were experienced with regard to data collection. While site NGOs were eager to assist, staff did not always have the time to do so as a result of full work schedules and under staffing. This led to months of delay in data collection. The result was that months went by between interviews, which, meant that the researcher ran the risk of becoming unfamiliar with the data. However, during these months of delay, the researcher transcribed existing data, read literature, attended research workshops and met with his supervisor. Secondly, emerging adult populations have proven very difficult to access. In cases, where organisations were actively working in communities, this demographic of young people were usually underrepresented. This meant that even in the communities, in which the NGOs were active emerging adults were not overtly active in community-focused work. This was also uncovered through preliminary discussions with some of the parents from the communities where the researcher met some of the participants. Thirdly, funding proved very challenging. Since, the research was not funded by external funders or research entities; a lack of resources such as monetary funds, key equipment also added to delays. Travelling to sites on a weekly basis was challenging as this required funds and time given the distance between the researcher and the sites. The research was therefore entirely self-funded. Fourthly, while the present study revealed invaluable insights into experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviours of a group south African emerging adults;

diversity in the research sample was lacking. To this end, greater gender, language, race and ethnic diversity may have yielded even more insight into experiences and self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviours of a group South African emerging adults. This would have made for even richer insight into the antisocial offending behaviours of a group South African emerging adults. Finally, while government institutions were also approached, efforts to pursue the research at sites such as youth care centres were met with resistance and misinformation was provided about the ages of young people housed in such care centres. This was concerning especially given the valuable contribution that this population could have made to not only the present study but also the broader research on antisocial offending behaviours.

### **5.3 Recommendations**



Emerging adults involved in this study revealed a multiplicity of self-explanations and factors, which shaped and led to their antisocial offending behaviours. This might suggest that measures to address such behaviours would have to be cumulative and multiplicative. To this end, strategies would have to include changes in existing policy and would need to address the psychosocial needs of young people who would be the targets of such interventions. The effects of such interventions would have to be closely, carefully, and continuously evaluated in order to determine its efficacy and relevance. Pre-emptive interventions such as awareness, educational programmes aimed at adolescence would remain incredibly useful especially given the trajectory of antisocial offending behaviours identified by current research. First, such policy changes and strategies would need to be informed by the relevant research such as that done in the present study as well as research, which expand to emerging adults in the youth detention and

correctional services centres. Psychosocial workshops involving the factors and themes such as those identified in the present study may prove largely beneficial. Such themes may include but may not be limited to building healthy relationships, building self-esteem, identity explorations, moral reasoning, problem solving and conflict resolution as well as job skills training and assisting emerging adults with employment opportunities. These may aid emerging adults and equip them with valuable psychosocial and vocational skills.

Considering, that very little is known about emerging adults and their offending behaviours, their offending patterns, it can be expected that that policy created to curb antisocial offending behaviour do not address the needs and barriers of this developmental stage. Rather than, focusing or directing policy driven initiatives and developmental projects to the needs of emerging adults; existing policy instead focuses on adolescent, juvenile delinquency and offending. Based on the responses provided by the emerging adults involved in this study an extended strategy might be worth contemplating. In this respect, a more integrative perspective might be beneficial. This means that while recognising the developmental trajectory of offending in or as part of adolescence, it may be crucial for some consideration to go into understanding offending which proceeds beyond adolescence in stages such as emerging adulthood. However, these strategies would need to be considered alongside legal, cultural, religious and demographic factors as all these may inform acceptable modes of discipline.

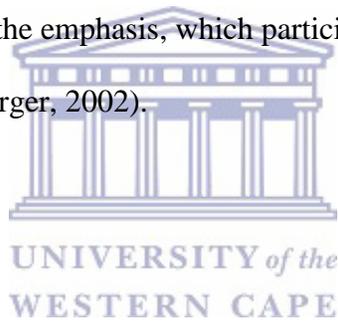
The fact that the emerging adulthood stage is marked by feelings of in-betweenity and identity as well as self-explorations lends more credence to the need for more research and understanding of what it entails; particularly for South African emerging adults. Additionally, and perhaps more relevant to the aims and objectives of this study; is that more research on a larger scale may offer

more generalisable results, as to the antisocial offending behaviours of South African emerging adults. While this study has offered valuable insights into the subjective realities and/or experiences and self-explanations, which these emerging adults attributed to their antisocial offending behaviours; more research involving more demographically diverse participants remain essential. Such research may focus on the psychosocial profiles and psychosocial needs of emerging adults, which from this study appears to influence engagement in antisocial offending behaviours. Given, the large numbers of emerging adults who are incarcerated in South African prisons and detention centres research with those incarcerated may add further value to understanding the self-explanations of emerging adults' antisocial offending behaviours.

Participants of this study made a notable distinction between the need for different strategies to prevent, perturb and deter societal norm violations and criminal behaviours while offering rich insight for parents, policy makers and health professionals and developmental practitioners. For parents in particular, emerging adults in this study have offered practical measures, which may prove valuable for those raising adolescents. These insights may also find use in parent programmes where strategies alternative to spanking may be in demand. In the South African context, recent developments in the justice system court judgments on issues such as child discipline and parental monitoring and discipline may lend prominence and strength to such strategies.

Both life skills training and enhancement programmes may be sufficient to assist young people to articulate future selves, setting goals, which may in turn motivate abstention from antisocial offending behaviours (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2003). According to Ebersöhn & Eloff (2003) life skills, involve individual proficiencies for behaving in a manner that meaningfully and

successfully help to meet the demands of the self, others and the environment. Life skills training may further serve the benefits of strengthening young people's abilities to function effectively in society, reacting to life's stressors amicably, as well as successfully dealing with conflict situations (Chance, 2003; Muthukrishna, 2002). Mentoring on the other hand may involve cross-age, dyadic relationship between an experienced, caring adult and a disadvantaged or troubled younger person (Davies & Thurston, 2005; van Der Ven, 2004). Mentoring relationships assist young people to negotiate life's challenges as well as to foster their potential (Keating, Tomishima, Foster & Alessandri, 2002; Rhodes, Spencer, Keller, Liang & Noam, 2006). Mentoring may be particularly helpful given the lack of positive parental rolemodels as reported by participants as well as the emphasis, which participants placed on social learning processes (Beam, Chen & Greenberger, 2002).



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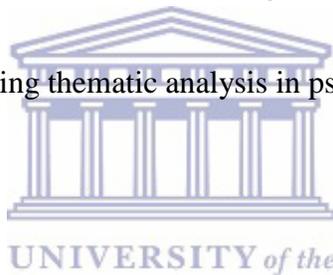
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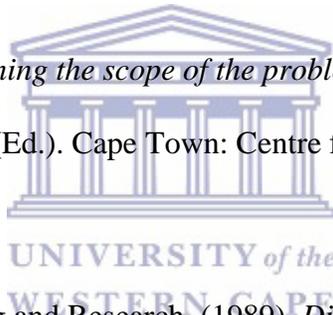
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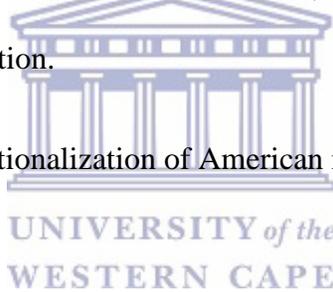
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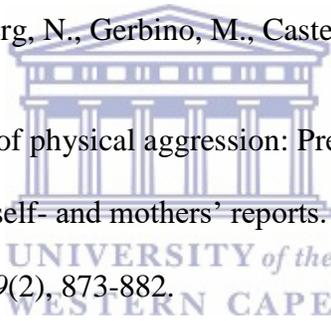
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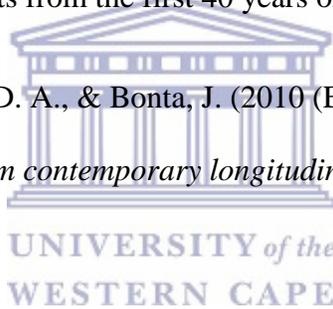
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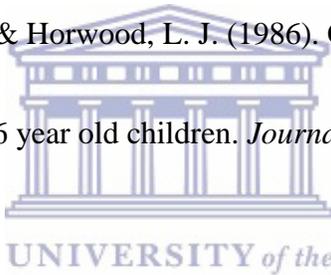
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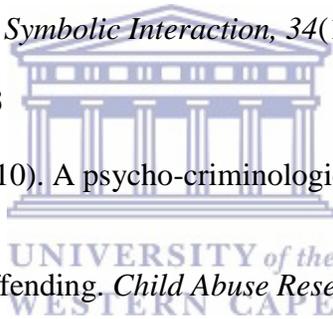
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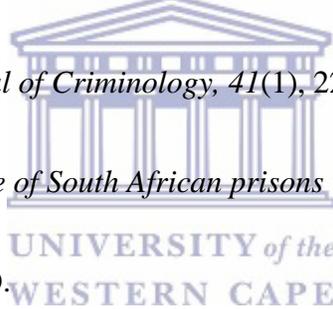
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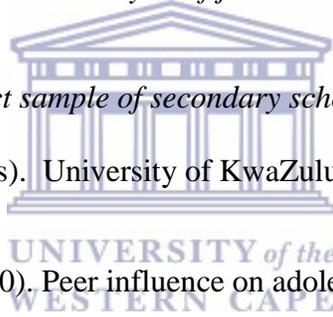
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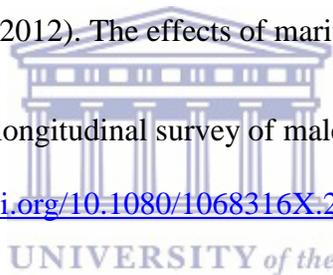
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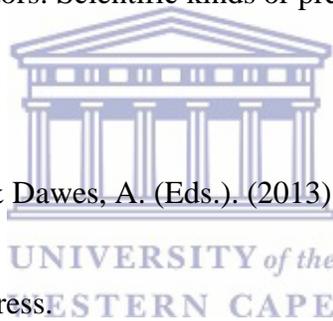
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## APPENDIX A: Ethics Clearance Letter



### OFFICE OF THE DEAN DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

02 September 2015

#### To Whom It May Concern

I hereby certify that the Senate Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the following research project by:  
Mr BD Faroa (Psychology)

Research Project: Exploring the experiences and self-explanation to the antisocial offending behaviour of a group of South African emerging adults.

Registration no: 15/6/25

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

*Ms Patricia Josias  
Research Ethics Committee Officer  
University of the Western Cape*

Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535, South Africa  
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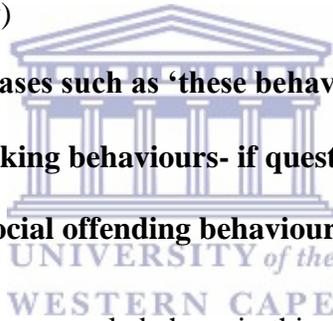
A place of quality,  
a place to grow, from hope  
to action through knowledge

## APPENDIX B: Interview Guide

### Interview Questions

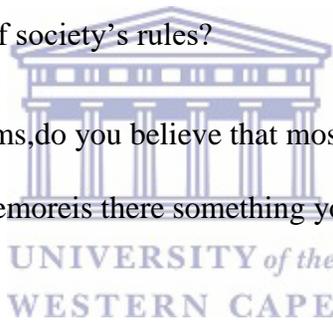
Sometimes, young people do things that get them into trouble with the law and/or society. Some examples of such behaviours are vandalism, drunk driving, entering bars while under age, assault, shoplifting, house breaking and stealing, sleeping out without parents' permission, truancy, yelling at, not listening to parents and elders. These behaviours were referred to in this study as **antisocial offending behaviours**. **Antisocial offending behaviours** refer to both criminal behaviours (behaviour that goes against a law of the country- brings you into trouble with the law) and societal norm violations (behaviours which are considered wrong by the community, society and parents but are not necessarily illegal- does not bring you into trouble with the law but rather with society)

(Explain at each point where phrases such as 'these behaviours' or 'such behaviours' refer to criminal and societal rule breaking behaviours- if question not relevant to present behaviour ask/refer to past antisocial offending behaviours)

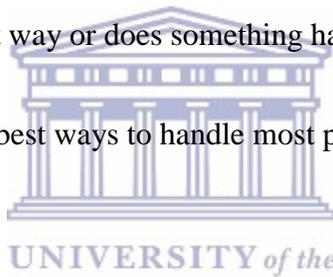


1. Why do you think some young people behave in this way?
2. What would you say are bad behaviours? What would you say are good behaviours?  
Please provide some examples of each.
3. Where do you think these (antisocial offending) behaviours start?
4. Have you or someone you know ever taken part in such (antisocial offending) or similar behaviour/s? If yes, state which and please explain.
5. Has any member of your family or a close friend ever been in trouble with the law? If yes, state whom and please explain.

6. How do you think people would justify taking part in such (antisocial offending) behaviours?
7. Is there a punishment for such (antisocial offending) behaviours? If yes, what are the punishments for such (antisocial offending) behaviours? Are the existing punishments enough to prevent people from taking part in such (antisocial offending) behaviours?
8. What do you think should be the punishment/s, if any for such (antisocial offending) behaviour/s?
9. What kind of environment do you feel leads a person to engage (take part) in criminal behaviour or the breaking of society's rules?
10. When you have/had problems, do you believe that most problems will solve themselves if you just do not fool with them or is there something you can do to solve them? Please explain.
11. Have you ever been blamed for things that were just not your fault? Has this happened often? Why or why not, were you blamed for these things?
12. When you were younger did you feel that your parents listened to you? And when you were older or even now, do you/ did you feel that your parents listened to you? Do think that your parents listening to you played a part in your engagement in these (antisocial offending) behaviours? Please motivate.
13. Do you feel that most parents nowadays listen to what their children have to say? Please explain.



14. Are you/were you a persuasive person? Do you find it hard to change a friend's ('mind') opinion? Why do you think that is/was?
15. Are you/were you able to change your parents', friends' and/or family's ('minds') opinions about anything- convince them? Why do you think that is/was the case?
16. When you did something 'wrong' (or engaged in antisocial offending behaviours), were you/are you able to do something to make it right or is the very little or nothing you can do to make it right? Please explain.
17. Do you think people are born right or wrong and why? When they do bad things is it because they were born that way or does something happen? Please explain
18. Do you feel that one of the best ways to handle most problems is just not to think about them?
19. Who do you think engages more in antisocial offending behaviours (crime and breaking society's rules); males or females?
20. Where do you see yourself in five (5) years? Please explain. And where do you see yourself in ten (10) year's time?
21. Have you ever felt that when a person your age decides to hit you, that there is little you can do to stop him or her? Please explain.
22. Have people (strangers, friends, family etc.) ever been mean to for no reason at all? Why do you think that was the case? Please explain.



23. Are you able to change what might happen tomorrow by what you do today? Why or why not?
24. Do you think bad things will happen no matter what you try to do to stop the more can you stop them from happening? Please explain.
25. Do you have a say about what you get to eat at home? Please explain.
26. If someone does not like you is there something you can do about it or not? Why or why not?
27. Do you think that planning ahead makes things turn out better or not? Why or why not?
28. Do you have a say about what your family decides to do or not to do? Why or why not?
29. If you could change the world, what would you change about it? If you could change something about yourself (with regard to antisocial offending behaviours), what would you change and why?
30. Who is the closest person to you in your family? Why do you think they are closest to you?
31. Do you think crime and breaking of society's rules is what everyone does when they are young or is it a lifestyle? Please explain.
32. When people engage in antisocial offending behaviours, does it have to do with they feel about themselves?



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## APPENDIX C:

### INFORMATION SHEET

**Project Title:** Exploring experiences and self-explanations of the antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults

#### **What is this study about?**

This is a research project being conducted by a Masters student, Mr Brendon Faroa at the University of the Western Cape. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are amongst the interest group from whom this study would like to obtain information about your understanding of behaviour that is considered by society as breaking the rules and criminal (breaking the law of the country). The purpose of this research project is to explore and understand the self-explanations of emerging adults (18-25) for engaging in antisocial offending behaviour.

#### **What will I be asked to do if I agree to participate?**

You will be asked to talk about your own antisocial offending behaviour, where it started, what it included and the explanations that you had or have for participating in criminal and societal norm violating behaviours. The study will be conducted at various sites in Cape Town. Information will be gathered through individual interviews. The duration of the semi-structured interviews will be one hour per participant at a time previously arranged with the participants via a non-governmental organisation.

## **Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?**

The researchers undertake to protect your identity and the nature of your contribution. To ensure your anonymity, (1) your name will not be included on the surveys and other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the survey and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your survey to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. Interviews will be audio-recorded and then transcribed. To ensure your confidentiality audio files of all interviews will at all times be kept in a safe and secure location, in particular when it is not in the hands of the researcher.

If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected.

In accordance with legal requirements and/or professional standards, we will disclose to the appropriate individuals and/or authorities information that comes to our attention concerning child abuse or neglect or potential harm to you or others. In this event, we will inform you that we have to break confidentiality to fulfil our legal responsibility to report to the designated authorities.



## **What are the risks of this research?**

There may be some risks from participating in this research study.

All human interactions and talking about self or others carry some amount of risks. We will nevertheless minimise such risks and act promptly to assist you if you experience any discomfort, psychological or otherwise during the process of your participation in this study. Where necessary, an appropriate referral will be made to a suitable professional for further assistance or intervention.

## **What are the benefits of this research?**

This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the investigator learn more about the self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of the self-explanations of antisocial offending behaviour.

## **Do I have to be in this research and may I stop participating at any time?**

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you

decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. *Your rights include not being obligated to reply to any question that you are not comfortable with and you may withdraw from the research process, at any time, without consequence. Your confidentiality will always be ensured. Furthermore, letters of consent will have to be signed by participants before interviews will take place.*

### **What if I have questions?**

This research is being conducted by Mr *Brendon Faroa* in the *Department of Psychology* at the University of the Western Cape. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Brendon Faroaat: 0713185042 or [bfaroa@uwc.ac.za](mailto:bfaroa@uwc.ac.za).

Should you have any questions regarding this study and your rights as a research participant or if you wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact:

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This research has been approved by the University of the Western Cape's Senate Research Committee. (REFERENCE NUMBER: 15/6/25)



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## APPENDIX D: Demographic Profile Sheet

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

1. What is your age? .....
2. What is your gender? Male Female (please circle one)
3. What was your highest grade-level passed at school/ what was your highest qualification achieved? .....
4. Are you a South African citizen? Yes No
5. What is your religion? .....
6. How would you describe your economic status? Low Middle High (please circle one)
7. How would you describe your parents' economic status? Low Middle High (please circle one)
8. Which racial group do you belong to? Black Coloured Indian White Other (please circle one)
9. Do you live on your own? If no, please indicate with whom. ....
10. Why are you currently attending this unit/ this site? .....



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## APPENDIX E:

### CONSENT FORM

**Title of Research Project:** Exploring experiences and self-explanations of the antisocial offending behaviours of a group of South African emerging adults

The study has been described to me in language that I understand. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand what my participation will involve and I agree to participate of my own choice and free will. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed to anyone. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without fear of negative consequences or loss of benefits.

**Participant's name**.....

**Participant's signature**.....

**Date**.....

**APPENDIX F: Primary Themes and Sub-themes**

<b>Primary themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
<b>Theme 1 <i>Home environment</i></b>	Family structure Overindulgent and liberal parenting Modeling
<b>Theme 2 <i>Labeling and Stigmatisation</i></b>	Undue blame
<b>Theme 3 <i>Social-emotional adjustment</i></b>	Inept social skills Peer pressure and group conformity
<b>Theme 4 <i>Moral Reasoning</i></b>	Impulsivity Compassionate care Understanding of good versus bad behaviours Experience of legal detention and incarceration Perceptions of punishment
<b>Theme 5 <i>Future self</i></b>	
<b>Theme 6 <i>Unemployment</i></b>	
<b>Theme 7 <i>Substance abuse</i></b>	

