

University of the Western Cape
Faculty of Community and Health Sciences

**Gang Members' Experiences of Victimization and
Perpetration of Rape in Prison**

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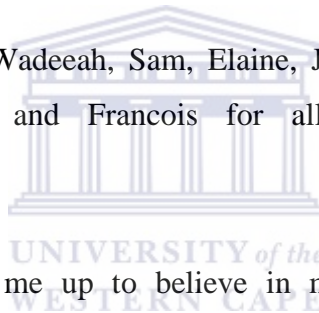
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ABSTRACT

People outside of prison tend to imagine sex in prison as violent gang attacks on defenceless individuals, but in actual fact, sex in prison is more complicated than the isolated gang rapes that take place.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher followed the qualitative research approach from a constructivist perspective to understand how participants portrayed or constructed their experiences of victimization and/or perpetration of rape.

The population of the study was members of the '28' prison gang with a history of sexual perpetration in prison. Participants for the study were male, released from prison, ages between 25 and 45 years of age. The researcher made use of purposive sampling in the selection of 15 participants.

Data was collected through in depth, face to face interviews starting with open ended questions and probing for in depth experiences, interpretations and meanings. Data was analyzed according to Creswell's (1998:140) guidelines for qualitative data analysis and was verified as suggested by Creswell (1998:201).

In order to explore the social context that might have influenced their constructions of experiences, the following question themes were identified:

- Participant's experiences of family life
- Participant's experiences of their involvement in crime
- Participant's gang involvement in Corrective Institutions
- Participant's experiences of forced sex in prison
- Consequences of rape in prison after release

The following key words were used:

Rape in prison, perpetrators, victims, 28-gang, 'wyfie', sex, sexual abuse

KEYWORDS

- **Rape in Prison**
- **Perpetrators**
- **Victims**
- **28-gang**
- **‘Wyfie’**
- **Sex**
- **Sexual Abuse**



DECLARATION

I declare that *Gang Members' Experiences of Victimization and Perpetration of Rape* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name.....Date.....

Signed.....



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS TO THE CHAPTER

The focus of this study was on rape in prison and more specific exploring how gang members portray their experiences of victimization and perpetration of rape.

In this chapter the reader is introduced to contextual information relating to the core issue of rape by gang members in prison. This is to be followed by a problem statement, research question, and comments on the significance of the study.

The research methodology that was followed and the ethical considerations considered in this study are explained in detail and no further discussion on the research methodology will be presented elsewhere in the report.

The chapter is concluded by indicating some limitations of the study, and explaining core concepts used in the study.

1.2 CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

The gang culture in prison has brought with it the disproportionate rise in prison rape, as gangs increasingly employ rape as an initiation ritual of choice. Once a male inmate is raped he is stigmatized and will be a victim of repeated sexual abuse for the remainder of his sentence. Most victims perpetuate the vicious cycle of crime by becoming abusers or rapists themselves in an attempt to regain their manhood in the same way they believe it has been taken away from them.

Sabo *et al* (2001:113) found that rape is not an isolated event in prison. It is part of a larger phenomenon: the hierarchical ranking of prisoners by their fighting ability and manliness. If you are a male prisoner you must either kill, or turn the tables on anyone who propositions you with threats of force and violence. This is the custom among young prisoners. In doing so, it becomes known that you are a man, regardless of your youth.

The reality of sexual abuse in prison is deeply disturbing. The actual rape can be vicious and brutal. Gang assaults are not uncommon and most victims are beaten and in extreme cases they could be killed.

Prison gangs are well organized and according to Parker-Lewis (2003:169), with nothing haphazard about the structure. The prison gang system is complex; it is vicious and should never be glamorized, dramatized or underestimated.

There are mainly three gangs operating in the South African prisons; the number gangs, as it is also known: 26's, 27's and 28's. *The 26's specialize in procuring money and goods and work closely with the 27's* (Gear & Ngubeni, 2002:5). According to Parker Lewis (2003:170), the 26's are cunning prison thieves whose symbol is the dollar. They operate in daylight hours. Schurink *et al* (1984:23) found that the procurement of money and other goods, through trickery and not violence, is seen as the main function of the 26-gang.

The 27-gang is known by blood and assaults. Gear & Ngubeni (2002:5) found that the 27's offer protection to the 26's in return for material goods and consumables.

The objective of the 28's is to pamper, protect and organize catamites or "wyfies" for sex. Of the three main gangs operating in South African prisons, the 28-gang is the most frequently associated with sex, because the object of the gang is to take and provide for "concubines" or wives. (Gear & Ngubeni, 2002:13)

According to Parker Lewis (2003:170), the 28's are notorious for their use of coerced sex to create *wyfies* (wives or sex slaves) for the pleasure of designated males in the gang. Schurink *et al* (1986:25), mention that the 28-gang consider the keeping of wives or "catamites" as a major function and, often, as their exclusive right.

According to the US Human Rights Watch Report (2001:14), overtly violent rapes are only the most visible and dramatic form of sexual abuse behind bars. Numerous victims of prison rape were never threatened with knives to their throats, but they took part in sexual act against their will with the belief that there is no other choice. Trickery or blackmail is the first step in luring the victim to the perpetrator.

Gear & Ngubeni (2002:17) found that, assaults and threats of more sophisticated trickery and manipulation are prized instruments for subordinating new prisoners. For example, offers of friendship, protection, and dagga are used to lure new prisoners and to begin a dependency dynamic in the interaction. *Moves resembling gestures of friendship and entailing offers or provision of food or small luxuries are the most commonly reported form that trickery follows* (Gear & Ngubeni, 2002:18). They further found that the target is frequently unaware that an exchange is taking place and a debt being created for which he will later be expected to pay with sex. The perception exists that you rape because you have been raped or that you violate because you have been violated.

Although some older men commit rape in prison, the perpetrators also tend to be young, if not always as young as their victims. They are frequently larger and stronger than their victims and are generally more assertive, aggressive and more at home in the prison environment. They are “street-wise” and often members of a gang with a network of inmate allies. Most of the men, who perpetrate in prison, come from Youth Centres or Places of Safety for children.

Boyd, Hagan and Cho (2000) found that progression from non-violent to more serious sexual assaults is not uncommon and non-contact and contact paraphilias co-exist. In other words an exhibitionist could be a rapist.

Certain prisoners become targets of sexual abuse the moment they enter prison. Their age, looks, youth, small size, physical weakness, being a first offender, being unassertive, non aggressive, shy, intellectual, not streetwise and other characteristics mark them as candidates for abuse. Prisoners with any one of these characteristics are likely to face an increasing risk of sexual assault, while prisoners with several overlapping characteristics are more likely to be targets of sexual abuse.

Ryan and Lane (1991:163) indicated that the experience of any victimization is always inherently one of helplessness. For the sexual abuse victim, the experience is particularly intrusive because of the assault on both body and privacy and the psychic self. *Although the impact of adolescent sexual abuse is complex, researchers note that many victims of sexual abuse suffer symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, act out sexually and experience periods of dissociation* (Hall *et al.*: 1998). Calam *et al.* (1998) note a host of symptoms exhibited by victims of sexual abuse including anger, sleep problems. Spiegel (2003) notes that trauma symptoms commonly detected among adolescent males with histories of sexual abuse, include the following:

- Re-experiencing the abuse through intrusive thoughts and flashbacks.
- Vivid memories and dreams of the abuse with content revolving around the return and retaliation of the perpetrator.
- Excessive autonomic arousal and hyper-alertness.
- Thinking, feeling and/or acting as if the abuse is recurring.
- Avoidance of activities that trigger recollections about the abuse.
- Distress reactions to demonstrations of affection from parents or loved ones.
- Abuse-specific and generalized fears.
- Acute or generalized panic responses.
- Blanking out.

Sexual assault and rape in prison has a profound impact on society as a whole. Firstly, the overcrowded prisons are incubators for the HIV and Aids virus as men have unprotected sex and are raped for initiation purposes in the gang structure. Furthermore, once they leave the prison system they resume normal sexual relationships with their partners, thereby increasing the spread of HIV and Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases.

HIV and Aids as well as other sexually transmitted infections represent a deadly threat to inmate sexual assault victims. According to Dumond (2001:15), for at least some inmates, sexual assault while incarcerated was the precipitating cause of their contracting HIV and facing a foreshortened future as a result.

The prevailing types of high-risk behaviour for transmission of HIV in the prison environment are high-risk sexual activity, sexual assault, and contaminated needles or other cutting instruments. *Three aspects of sexual activity inside the prison make it a higher risk for transmission: anal intercourse, rape and sexually transmitted infections* (Goyer et al 2005:13).

In the second place, according to the Constitution, (The Constitution of R.S.A: section 35) a prisoner has the right to be protected, humanely treated, and be free of abuse. South Africa is a nation that has built itself post 1994 on its commitment to human rights; therefore prisoners have to be afforded the same rights as all citizens. Rape is about power and the violation of a person's body, thus when a prisoner is being raped, there is no consent given and is therefore a clear violation of human rights. The occurrence of prison rape is not only a terrible violation of the person's human rights, but also an indictment of any institution that is unable to effectively protect the people it is suppose to be housing safely.

Besides violating the human rights of the person in detention, prison rape also has severe consequences for rehabilitation. Middlebrook, 1980:523 concurs by stating that the aim of prison sentencing and subsequent punishment is rehabilitation, to cure whatever personal problem caused them to commit a crime. The sentencing officer sends the perpetrator to a place of confinement where he is expected to be placed in safe custody. If the prisoner is raped, his safety has been compromised and the possibility of him becoming a sexual perpetrator is increased.

In today's world the judge who sentences a young person to reform school or prison passes male rape on him as surely as the sentence (O'Donnell, 2004:241).

If there is no intervention by authorities, the victims of rape in prison are at risk of becoming sexual predators themselves. To assert authority in the prison gang, they rape fellow prisoners. As a result the victims are humiliated and filled with rage. To regain their manhood

they feel the need to exert sexual authority on vulnerable people once they are released from prison. This is often in the form of rape. Gear & Ngubeni (2002:50) agree with the aforementioned by stating that abusive behaviour can follow a cyclical pattern where victims can become abusers.

From the victim's perspective, nothing can be more horrific than sexual abuse and rape in prisons and juvenile detention centers. This is a reality faced by boys and men in overcrowded and understaffed prisons and detention centers throughout the country

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

As a former employee of Correctional Services, the researcher is aware that, as much as the Department of Correctional Services is advocating its focus on rehabilitation, very little evidence is found of constructive steps and strategies to combat gangsterism and the subsequent physical, mental and sexual abuse.

In order to curb sexual abuse and rape in prisons, it is crucial to be familiar with the gang sub-culture, the perpetrators, their positions in the gang, why they sexually abuse and who the victims are. The study is conducted with the above in mind, exploring how gang members construct the experience of victimization and perpetration of rape in prison.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question that flows from the preliminary literature review:

How does the gang member construct the experience of victimization or perpetration of rape?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

From the literature studied for this research, it is evident that there is a dearth of information on the role of the gang subculture in correctional facilities in South Africa and the involvement of the gang members in sexual abuse and rape. There is a huge gap in scientific, objective information as there is very little written up on the subject of gangsterism in prison and their experiences of sexual activities, specifically sexual abuse and rape.

Correctional officials could benefit directly from this study as little is known about the dynamics and operations of the gangs in prison in relation to sexual abuse and rape.

Exploring prisoner's experiences of sexual abuse and rape in prison from a qualitative perspective, can contribute to the knowledge base of the helping professions.

The findings from this study could also inform themes for exploration in a comprehensive quantitative study.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 GOAL OF THE RESEARCH

The goal of the research was to explore how gang members construct their experiences of victimization and/or perpetration of rape.

1.6.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

For the purpose of this study, the researcher followed the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research was best for this study because of a number of reasons.

The type of information sought is qualitative in nature as it is an attempt to understand the social circumstances and meanings in which sexual abuse and rape in prison are situated. Qualitative research is holistic, inductive, and contextual based on narratives because it uses small samples that are studied in great depth. Qualitative research is also narrative rather than numerical. Qualitative research provides an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the topic being researched. *It gives insight into the interpretation, understanding, experiencing and producing of the social world* (De Vos *et al*, 2005:73,74). At the same time the data generated should be flexible and sensitive to the social context. Qualitative research aims to produce in-depth understandings on the basis of rich, contextual and detailed data, while it focuses on understanding the richness of the individual's perceptions and experiences of the world. Mason (2003:57) states that qualitative research should produce explanations or arguments, rather than claiming to offer mere descriptions. For this reason the research should be formulated around an intellectual puzzle or research questions. The results of qualitative research are descriptive rather than predictive.

1.6.3 STRATEGY OF INQUIRY

Both Patton (2002:80-136) and Creswell (1998: Chapter 4) imply that the choice of the strategy of inquiry is influenced to a large extent, by the central focus and the foundational question. As I was interested in how participants portrayed/constructed their involvement in rape in prison, I was guided by Patton's perspectives of constructivism in the qualitative inquiry. According to Potter (1996:40), the constructivists do not believe in an objective way of knowing. The constructivists believe that the world is subjectively constructed by the meanings that people assign to observations. *The idea that social groups such as street gang*

construct their own realities has a long history in sociology (Patton, 2002: 98). It thus makes sense to learn about their realities if one wants to plan interventions.

Patton (2002:96) indicates that there are a number of questions to be asked when the researcher engages in qualitative research from a constructivism perspective.

The following questions should be asked:

- How have the people in this setting constructed reality?
- What are their reported perceptions, “truths,” explanations, beliefs and world-view?
- What are the consequences of their constructions for their behaviours and for those with whom they interact?

As a novice researcher who was engaged in a study of limited scope, I was however, acutely aware of the fact that I could not claim to present research from a pure constructivism perspective.

I could also identify with Guba and Lincoln (1989) as cited in Patton (2002:98), who state that data obtained from constructivist inquiry doesn't have special status or legitimacy; they represent another construction to be taken into account in the move toward consensus.

1.6.4 POPULATION, SAMPLING AND RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

The population of the study was members of the “28” prison gang with a history of sexual perpetration in prison.

Participants for this study were males, released from prison, ages between 25 and 45 years of age. This age group was important for the study, because the members have all been in the gang for a period of time in which they already acquired a certain amount of power and status and would be able to talk with authority as from a gang perspective. The researcher made use of purposive sampling in the selection of 15 participants. Participants were involved in a program for perpetrators of sexual abuse in prison and volunteered to participate in the interviews once released from prison.

1.6.5 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Creswell (1998:111) describes data collection as a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions. Potter (1996:96) defines interviewing as the technique of gathering data from humans by asking them questions and getting them to react verbally.

The method for gathering data was in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended, face to face interviews with participants. The goal was to understand the participants' perspectives and experiences in their own words. Considering the code of conduct amongst members of the 28-gang, the in-depth interview method was more favourable and less threatening for gang members. Perpetrators of sexual abuse who are gang members would not reveal any of their experiences in front of each other.

In-depth, open-ended interviews were conducted because the ontological position of the researcher suggests that people's knowledge, experiences and interactions are meaningful properties of the social reality which research questions are designed to explore (Mason 2003) Individual interviews were conducted because of the sensitive nature of the information sought. It is important to capture what respondents have to say in their own words in order to understand their experiences and perceptions within their natural setting and how they construct "reality".

Semi-structured interviews are defined by de Vos *et al* (2005: 292) as questions organized around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth. The researcher made use of open-ended questions. Open-ended questions do not predetermine the answers and it allowed room for the participants to respond in their own terms.

The following themes were studied which seek to explore how gang members gave meaning to the experience of victimization and perpetration of rape in prison:

- Participant's experiences of family life
- Participant's experiences of their involvement in crime
- Participant's gang involvement in Corrective Institutions
- Participant's experiences of forced sex in prison
- Consequences of rape in prison after release.

1.6.6 PILOTING OF INTERVIEW

Seidman (1998:32), as cited in De Vos *et al*, urges researchers to do a pilot venture in which they try out their interviewing design with a small number of participants in order to identify their own ability to conduct interviews and to come to grips with the practical aspects of interviewing. I elected a released prisoner and member of the 28 prison gang to conduct this interview, so as to assure that I could get the information needed and to ascertain whether I could keep the interview focused on the goal of the research.

The conducting of a pilot interview in this research attested to be of great significance and added to the learning process of the researcher. I learned that I needed to probe more empathetically, especially on information regarding perceptions of perpetration.

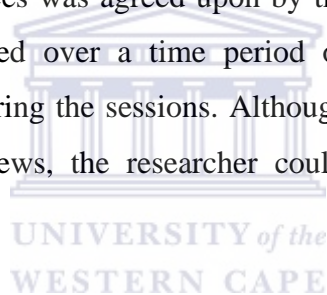
1.6.7 DATA-COLLECTION PROCESS

1.6.7.1 Selecting the interview setting

Due to the sensitive nature of the information sought and the fact that all the participants belong to a gang, it was important to secure a venue best suited for the interviews. Participants made it clear that they do not want to get in contact with each other and that they should not be seen by other gang members while they were busy sharing information with the researcher.

De Vos *et al* (2005:294) make it clear that the logistics of the interview should be planned ahead of time. The researcher arranged a place and time ahead of time, followed it up with phone calls and confirmed it closer to the date.

A quiet venue without disturbances was agreed upon by the researcher and participants. All fifteen interviews were conducted over a time period of three weeks. The majority of participants were comfortable during the sessions. Although some of the participants were a little nervous during the interviews, the researcher could get valuable information from participants.



1.6.7.2 Conducting the interview

The researcher chose to have a male colleague present during the interviews, with the consent of the participants. This person was well known and respected by the participants as he worked with them while they were incarcerated. The researcher informed the participants of the arrangement prior to the interviews and they all gave their approval. This was also a measure which the researcher put in place for her own safety and protection.

At the start of each interview the researcher gave a brief outline of the nature and purpose of the research and reminded the participants of their rights to refuse to answer a question and/or to terminate the interview at any point. It was also confirmed by the researcher that the information would be treated confidentially. All participants made it clear that they did not want the researcher to use a tape recorder. They were comfortable with the researcher taking notes during the duration of the interview. The interviews were scheduled for 90 minutes, but were terminated when the information became saturated and the participants started to repeat themselves.

The researcher posed five discussion topics to the informants. The researcher phrased these as open and as non-directive as possible, while attempting to guide the interview toward the area of study that was of interest. . The researcher succeeded in getting the participants to open up and express their views, experiences and ideas. In general the participants co-operated with the researcher and spoke freely about their experiences in prison and after release. Although some were reluctant at first to share information on the gang structure and activities, they gave valuable information after a few probing questions. Two participants in particular spoke with a lot of anger and resentment towards females, which made the researcher feel uncomfortable and nervous. The facilitator seemed to have a calming effect on the two participants and the necessary information could be obtained.

The following interviewing techniques as proposed by De Vos *et al* (2005:288) were found most useful:

- The participant must do ninety percent of the talking. The point is for the participant to tell the story.
- Ask single questions, one question at a time.
- Ask questions when you do not understand.
- Repeat key questions throughout the interview.
- Encourage a free rein, but maintain control.
- Allow pauses in the conversation, this will give the participant the opportunity to think through their answers.
- Don't interrupt a good story, jot down your question to be asked later.
- Follow up on what the participant said.
- Conclude the interview with a general question such as "Is there anything further that you feel is important?"
- Monitor the effect of the interview on the participant.

1.6.7.3 Taking notes

As previously mentioned, the researcher was requested by the participants not to make use of any form of recording device. Due to the sensitive nature of the information, they were of the opinion that their lives could be in danger if their voices would be recognized on the recordings. The researcher was obliged to take detailed notes while conducting the interview. Although this didn't impact negatively on the interviewing process, it could have happened that some detail went unnoted. The researcher was assisted by the facilitator in the taking down of notes. Non-verbal behaviours such as eye contact, posture, gestures and fidgeting, as well as striking themes were also noted by the researcher, as recommended by De Vos *et al*

(2005: 311). Impressions and more detailed info were also jotted down immediately after each interview.

1.6.7.4 Concluding the interview

At the end of each interview, as suggested by De Vos *et al* (2005:289), the researcher asked the participant if there was anything else that he feels is important to add in closing. The data obtained by the questions asked, proved to be rich and useful to the researcher. The researcher asked the participants about their feelings of the interview and the personal questions posed to them. The participants indicated that the interviews were intense and, with the exception of one, they never shared the information with anyone before.

A number of participants expressed their relief in sharing the information for the first time.

The researcher thanked the participants for the willingness to participate in the study and for the trust they showed in sharing such personal information. The researcher once again confirmed the confidentiality and anonymity of their participation and the information shared.

1.6.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Potter (1996:115) states that qualitative theoreticians and researchers have provided little guidance even of a general nature about how to analyze qualitative evidence. The analysis of qualitative research is a creative process and can be managed in various ways.

Patton (2002:205) is of the opinion that qualitative analysis is an attempt to capture the richness of the information from the participant's talk, rather than reducing the responses to quantitative categories.

According to Creswell (1998:141), the first step of the data analysis process is to read through the collected material to obtain a sense of the whole, then to write memos and reflective notes as an initial sorting process forming initial codes and then to further adapt the process to the strategy of inquiry.

Coffey & Atkinson (1996:83) suggest that we not only look at the content of the data, but also at the form of the data. A narrative approach can be useful to alert the researcher to research problems and themes that coding and content analysis may not be uncover.

The data gathered was analyzed according to the following guidelines as recorded in Creswell (1998:140-142):

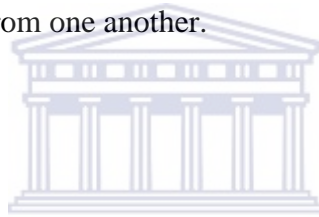
- The researcher began by jotting down notes in the margin of the text.
- The researcher then wrote the findings in the form of memos and reflective notes, the field notes were then summarized.

- The researcher obtained feedback on the initial summaries by taking info back to the facilitator.
- The researcher and facilitator scrutinized the words and metaphors used by prisoners.
- Thereafter, developed codes and sorting the visual images into categories.
- To understand the participant's construction of reality, the analysis moved beyond contextual analysis, in other words, the researcher focused on how it was said rather just what was said.

Creswell, 1994:155, indicates that, during the aforementioned process, the researcher should look for useful quotations to include into the “qualitative story”.

The process of generating categories, themes and patterns was the most difficult and complex phase in the analyzing of data. De Vos *et al* (2005:338) rightly state that the analytic process demands a heightened awareness of the data, a focused attention to the data and openness to the subtle undercurrents of social life.

The process of category generation involved noting the regularities in the people chosen for the study. As the categories of meaning surfaced, the researcher made sure that it was internally consistent but distinct from one another.



1.6.9 DATA VERIFICATION

Creswell (1998:201-203) identifies the following data verification methods and proposes that at least two of these methods should be implemented:

- **Prolonged engagement and persistent observation**, which involves trust with participants, awareness of culture and checking misinformation.
- **Triangulation** in which the researcher uses different sources, methods and theories to offer corroborating evidence.
- **Peer review or debriefing** provides an external check of the research process.
- **Negative case analysis** where the researcher refines working hypothesis as the research process progresses.
- **Clarifying research bias** from the onset of the study is important. The reader will thus understand the researcher's position and the presence of any biases.
- **Member checks** allow the researcher to seek the informant's views of the credibility of findings and interpretations.
- **Rich, thick descriptions** of the research setting and the process followed will give the reader the opportunity to make decisions regarding transferability.

- **External audits** make room for an external consultant to examine the process and product.

The data-verification methods applied in this research were:

Peer review and debriefing: As suggested by Krefting (1991:219), peer review and examination refers to the researcher's discussion around findings and the problems experienced in the qualitative research. In the case of the researcher the peer review and debriefing was done by a former colleague and expert in the field of prison gangs and their activities.

Clarifying researcher bias: The nature of the study required the researcher to clarify her own experiences as a female officer in a maximum security prison with her supervisor from the start. The thought of interviewing 15 perpetrators of rape, while assisting the victims on a daily basis, posed a challenge to the researcher, but with dedication the researcher stayed an objective as humanely possible.

Reflexivity was an integral part of my research to clarify researcher bias.

According to Mason (2003:54), qualitative research should involve critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or active reflexivity. Because the participants of this study were perpetrators of rape and the researcher was formerly employed by the Department of Correctional Services, I constantly took stock of my actions and role in the research process, and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of the "data"

Prejudice and bias could impact on and influence the lens that was used by myself, hence, the importance and significance of clarity, honesty and transparency of my own involvement. I engaged from a basis of respect and genuineness.

I integrated values and principles of accountability, transparency and relative freedom of contamination of personal bias and value judgments.

Member checks: The researcher spent approximately an hour and a half with each participant asking questions, probing, clarifying and trying to get their perceptions and meanings of what was communicated. The process was intense and tiring, but a good learning experience for the researcher.

1.6.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical clearance was granted by the Research Committee of the University of Western Cape after presentation of a proposal on ethical standards I would adhere to.

The following the core ethical guidelines, as suggested by Royse (1991:240-243) were fully adhered to:

- All subjects involved in the research were volunteers.
- Sufficient information about the study was provided to ensure that risks and benefits are understood.
- No volunteers were compensated for participation in the study.
- Participants were allowed to withdraw at any time if they so wished.
- All literature sources of information were acknowledged.
- All participants signed an agreement stating that participation was voluntary.
- Researcher arranged for a debriefing session for the participants who felt traumatized by interview.

1.6.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is contextual and perceptions and experiences are related to the participants in the specific context.
- The researcher could not make use of a tape recorder and had to make use of notes taken down during the interviews. It could have happened that information or even description of body language and feelings got lost in the process.
- The information shared by participants was highly confidential. Some stated that lives could be in danger if their identities became known. This indicated that a number of participants were not comfortable in sharing “sacred” information on the activities of gangs in prison.
- Being a female in a maximum security prison, the researcher was exposed to the brutality of prison rape on a daily basis, and this could have influenced the researchers perception of the participants.

1.6.12 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Rape in Prison:

In South Africa rape is defined legally as the intentional, unlawful, sexual penetration of a woman without her consent, with sexual penetration defined as the penis touching the outer lips of the vagina. *The definition has obvious shortcomings, especially where male rape is concerned. It does not remotely cover the occurrence of male rape in prison, which is conducted along gender lines and the contested understandings of sex* (Harvey, 2002:44).

Sabo *et al* (2001:11) note that the act of rape in prison is clearly tied to the constitution of inter-male dominance hierarchies. Rapes between male prisoners are often described as if they occurred between men and women and in terms of master and slave.

Perpetrators:

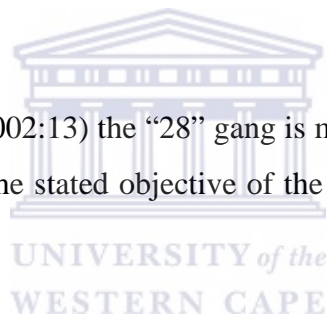
According to the US Human Rights Watch Report (2001: IV 15), perpetrators tend to be stronger, more physically aggressive and more assertive than their victims. They tend to be better established in the inmate hierarchy and often they are gang members with a network of inmate allies.

Victims:

The US Human Rights Watch Report (2001:IV 1), states that prisoners fitting any part of the following descriptions are more likely to be targeted for sexual abuse: young, small in size, physically weak, white, gay, first offender, being unassertive, non aggressive, shy or non street smart.

“28” Gang:

According to Gear & Ngubeni (2002:13) the “28” gang is most frequently associated with sex in South African male prisons. The stated objective of the gang is to provide for and protect “concubines” or “wives”.



“Wyfie”:

Gear & Ngubeni (2002: 11) state that a “wyfie” or wife is also referred to as a small boy, young man, madam, girlfriend or concubine.

Sex

The word ‘sex’ as used in ordinary language, is ambiguous, referring both to a category of person and to acts in which people engage, as in ‘having sex’. For the sake of clarity, we must distinguish sex, meaning biological or anatomical differences between women and men, from sexual activity. We need also to make a further important distinction, between sex and gender. While sex refers to physical differences of the body, gender concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females. The distinction between sex and gender is fundamental, since many differences between males and females are not biological in origin (Giddens, 1998:91).

Sexual abuse

Any sexual behaviour that involves violation, exploitation, manipulation, or coercion of another is considered sexually abusive and may result in varying impacts to the victim. Sexual abuse behaviours are not viewed as impulsive acts, rather the offender engages in some antecedent thinking about the incident. The behaviours involved in an offence are viewed as a sexualized expression of nonsexual needs at the expense of another individual (Ryan & Lane, 1991:107).

The traditional definition does not make provision for the fact that a man can be raped, however in the discussion that follows, it is clear that male rape is a reality and is as traumatizing for a male as for a female.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The focus of the study was exploring how gang members portray their experiences of victimization and perpetration of rape in prison. The gang culture in prison has brought with it a rise in prison rape as gangs employ rape as an initiation ritual. Contextual information on the gang culture in prison and the consequences of sexual abuse were discussed.

The research question asked was: How does the gang member construct the experience of victimization or perpetration of rape?

The study is significant due to the fact that there is a gap in scientific, objective information on the subject of Gangsterism in prison and their experiences of sexual abuse and rape.

The qualitative research approach was followed and the method for data gathering was in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended, face to face interviews. Participants for the study were males, released from prison, ages between 25 and 45 years of age and all members of the “28” prison gang.

6.13 LAYOUT OF THE REPORT

The report is structured into the following chapters:

- Chapter 1: A general orientation to the research and discussion of the research methodology.
- Chapter 2: A Theoretical perspective on gang activities.
- Chapter 3: Data analysis and discussion.
- Chapter 4: Summary of findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON GANG ACTIVITIES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

South African prisons have been faced with the problem of gangs and their violent manifestations for years. Prison gangs are not exclusive to South Africa, but they are distinctive in South Africa because of their form of operation and due to the fact that they have a nation-wide organisation. Their historic roots also make them distinctive and according to Haysom (1981:1), these gangs are not spontaneous cliques banding together, but they have a structure, ranking and disciplinary code that pre-dates the South African Correctional Services.

Thus far, little research targets South African prison gangs. The work of researchers such as Haysom (1981), Lotter and Schurink (1984) and Gear and Ngubeni (2002) is most prominent in this regard.

This study in particular aims to shed more light on the 28-prison gang, their activities and the perception of the perpetrators of prison rape in the 28-gang on their victimization and subsequent perpetration. Literature of previous studies will also be presented.

Creswell (1998:20) is of the view that literature in a research study achieves more than one purpose. Firstly it shares with readers previous studies closely linked with the study conducted and secondly it relates to a study linked to the larger ongoing discourse on the topic as a means to fill the gaps and extending the previous studies. It also provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study and a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings.

Creswell (1998:21) also states that in qualitative research, literature should be used inductively as the study is exploratory. For this reason Creswell (1998:84) argues that the decision on whether literature findings and theoretical perspectives should be presented before or after data collection, depends on the strategy of the enquiry. The option could be put on a continuum on “before-after” with the possibility of both. The inductive form of reasoning should however not be sacrificed in this decision.

Because rape in prison is often perpetrated by gangs, it seemed most relevant to present a theoretical perspective on gangs to provide a backdrop to the study of rape, within context of

gang related activities. Literature related to the findings of the study will be presented and compared in Chapter 3 of this document.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION OF GANGS

A myriad of definitions and descriptives exist for gangs and what gangs should be. None of these definitions and descriptives is conclusive and encompassing.

According to the Correctional Services of Canada Research Report (2004) there is little agreement among social scientists when it comes to the meaning of the term “gang”.

According to Regulus (1995:1047), gangs are collections of several to many individuals who meet and associate primarily around a shared social, not political or economic, collective identity and purpose.

In terms of the Oxford Reference Online (2006) gangs are also defined as an organized group of criminals. Informal a group of people regularly associate together. An organized territorial group of especially urban youth demanding loyalty from members, engaging in various criminal activities and often violently rivalling.

Gordon (2000:46) indicates that research reports consistently indicate that it is virtually impossible to accurately define a gang and gang member, regardless of the location and objectives of the research and the methods used by the researchers.

According to Abercrombie *et al* (1984:178), the term “gangs” is typically used to refer to small groups which are bound together by a common sense of loyalty and territory, and which are hierarchically structured around a gang leader.

There seems to be a distinct difference in the structure, style, code and operation of street/ community gangs and prison gangs.

Gordon (2000:48) defines street gangs as a group of young people, mainly young adults who band together to form a semi-structured organization the primary purpose of which is to engage in planned and profitable criminal behaviour or organized violence against rival street gangs.

According to Esbensen (2000:2), for a group to be classified as a youth gang, the following elements should exist:

- The group must have more than two members.

- Members must share some sense of identity. This is generally accomplished by naming the gang and/or using symbols or colours to claim gang affiliation.
- Hand signs, graffiti, specific clothing styles, bandannas and hats are among the common symbols of gang loyalty.
- Involvement in criminal activity is a central element of youth gangs.

Prison gangs are usually well structured. The members are loyal, disciplined, well organized and oriented to respect the gang hierarchy.

By definition, these gangs operate and function in prisons. Some powerful gangs control the prison environment; this control is not isolated to prisoners but also seem to include at least some prison officials as silent co-operators. These gangs are well structured, have very tight control over gang members and operations. According to the Economist (1998:30) prison gangs tend to operate secretly and are highly structured. They are characterised by respect and discipline is ruthlessly enforced. Within the prison setting, gangs are even more dynamic. Inmates are commonly joined together by factors such as city loyalty, race or even on which side of the prison they reside. Networks are also formed through what inmates have to offer other inmates. Wilkinson & Delgado, 2006:36 state that the common element between traditional and loosely formed gangs is illegal activity.

Despite the differences in the street- and prison gangs, there exist some similarities and informal relations. The Scorpion street gang, for example, is seen as a feeder gang for the 28-prison gang. Even though there is no formal relation between the two gangs, a member of the Scorpions is easily persuaded and accepted into the 28s prison gang on his arrival at prison. As much as the prison gang code does not apply to the street gangs and the street gang code does not apply to the prison gangs, they seem to recognise the existence and interrelatedness of each other as gangs. By virtue of their environment in which they exist, it defines their domain of operation. Prison gangs operate and dominate the prison environment and the street gangs operate in the community.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF GANGS

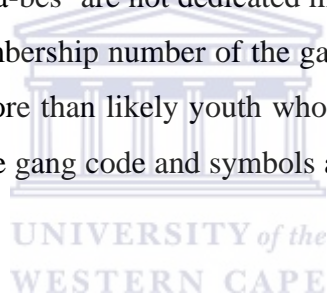
2.3.1 STREET GANGS: STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

Allender & Marcell (2003:10) assert that a hierarchy exists in the criminal gang world. Gangsters typically start out in a street crew, usually in a neighbourhood or crowd where they have some sort of connection.

Gangs have identifiable and distinguishable levels of membership. As much as members of a gang serve in common cause for the gang there is a clear line of command and distinction between the foot soldiers/ordinary members and the leadership of the gang. Crossing these lines of command and structure could be viewed as opportunistic and could result in the death of the challenger. As much as death is always a possibility, gang members are continuously looking for ways to be promoted in the gang hierarchy.

It is important to distinguish between the different levels of membership in order to clarify the understanding of the gang structure. The generic gang structure consists of a leadership level, hard core members, fringe members and 'wanna-be groups'.

National Central Police University (2005) and Standing (2005) assert that the leader is responsible for leadership; the hard core members are responsible for enforcement of gang rules and monitoring of activities. These members are seen to be dedicated members of the gang. Fringe members and 'wanna-bes' are not dedicated members of the gang but play a role of hangers on and boost the membership number of the gang. "Wanna-be" members are not members in the true sense but more than likely youth who display the gang as an interesting place to be. They may emulate the gang code and symbols and express the desire to be part of the gang.



The instructions are issued by the leadership and the foot soldiers execute these instructions, whatever it may be. The leadership selects which member(s) have to execute their instructions. *The leaders of the gang determine and decide on the level of criminal activity the gang will be involved in, whether it is robbery, housebreaking, hijacking or drugs. The leadership give strategic guidance to members by deciding which battles, how and when they will be fought* (Standing, 2005:10).

Hard core members are older and established gang members. They are normally responsible for the day-to-day activities of the gang and could be ruthless in enforcing the gang code and culture. They also serve as mentors to newer and younger members of the gang (Standing, 2005:10).

Fringe members and 'wanna-bes' are the foot soldiers. They have not fully committed to the gang and a life of crime but are recognised by the gang as potential members and beneficial to have around. *They are normally recognised, applauded and rewarded for the execution of the instructions from the leadership* (Standing, 2005:10). Gordon (2000:48) describe 'wanna-be

groups' as clusters of young people who band together in a loosely structured group to engage in spontaneous social activity and exciting, impulsive, criminal activity including collective violence against other groups of youth.

Gangs, regardless of their area or domain of operation, have different reasons and activities to justify and ensure their continued existence. These gangs operate on a fairly free basis, determine their territory and most times fiercely protect this territory from invasion by rivals or conflicting enterprises.

Herrendorfer (2004:2) asserts that gangs never have a political agenda to protect. In almost all the situations, gang activities are directly related to, and associated with crime or illegal activities. These activities include selling drugs, extortion, murder, prostitution, hijacking, corruption and money laundering. In the South African context, this is possibly not accurate as many gang leaders pre- 1994 didn't have political power and therefore they had political agendas.

Standing, 2005:3 declares as follows: *As much as it is believed that gangs mainly involve themselves with illegal activities, many gang leaders are involved with formal businesses. This is of great concern to the business community and politicians.* These legal business activities serve as fronts for the illegal business activities. They would more than likely operate in the unregulated business sector. In having a legal business, gang leaders have been known to amass huge fortunes.

Gang leaders of "super-gangs" often act as benefactors of poor communities by dishing out hands full of cash, paying rent and or school fees. They have also resorted to paying university fees for law students. These supposed acts of generosity always have a repayment element of some sort. In the instances where rents were paid, it was expected that the home owner becomes a point of sale or store room for gang stocks, weapons and commodities. Standing, 2005:6 reports as follows: *For the law students the repayment was more futuristic; when a student qualifies and holds positions of authority in courts as prosecutors and magistrates, they are made aware of their indebtedness to the gangs and their leaders.*

Most of the gangs that researchers write about- juvenile, delinquent, youth- are depicted as hanging around, usually in the open. Klein (1995:22) mentioned that, in the US context, it may be at a street corner, a taco stand, or on the side of a park watching the action; they're somehow in the open or in the open behind a building. They're smoking, drinking, "roughhousing", and playing a pickup ball game, messing with a few girls or sauntering up a street in a possessive, get-outta-our's-way fashion.

2.3.2 PRISON GANGS: STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

Buentello, Fong and Vogel (1990) in Wood and Adler (2001:172) give a five stage model of male prison gang development. In *stage one* the new prisoner must adapt to the prison environment. To overcome feelings of isolation and to cope with the everyday threat of violence, the prisoner begins to associate with like-minded prisoners and moves *stage two* – the formation of loose associations with other prisoners. Some of the cliques in stage two may be disbanded, but others will move to *stage three* and become self-protection groups able to withstand hostility from other prisoners. In time, the individual influence of some members is acknowledged and they emerge as leaders. The group may now move to *stage four*: the predatory group. Rules of conduct are devised and wavering members expelled. The clique is able to instil fear into the other prisoners and begins to accumulate power within the prison. As the group maximises its power and illicit trades, it becomes a powerful entity within the prison and moves to the final, *fifth stage*- a prison gang.

Knowles (1999:272) states that prison gangs in the U.S. have risen to power within the prison walls in the recent decade. Dumond, 2001:6 states as follows: *Incarcerated settings are societies which value aggression, power and loyalty- many of the attributes often associated with 'masculinity' in society. Prison is a place where 'kindness' is 'weakness'...*

Wilkinson & Delgado (2006:37) state that within the prison setting, gangs are more dynamic than on the street. Inmates are commonly joined together by factors such as loyalty, race or even on which side of the prison they reside. Networks are also formed through what inmates have to offer each other. Wilkinson & Delgado (2006:37) further mention that each activity the prison gang participates in, brings it closer to its ultimate goal of economic control. As is the case with their street counterparts, prison gangs strive to control the prison economy. As the gangs get more organized and the membership increases, they tend to participate in more illegal activity and control a larger portion of the prison population.

According to Camp & Camp in Wood and Adler (2001:170), the activities of prison gangs include intimidation, drugs, assault, and abuse of weaker prisoners, extortion, protection, contraband weapons, strong-armed robbery, rackets, robbery, prostitution, rape, murder, bribery, arson, slavery and explosives.

Due to their access to, and availability of illegal commodities and the control that they exercise over these commodities, prison gangs are very influential and a formidable force to be reckoned with.

Prison gangs, in terms of their operations, activities and codes, if violated or challenged, could have deadly consequences for the transgressor.

According to Allender & Marcell (2003:10) the motivation driving the prison gang member is complex. While many sources have cited the need for protection from predatory inmates, other factors include the human need to seek acceptance, increase status and financial profit from gang activities.

According to Jacobs (1974:398), there can be no doubt that the existence of gangs in the prison is inextricably tied to their continued viability on the street. Were the gangs to dissolve on the streets, they would immediately disappear from the prison.

2.4 SUMMARY OF THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND VIEWS ON THE FORMATION AND FUNCTIONING OF GANGS

There seems to be an element of truth in all theories; therefore the researcher has chosen to focus on certain theories as a means of putting into context the involvement and social structure of gangs and gang membership. Theories and views most commonly cited in publications are summarized as follows:

2.4.1 STRAIN THEORY

According to the Correctional Services of Canada Research Report (2004:17), the strain theory considers delinquency and gang membership as consequences of the discrepancy between having high economic aspirations and a lack of means by which to achieve them. The youth therefore choose to get involved in illegal activities to achieve their aspirations. A number of variations of the strain theory exists which include Merton's Anomie Theory of 1938 and Cloward and Ohlin's Differential Opportunity Theory of 1960.

The anomie theory of Robert Merton acknowledges the strain that lower-class youth felt in attempting to achieve middle-class aspirations. Merton outlined five ways in which they could adopt to the strain. *They could conform to the general goals and attempt to reach them by in a legitimate way. They could use innovation and reach the goal using means other than those generally used by society. They could use ritualism, rejecting the goal and focusing instead*

on the means of achieving it. They could **retreat**, completely rejecting both the goals and means of society, or they could **rebel**, substituting their own goals and means for the universal ones (Correctional Services of Canada Research Report, 2004:17).

The strain theory has thoroughly evolved and the most notable addition, Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory (GST) came in 1992. The GST suggests that adolescents are pressured into delinquency by the negative affective states or emotions resulting from negative relationships and experiences, rather than directly from the sources of strain. *This means that youth will not necessarily engage in delinquency as a result of strain, but delinquency as a coping response is more likely when the youth experience negative affect (anger or frustration) as a result of strain* (Wallace et al, 2005:105)

Broidy and Agnew (1997:276) emphasises that the general strain theory (GST) is much broader than the classic strain theory in that it recognises that there are a number of sources of strain; not just the failure to achieve positively valued goals. The GST also identifies that there are a wide range of adaptations to strain, for instance cognitive, behavioural and emotional.

2.4.2 SUBCULTURE THEORY

Bernburg & Thorlindsson (2005:459) assert that the subculture of violence approach implies that group adherence to values that encourage violence may influence violent behaviour through two analytically separate component processes. First, subculture values may produce violent behaviour through socialization; social actors internalize the values that support violence and act accordingly. Second, subcultures of violence may operate through diffuse social control; widespread commitment of group members to values that support aggression may place pressure on all members to be aggressive, regardless of personal commitment to the values.

The subculture theory of delinquency and gang development grew out of the strain theory and is based on the assumption that all youth share similar goals and economic ambitions. It differs in postulating that instead of striving to achieve the same goals as middle-class youth, lower-class youth create their own, new subculture in which to achieve status. *This subculture consists of norms and criteria which are suitable to a criminal lifestyle: toughness, excitement, fate, autonomy, hostility, achieving recognition through crime and hedonism* (Correctional Services of Canada Research Report, 2004:18).

According to Dissel (1997), gangs are an example of a subculture in which violence is particularly prominent and this is connected to the composition of its members and their social setting. With reference to township gangs, both the youth and maleness of their members are said to encourage the use of violence as a result of the strong association between masculinity and violence.

2.4.3 DIFFERENTIAL ASSOCIATION THEORY

The Correctional Services of Canada (2004:20) states that the differential association theory proposed by Sutherland and Cressey in 1978, posits that criminal behaviour is learned in the interaction with others and that criminal activity is learned within intimate social groups. Techniques, motives, drives, rationalizations and attitudes behind the criminal activities are taught.

Shoemaker (150:150) is of the opinion that the best known interpersonal theory of delinquency is the theory of differential association. The major components of the theory include the following: firstly, all behaviour is learned, hence, delinquent acts are learned behaviour; secondly the learning of delinquent behaviour primarily occurs in small, informal group settings; and thirdly the learning of delinquent behaviour develops from collective experiences as well as from specific situational, current events.

2.4.4 SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) posits that observing the behaviour of significant or influential others generates ideas of how new behaviours are performed. These ideas and observations are organized as guides for further actions. Modelled behaviour is more likely to be adopted if the behaviour is perceived as resulting in desirable outcomes. *Observing violence in one's family of origin, then, creates ideas and norms about how, when and towards whom aggression is appropriated* (Corvo, 2006:118).

Social Learning Theory expands on the ideas of Sutherland and Cressey (1978) in order to explain how individuals learn criminal attitudes and behaviours. Ronald Akers (1985) proposed that overall, human behaviour is driven by seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. Humans learn behaviours by repeating those that are reinforcing and discontinuing those that are punishing. *Criminality occurs when a criminal act brings about material reinforcement such as money or social reinforcement such as gang acceptance and does not bring about material and social punishments which outweigh these reinforcements, and then the*

individual will chose to repeat the criminal act (Correctional Services of Canada Research Report, 2004:20).

2.4.5 SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORY

According to the Correctional Services of Canada Research Report (2004:16), the Social Disorganization Theory considers gang involvement as an alternative avenue for youth who otherwise lack social connectedness with personal and community institutions. This lack of connectedness can originate from rapid population movements, rapid political, economic, or social changes, racism, unstable political regimes, war or revolution, rapid industrialization or urbanization, racial shifts in the labour market, community fragmentation, social or family disorganization, or the failure of socialization agents, such as schools to meet the needs of a changing population. Social disorganization theory stressed that gang formation was not abnormal, but a normal response by normal individuals to abnormal social situations.

According to Shaw & McKay (1942) as cited in Thabit (2005), the economic instability and social pathology which characterize delinquency rates lead to conflicting moral and value systems for young children. These conflicting standards are reflected in the influence that individuals and informal groups exert in the areas, in addition to, or opposed to, the traditional institutionalized social control forces emanating from churches, schools and families. In delinquency areas, a young child is as likely to see economic success and personal reputation earned by criminal behaviour as by school success and hard work in legal occupations. *The extent to which children in a delinquency area may choose to identify with a conventional or a criminal life-style depends on the particular strength of the legitimate social control forces in their lives, particularly those within their family settings* (Shoemaker, 1990:88).

2.4.6 LABELING THEORY

According to labeling theory, formal criminal intervention should affect the individual's immediate social networks. *In many cases, the stigma of the criminal status may increase the probability that the individual becomes involved in deviant social groups* (Bernburg et al., 2006:67).

Labeling theory argues that no behaviour in and of itself is necessarily deviant; it is the labeling of a behaviour as deviant that makes it so. As a result, individuals are not criminals.

As a result, individuals are not criminals until society has labelled them as such. *In addition, labeling theory asserts that labeling an individual a 'gang member' results in these labels becoming the individual's master status or primary identity* (Correctional Services of Canada Research Report, 2004:18).

2.4.7 THE CONCEPT OF POWER

Although not a formulated theory, the concept of power in the formation and activities of gangs, are widely recognized by researchers.

Vogelman & Lewis (1993: 41) are of the opinion that controlling and domineering behaviour is learnt from family modes of relating, the media, sexist sexual institutions and activities and society's glorification of 'strong armed' masculinity and docile femininity. Men have been taught to define their power in terms of their capacity to affect their will, without the consent of those involved, especially women.

According to O'Donnell (2004:244) prison rape is an acting out of power roles within an all-male, authoritarian environment where strength and dominance are emphasized.

Rideau & Wikberg (1992) as cited in Knowles (1999:273), contend that the pursuit of power via sexual violence and the enslavement of weaker prisoners is an integral feature of imprisonment throughout the United States in both jails and prisons, and even in the juvenile justice system. Rape in prison is rarely a sexual act, but one of violence, politics, and acting out power roles.

2.5 GANGS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

2.5.1 COMMUNITY/STREET GANGS

Pinnock (1997:5) stated that earlier work on gangs in South Africa has suggested that the effect of poverty and apartheid's massive social engineering created social stress to which gangs were a teenage response.

Weak family attachments and single parent families in poverty stricken communities are commonly believed to be the breeding ground for boys joining a gang. Community and societal challenges within their living environment and the perceived wealth and power of older gang leaders and shibeen owners, serve as an inspiration for youth to form and be part of gangs. Youth also organize themselves to prevent themselves from being victimized by older gang members or rival gangs. *This gang formation also provides some protection for*

moving from one area to another in the township (Van Wyk & Theron, 2005:54). In a majority of the afore-mentioned families and their socio-economic situation, the youth is deprived of affection, discipline and leadership, thus it is easy for them to be influenced by gang members.

This clearly has references to the *social disorganizing theory* which refers to the failure of social institutions or social organizations such as schools, business, policing and group networking in certain communities.

Prince (2005) as cited in Davids (2005:19) stated that the reasons for the formation of gangs on the Cape Flats were because of high poverty levels, social instability and unemployment. One can argue that poverty and unemployment and inadequate living conditions in itself are not the cause of crime but it facilitates crime as a result of the lack of sufficient recourses to deal with crime. This derives from the concept of the *strain theory* which proposes that delinquency develops because youths are unable to achieve valued goals through legitimate means.

Gangs provide emotional support, protection and a sense of belonging which their dysfunctional families fail to provide. Dissel (1997) asserts that youth in poverty stricken communities who escape violence or the effects of alcohol abuse in their homes, spend much of their time on the streets where they are easily drawn into gangs, almost through a process of natural attrition. Their fathers are, in most cases, gang members so they naturally take on the inherited roles of their fathers. Dissel further states that gangs provide members with a sense of belonging, as well as opportunity for economic improvement and for gaining a sense of power, acceptance and purpose. This view is shared by Gordon (2000:51), stating that “many street gang members wanted to escape from, and find rewarding alternatives to, exceedingly unpleasant family lives.”

In contrast to what Herrendorfer (2004:2) argues, another reason for adolescent boys joining gangs is the ordeals and trials they face to prove their manhood, courage and right of existence within their communities. These boys believe it is their duty and responsibility to defend and protect their immediate environment such as their street/ block of flats or their township from invasion by rival or other gangs.

Gangs and gang membership create a sense of powerfulness and invincibility - with a gang in hand, a gang member can conquer the world (Davids, 2005:20).

The association with a gang gives its members a sense of power and recognition. Gang members are feared and respected by the prisoner community at large as well as places of

safety. The position in the hierarchy of the gang also gives the member a certain level of status which in return gives him self-worth as a person.

Due to societal factors such as early school drop out, introduction to early childhood abuse and drug use, these boys experience feelings of rejection and isolation from their families. The gangs provide them with opportunities for development and socialization with peers. Their identities are reinforced and they are accepted into a brotherhood and surrogate family where they will be protected and cared for, where the notion of 'one for all' and 'all for one' prevails. This view is supported by Regan (1996:26) who states that gangs serve a valuable role in the development and socialization of an individual as they seek the approval of their peers and their identities. Regan further notes that gang membership is also influenced by the individual's relationship with the family, community, school, and the individual's personal needs and characteristics.

This view is shared by followers of the *subculture theory* which rationalizes that lower class youth find it hard to fulfil goals and objectives in our society and instead replace them with their own which usually involve crime and deviant behaviour.

Wilkinson & Delgado (2006:37) state that the main elements in most gang definitions include: gang name, bylaws, common association and criminal activities.

2.5.2 PRISON GANGS

Prison gangs were primarily formed as a means of self protection from more dominant prisoners and the authorities. *This primary formation for protection has evolved to display power and resourcefulness in dealing with forbidden articles and commodities* (Wood & Adler, 2001:169).

In an abnormal environment, like the prison setting, prisoners form groups and organize themselves in order to maximise self-protection and power. Moral and humanistic concerns have little relevance in prison and status and power are based on domination, control and gratification.

It is widely accepted that the South African Prison System is grossly overcrowded. The system is designed for approximately 100 000 prisoners and at the moment the system carries close to 160 000 inmates of which almost 46 327 are awaiting trial (JIOP, 2006:12) A large proportion of the prison population is of the male gender grouping, and more than likely their offences are violence and aggression related (JIOP, 2006:44). Regardless of the offence, once a prisoner enters the walls of prison, he has entered a unique world in every sense. This is a world dominated by gangs, violence, drugs, smuggling, corruption and rape.

It is in this mind of overcrowding that the prison gangs thrive. The architectural structure of the majority of prisons and the staff shortages also create opportunities for gangs to operate without much resistance.

The South African prison gang phenomenon is distinctive from the international trends. According to Parker Lewis (2006:27), the difference between the prison gangs in South Africa and prison gangs in other parts of the world is that, in South Africa, the prison gangs have created their own reality, a system that exists in prison and has an idiosyncratic history, a coded language, roles, rules, rituals mythologies and even invisible clothes which only the initiated can identify. It is characterized by an extensive national gang network which encompasses all prisons in South Africa. A gang member has membership of these gangs for life and is not dictated or determined by geographical area or limited to such. Members maintain their seniority regardless of where they are or whether they have been released. On re-entry to the prison system he continues in his position.

South African gangs have a strong military hierarchal structure which demands absolute loyalty and obedience to the structure of command. Failing or challenging this command is severely punished and can also result in death.

A distinctive characteristic of the SA prison gang's fraternity is the predominant prevalence of 'number gangs', of which the 26, 27 and 28 are the dominant ones. The lesser known gangs are the Big Fives, Desperadoes, 25's, 29's, Forty Thieves, Fast Eleven, Spy 13, Black Power, Air force, etc.

The Number Gangs have their origins in an anecdotal history that dates back to the nineteenth Century when gangs were formed to counteract the violence and abuse that was meted out by the then prison officials on the black migrant mine workers who entered prison. The origins of the Number Gangs go back to the 1880s, the days of President Paul Kruger and the old Transvaal Republic and the colonisation of Zululand and Natal. (Haysom 1981, Gear & Ngubeni 2002, Steinberg 2004, Parker Lewis 2006).

Steinberg (2004:6) gave a clear account of the origin and history of the Number Gangs. The Number Gangs originated from the outlaws that badgered the Johannesburg area from the late nineteenth century. The most prominent was the Ninevite gang that consisted of young black men who left their homeland in the rural areas. The leader of the Ninevites was 'Nongoloza' Mathebula who shaped his members into a paramilitary hierarchy. Nongoloza copied the rank structure and imaginary uniforms from the Natal Colony's judiciary and the Transvaal Republic's Military. The Ninevites were active for more or less two decades and recruited

vast numbers of vagrants and homeless men of early Johannesburg. The Ninevites gained access to the compounds where the Johannesburg gold miners lived and they had also taken control of a number of prisons in the Transvaal. The gang was based in a number of caves across the south-western outskirts of Johannesburg from where they robbed and plundered mainly black labourers on their way home on payday.

By the time the Ninevites were defeated in mid-1910s, most of the leaders spent already some time in prison where they started recruiting men for the gang. Gangs originated from the Ninevites had its roots in the majority of prisons in the country by the 1930's. Today, those gangs are still operating as the 26s, 27s and 28s in South African prisons. The ranks and imaginary uniforms still exist. *Notwithstanding the fact that the gangs have their origins in the 19th century, they draw their life from the present prison culture. No self-generating social organism can be explained away entirely by its origins* (Haysom, 1981:6).

2.5.2.1 The nature and characteristics of the 28-Gang

The 28-gang has by far the biggest membership and is also the oldest of the prison gangs. This gang is known for coercing young men and first time offenders as sex slaves or 'wyfies' by misleading them with supposed generosity and protection. *The 28s are men of the night, their symbol is sunset* (Haysom, 1981:11).

The 28 gang consist of three divisions, namely Silver Line or White Line, the Gold Line or Red Line and the Third Division, which are the fighting soldiers of the Gold Line. *The fighters are not scared to take blood. These gang members are also regarded as the sex predators/perpetrators in prison* (Parker Lewis, 2006:78).

The members of the Silver or White Line are being used for cleaning and daily chores in the cells. They are also the ones who are being used as sexual partners or 'wyfies'/ 'privates'.

According to Parker Lewis (2006:78), the Gold Line also known as the blood line or the Red Line are males who enter the gang by taking blood through the stabbing of a warder. The Silver Line also known as the feminine line or the private line is the designated 'females' in the gang who provide sexual favours to the gold line.

Due to the gender segregative nature of prisons, it brings with it the implication that sex whether voluntary or coerced will be performed as a same sex activity. These sexual favours are not always consensual. There are numerous ways in which the predators or *indotas* (gang leaders) obtain sexual favours from victims. An '*indota*' would initially start off a casual and informal conversation with a newcomer to prison offering advise, friendship and protection. They could also offer commodities and luxuries such as cigarettes, dagga, soap, and other usables as a premise to care and fend for the unsuspecting newcomer. The recipient of these

commodities and gestures of friendship is not aware that these actions are part of a ploy to create a dependency and indebtedness that can only be settled by way of sexual favours.

The predator initially utilizes a strategy of soft approach and friendship but as soon as the recipient refuses to accede to the sexual demands in lieu of the debt, the relationship is no longer friendly but turns aggressive and abusive in order to recoup that debt. O'Donnell (2004:244) is of the opinion that rape is the start of a lengthy episode of abuse and control. The victim remains indebted to the perpetrator long after he has received the measure of protection. *Contrasting with blatant bullying, assaults and threats, of these more sophisticating trickery and manipulation are also prized instruments for subordinating new prisoners* (Gear & Ngubeni, 2002:17).

The perpetrator is seen as a heterosexual male, but when in prison, has the 'gang imposed' right to engage in male-on-male sexual activities. This right is not viewed as rape by the perpetrator, but as a display of his power and seniority within the gang. *For them the perpetration of sexual acts is not for gratification or sexual pleasure but rather primarily to dominate and conquer a weaker person* (Sabo et al., 2001:64).

The characteristics of prison rapists are not clear and predictable, but there are patterns that can be distinguished. *First, although some older inmates commit rape, the perpetrators also tend to be young, if not always as young as their victims- generally well under thirty five years old. They are frequently larger or stronger than their victims and are generally more assertive, physically aggressive and more at home in the prison environment. They are street smart, often gang members. They have typically been convicted of more violent crimes than their victims* (Human Rights Watch: 2001).

Potential victims and victims of prison rape could be identified as young first time offenders with appealing physical and facial features, feminine qualities, white, gay, unassertive, ingressive and not-street wise (Human Rights Watch: 2001).

The boundaries between consensual and forced sex in prison are not always distinguishable. Due to the lack of clarity and distinction many young and unfamiliar offenders have found themselves in a situation of perpetual debt repayment with the result that the victims are beings forced into a life of sexual abuse and violence in prison.

2.5.2.2 The nature and characteristics of the 27-Gang

The smallest of the major gangs, is the 27-gang. The 27s are seen as the overseers and enforcers of the gang codes applicable to the 26s and 28s. Their actions are characterised by severe violence and aggression and is signified by blood. As Parker Lewis (2003:170) points out, the 27s are a silent and selective breed. They enforce the codes of the Number gangs and fight on behalf of the 26-gang who should not be involved in blood.

2.5.2.3 The nature and characteristics of the 26-Gang

The 26-gang is known for its association in cunning means to obtain cash and other sellable goods by means of fraud, theft and robbery. The 26s do not get involved in violence as a rule. *The 26s specialize in procuring money and goods ...* (Gear & Ngubeni, 2002:5). According to Parker Lewis (2003:170), the 26's are cunning prison thieves whose symbol is the dollar sign and who operate in daylight hours. *The 26s steal and rob by patience and cunning* (Haysom,1981:7). Parker Lewis (2006:95) found that the 26s are responsible for acquiring supplies of money, drugs, cigarettes and luxuries and of beating the system. They must ensure prosperity of the prison and are obliged to share with the 28s when they are low on resources.

2.6 SUMMARY

Within this chapter the researcher aims to give a clear understanding of street- and prison gangs. The theories researchers used to explain the formation and functioning of gangs and in the gangs in South African prisons are also being discussed in more detail.

A myriad of definitions and descriptives exist for gangs and what gangs should be, but none of these definitions is conclusive and encompassing.

Some define gangs as an organized group of criminals; an informal group of people regularly associate together. Gangs are described by others as small groups which are bound together by a common sense of loyalty and territory, and which are hierarchically structured around a gang leader.

Several theories exist which give us a better understanding on the formation and functioning of gangs. In short these are:

Strain theory which considers delinquency and gang membership as consequences of the discrepancy between having high economic aspirations and a lack of means by which to achieve them.

Subculture Theory of delinquency and gang development is based on the assumption that all youth share similar goals and economic ambitions. Instead of striving to achieve the same goals as the middle-class youth, lower class youth create their own, new subculture in which to achieve status. This subculture consists of norms and criteria which are suitable to a criminal lifestyle.

Differential Association Theory posits that criminal behaviour is learned in the interaction with others and that criminal activity is learned within intimate social groups.

Social Learning Theory hypothesize that observing the behaviour of significant or influential others generates ideas of how new behaviours are performed. Observing violence in ones family of origin creates ideas and norms about how, when and towards whom aggression is appropriated.

Social Disorganization Theory considers gang involvement as an alternative avenue for youth who otherwise lack social connectedness with personal and community institutions.

Labeling Theory posits that the stigma of the criminal status may increase the probability that the individual becomes involved in deviant social groups.

Street gangs normally start out in a street crew, usually in the neighbourhood where they have some sort of connection. They have identifiable levels of membership and there is a clear line of command and distinction between the ordinary members and the leadership. Street gangs have different reasons and activities to justify and ensure their continued existence. In most cases, gang activities are directly related to crime or illegal activities. These activities include selling drugs, extortion, murder, prostitution, hijacking, corruption and money laundering.

There seems to be a distinct difference in the structure, style, code and operation of street gangs and prison gangs. Researchers found that in the U.S, within the prison setting, gangs are more dynamic than on the street. Inmates are commonly joined together by factors such as loyalty, race or even on which side of the prison they reside. The activities of prison gangs include intimidation, drugs, assault, abuse of weaker prisoners, extortion, protection, contraband weapons, strong-armed robbery, rackets, robbery, prostitution, rape, murder, bribery, arson and slavery.

The South African prison gangs are distinctive from the international trends. The significance of the history of the prison gangs is that it helps us understand and shows that the prison gangs is not a superficial phenomena, but the gangs are deeply rooted in the prison system. The prison gangs in South Africa have created their own reality, a system that exists in prison

and has an idiosyncratic history, a coded language, roles, rules, rituals, mythologies and even invisible clothes which only the initiated can identify. A distinctive characteristic of the SA prison gangs fraternity is the predominant prevalence of the ‘number gangs’ of which the 26, 27 and 28 are the dominant ones. The 28-gang has by far the biggest membership and is also the oldest of the prison gangs. The gang is known for coercing young men and first time offenders as sex slaves or ‘wyfies’ by misleading them with supposed generosity and protection.

The smallest of the major gangs is the 27-gang. They are the overseers and enforcers of the gang codes and their actions are characterised by aggression and violence and is signified by blood.

The 26-gang is known for its association in cunning means to obtain cash and other sellable goods by means of fraud, theft and robbery. They are responsible for acquiring supplies of money, drugs, cigarettes and luxuries and of beating the system.



CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of this study was to explore how gang members construct their experiences of victimization and/or perpetration of rape.

For the purpose of this study a semi-structured interview guide was compiled. Open-ended questions were verbally posed to facilitate free flowing response. In order to explore the social context that might have influenced their constructions of experiences, the following question themes guided the interviews:

- Participant's experiences of family life
- Participant's experiences of their involvement in crime
- Participant's gang involvement in Places of Safety and/or Correctional Centres.
- Participant's experiences of forced sex in prison
- Consequences of rape in prison after release.

Data was analyzed thematically, per question theme, as explained in Chapter 1.7. This chapter deals with the analysis and discussion of the research findings as derived from semi-structured interviews and the findings from relevant publications and literature

3.2. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The discussion that follows will be based on the central themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data, starting with the first memories and experiences that emerged spontaneously.

3.2.1 DISCUSSION OF THE EXPERIENCES OF CHILDHOOD FAMILY LIFE

Table 1 summarizes the themes and sub-themes related to the first discussion point and the table structures the discussion that follows.

TABLE 1

**SUMMARY OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES FROM THE FIRST QUESTION:
Participant's experiences of childhood family life.**

First theme: 3.2.1.1 Emotional and material deprivation
Sub-themes: a) Aggression/Violence in the home b) Substance use c) Poverty and inadequate housing d) Escape from family life
Second Theme: 3.2.1.2 Feelings of rejection by a father figure
Third Theme: 3.2.1.3 Submissive and emotional absent mother

3.2.1.1. Emotional and material deprivation

According to Krieger (2001) deprivation can be conceptualized and measured, at both the individual and area level, in relation to: material deprivation, referring to 'dietary, clothing, housing, home facilities, environment, location and work (paid and unpaid), and social deprivation, referring to rights in relation to 'employment, family activities, integration into the community, formal participation in social institutions, recreation and education'.

However people and especially children can also be regarded as being emotionally deprived if they are deprived of adequate and appropriate interpersonal and/or environmental experiences in the early developmental years. (Dorland's medical dictionary 2007).

Craig (1996:58) quoted Erik Erikson who believed that the development of the individual occurs in eight stages. He also believed that personality arises from the manner in which social conflict is resolved during key interaction points in development. As an example of basic needs in early childhood I highlight the needs of children in the first three stages. Craig (1996:60) describes the stages as follows:

Stage one: trust versus mistrust. From early caregiving, infants learn about the basic trustworthiness of the environment. If their needs are met, they receive attention and affection

and are handled in a reasonably consistent manner; they form a global impression of a trustworthy and secure world. If on the other hand, their world is inconsistent, painful, stressful and threatening, they learn to expect more of the same and believe that life is unpredictable and untrustworthy.

Stage two: autonomy versus shame and doubt. Toddlers discover their own bodies and how to control them. They explore feeding and dressing, toileting and many new ways of moving about. When they succeed in doing things for themselves, they gain a sense of self-confidence and self-control. But if they fail continually and are pushed or labelled messy, sloppy, inadequate or bad, they learn to feel shame and self-doubt.

Stage three: initiative versus guilt. Children at age 4 or 5 explore beyond themselves. They discover how the world works and how they can affect it. For them, the world consists of both real and imaginary people and things. If their explorations and activities are generally effective, they learn to deal with things and people in a constructive way and gain a strong sense of initiative. However, if they are criticized severely or punished, they learn to feel guilty for many of their own actions.

It can thus be concluded that it is important for the parents or caregivers to act as positive role models, to show consistency and to have a trusting relationship with the child. Children should be given the opportunity to explore, but the parent should still be close; not to judge, criticize and label when the child makes a mistake, but to correct him/her in a responsible manner. If these needs are not met children might be emotionally deprived.

When participants in my study were asked about their early experiences of family relationships, there was an immediate strong response against the father figure. In most cases the father figure was experienced as a violent, abusive person who used either alcohol or other substances. Responses regarding their relationships with their mother did not, however, come spontaneously and I had to probe for their experiences. The mother was either not mentioned, or seen as a submissive figure in the background. Poverty, inadequate housing, substances and violence played a significant role in the lives of the participants and left them with minimal material and emotional security.

a) Aggression/Violence

Participants described the relationship between family members as violent and, in some cases, abusive. This includes physical, verbal and mental abuse. Parents fought with each other and there were also indications that the fathers punished the children in the most severe ways.

The following quotes illustrate:

- “He would beat up the children for no reason at all and call my mother nasty names.”
- “My father brought us up like ‘army children’. He disciplined us by letting us do exercises, standing on the table on one leg and sometimes we had to sleep while standing up. Because I was the oldest of the children, I got the most punishment, especially when my father was drunk.”
- “He used to beat us up and we never got any love from him”
- “We were scared of him because he also burnt us with cigarettes and once he put my youngest brother’s hand on the hot plate because he didn’t sweep the yard.”
- “He always beat my mother and the children, even me. We always ran away from him and then we went hiding in the bushes near our house.”

b) Substance use

Participants grew up in households where one or both parents used alcohol, mandrax or dagga. The participants predominantly experienced violence and abuse with the use of substances by parents. Conflict and abuse in the homes generally occurred during the use of alcohol and other substances. The substances abuse became an aid in expressing feelings of anger and dissatisfaction.

The following are examples from participant’s narratives

- “They both used to drink a lot and then, when my stepfather was really drunk, he got aggressive and used to beat up my mother and our children.”
- “My father used alcohol and mandrax and then he would get rough with my mother and the children.”
- “My father used drugs and he beat us and shouted at us all the time.”

c) Poverty and inadequate housing

From the examples given by participants, it was evident that a number of them were from a lower socio-economic background and were exposed to material deprivation. Participants experienced overcrowded housing and parents were either unemployed or worked as domestic workers or contract labour workers. Home to them was not a place where they could feel safe and protected as children.

The following serve as examples:

- “*We stayed In Somerset West in a squatter camp. We were poor and the house was small. My father worked at a clothing factory and my mother was not working.”*
- “*We all shared a room with my mother. My mother receives a disability grant because she is an epileptic and she cannot work. We were about fifteen people staying in the small two bedroomed house.”*
- “*We were very poor. Eleven children, mother and father lived in a prefab container of only one room in a squatter camp.”*
- “*Sometimes my mother sent me and my older sister to the streets to beg for money so we had something to eat.”*

d) Escaping from home environment

As a result of the poverty, substance abuse, violence, abuse and neglect, a number of participants mentioned that they ran away from home and lived on the streets. These children yearned to enjoy the freedom of living by their own rules and many a time set off on a life of drug and alcohol abuse, personal irresponsibility, the inability to form significant social attachments, impulsive behaviour and no sense of lifelong priorities. They start forming a bond with other children on the street who then replaced the actual family.

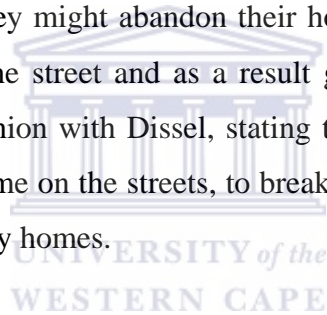
- “*When I was twelve years old, I ran away from home with some of my friends.”*
- “*At the age of eleven I ran away from home and ended up at the Epping market.”*
- “*I ran away from home not long after that and lived on the streets of Cape Town for a while.”*

- *“I ran away and dropped out of school when I was in standard one.”*

It is clear from the above extracts that the elements/sub-themes as identified by the researcher, are all interrelated. Due to ineffective parenting and poverty conditions, participants experienced emotional and material deprivation. Paschall *et al* (2003:16) state that parenting is an important determinant of delinquent behaviour among adolescents in general. As seen in the abstracts from participants they grew up in households where one or both parents use alcohol and drugs. Fleisher (1997) agrees that, most commonly the parents are alcoholics, and many use other drugs as well, such as marijuana, heroin and cocaine.

A number of participant’s fathers are being described as violent and aggressive. These are the role models and the adults whom they look up to for support and guidance. The excessive use of alcohol and other substances, combined with violence and abuse made the children feel unsafe and deprived. As a result, many of them left their homes to seek acceptance from peers on the streets.

Dissel (1997) emphasises that children leave the family home when the family becomes dysfunctional and discordant. They might abandon their homes permanently or beginning to spend more and more time on the street and as a result get drawn into criminal activities. Davids (2005:19) shares this opinion with Dissel, stating that youth in the community grow up spending a majority of their time on the streets, to break away from violence or the effects of alcohol abuse prevalent in many homes.



3.2.1.2. Feelings of rejection by the father figure

A number of participants portrayed the father figure in the household as an oppressing figure. Most of the participants perceived their relationship with their father as cold, violent and abusive. Participants had strong negative feelings towards the father figure. Due to the aforementioned, the participants’ perception of their role as a man became blurred and twisted. In a healthy family structure, the role of the father is one of provider, care taker and protector and not, as perceived by participants, as violent, cruel and abusive.

The following quotes illustrate:

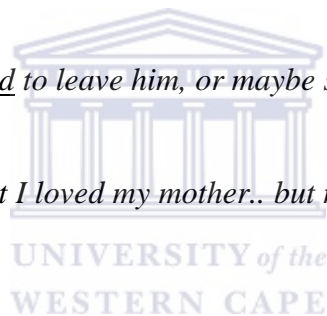
- *“I hated my stepfather...”*
- *“I hated the way my father treated our children. When I look back at my years as a child, I can see that my father took all our happiness away from us. He made me a loser. I hate my father...”*

- “I was scared of my father and I still don’t like him. I got angry when my father hit me for no reason at all.”
- “Sometimes my uncle stayed with us, and when he was with us it was all tense. I will never forget that I promised myself as a young boy that I will become a gangster just to take revenge on that uncle.”

3.2.1.3. Submissive and emotional absent mother

Participants predominantly perceived the mother figure as someone who exists in their lives, but mostly in the background. The mother is being portrayed as a non-assertive/submissive and weak character. There was no spontaneous response about the relationship with their mothers when asked about the family relationships. Only two participants showed compassion towards the mother figure. Participants seem to have experienced their mothers as submissively accepting being the wife of the abusive man.

- “Maybe she was too scared to leave him, or maybe she didn’t have anywhere to go”
- “I hated my stepfather, but I loved my mother.. but my mother couldn’t stand up to my stepfather.”
- “I didn’t know my mother and called my aunt ‘mommy’.”



It is clear from the above examples given by participants that they had no positive and healthy relationship with their father figures. The result of this is described by Regulus (1995:1046) by stating that families contribute to youth risk for gang involvement in that weak family attachments and inappropriate role modelling deprive youths of affective ties, identity anchoring, adult status recognition and social sensitivity.

Participants did not have lengthy discussions on their relationship with their mothers. A number of participants mentioned that they loved their mothers, another felt that the mother should’ve stood up against the father, portraying the mother as weak and submissive. This is confirmed by Fleisher (1997), mentioning that mothers of these children are passive bystanders who pretend not to know that he abuses the children - fearful, they say that they might be beaten themselves or have their supply of drugs cut off.

3.2.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS RELATING TO SECOND QUESTION: EXPERIENCES OF INVOLVEMENT IN CRIME

Findings relating to getting involved in crime can best be portrayed by an “interactive” flow chart which indicates that there is a central story line of progression from living on the street, affiliation with delinquent peers and abuse of substance to getting involved in crime and progressions to serious crimes.

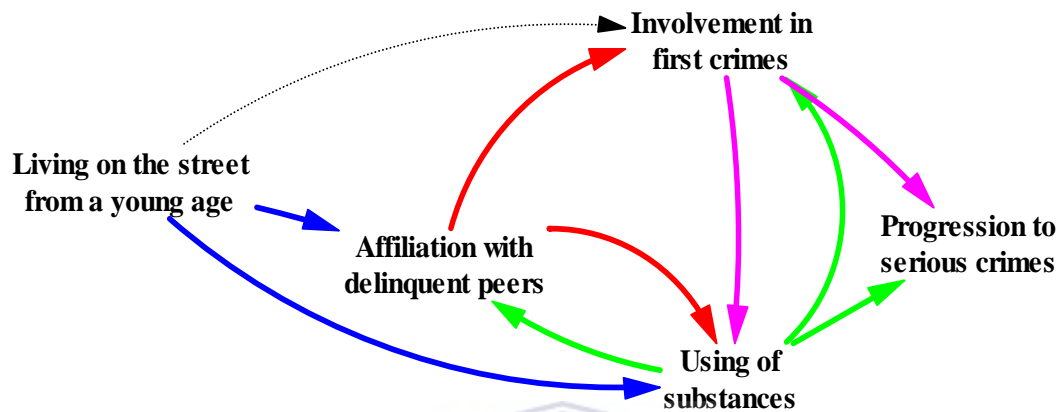


Figure 1: Interrelated themes that emerged from exploring experiences of involvement with crime.

The figure indicates that participants seem to have been exposed to crime from a very young age in their developmental phases of life. It seems as though most were exposed to crime through either relatives, adults in their immediate environment and/or caregivers.

Participants ran away from home and started a life on the streets. The blue arrows show that participants lived on the streets, with their friends and started using substances, at a young age with peers. Participants started using substances with friends on the streets and subsequently got involved in crime (red arrows). Using of substances, bonding and committing crimes with delinquent peers lead to the committing of more serious crimes (green arrows). Participants got involved in crime, starting to use substances with their peers, and progressively the crimes they committed became more serious. (purple arrows).

The figure indicates that participants seem to have been exposed to crime from a very young age in their developmental phases of life. It seems as though most were exposed to crime through either relatives, adults in their immediate environment and/or caregivers.

First experiences of crime and the progressive nature of crime are interrelated; there is not a clear dividing line from the first experience and progression to more serious crimes. Participants have revealed that they became involved in criminal activities at an early age,

initially as a minor offence. A number of participants also joined street gangs as a means of gaining power and acceptance which they didn't get at home. The crimes became progressively serious to the point where they were incarcerated in a formal prison. A number of participants perpetuated their involvement in crime after having been detained in Juvenile Places of Safety. The majority of participants committed crimes in groups, either with friends, siblings or gang members. This gave them a sense of security and belonging. In a number of cases the involvement in crime went hand-in-hand with substance abuse.

The discussion of the themes is presented in the following sequence: Age and nature of first involvement in crime; substance use; affiliation with delinquent peers and progressive nature of crime.

3.2.2.1 Age and nature of first involvement in crime

Even though the ages of first involvement in crime vary, participants all seem to have been involved in crime from a very young age. The nature of the first crimes, in most cases, was economic crimes such as housebreaking, shoplifting and theft. There were also cases of robbery and one of murder.

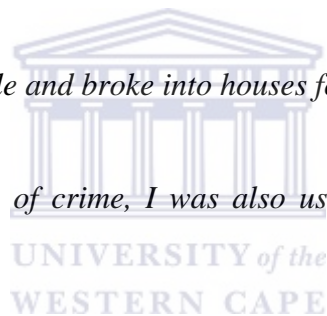
- *“I started drinking beer and wine with my friends when I was seven. When I was nine I joined the Born Free gang and I had my own crowd of boys that I sent out to rob people and break into houses. When I was twelve I went with my friends and the police caught us breaking into a house.”*
- *“I was twelve and in standard five, I was co-accused in a murder case...When I was thirteen I was arrested for theft.”*
- *“When I stayed with my friends on the station, I was eleven or twelve; we were using glue and thinners. That is the time when we started shoplifting and robbing people.”*
- *“I lived on Cape Town streets with friends after I ran away. I was eight years old. We started robbing people and broke into houses for money and drugs.”*
- *“...but she made a living of shoplifting and she taught us to shoplift. He used us children to smuggle drugs for him. I started with the crimes when I was almost eight years old.”*

- *“I was twelve when I started shoplifting with my brothers.”*
- *“I was nine when I broke into a house and got caught by the police.”*

3.2.2.2 Substance use

In a number of cases the crimes were committed while participants were under the influence of substances such as alcohol, dagga, thinners, glue and mandrax.

- *“I started drinking beer and wine with my friends when I was seven...We decided to beat her up more and we also raped her. We were drunk...”*
- *“...we were using glue and thinners. That is the time when we started shoplifting and robbing people.”*
- *“We started robbing people and broke into houses for money and drugs.”*
- *“I continued with my life of crime, I was also using drugs with the boys from the neighbourhood.”*
- *“I lived on the streets for two years, robbing people and doing drugs...”*



3.2.2.3 Affiliation with delinquent peers

The majority of participants committed the crimes in groups, either with friends, siblings or gang members. Peer pressure, the sense of belonging and acceptance and the need of security made them feel safe in the group. A number of participants were also introduced to the gang culture and they decided to join the gang.

- *“When I was nine, I joined the Born Free gang and I had my own crowd of boys that I sent out to rob people and break into houses.”*
- *“I joined the gang because it made me feel as if I belonged somewhere and it gave me power.”*

- *“When I stayed with my friends on the station, I was eleven or twelve...”*
- *“I was twelve when I started shoplifting with my brothers.”*

3.2.2.4 Progressive nature of crime

Participants became involved in criminal activities at a very young age. The initial crimes were mostly minor offences such as housebreaking and theft. The crimes became progressively more serious and they were eventually charged for offences ranging from robbery to murder and rape.

The following narratives are lengthy, in order to systematically explain how participants initially became involved in crime and how the nature of the crimes progressively got worse:

- *“I started drinking beer and wine with my friends when I was seven. When I was nine I joined the Born Free gang and I had my own crowd of boys that I sent out to rob people and break into houses. When I was twelve I went with my friends and the police caught us breaking into a house. Not long after this we were walking in the forest near the squatter camp and we found a black woman in the bushes... We decided to beat her up more and we also raped her. We were drunk... We were caught by the police and sent to a place of safety in Bellville. When I ran away from that place in Tokai, I met some members of the Born Free gang on the station...so I took the knife and I stabbed the man and the woman. I was sent to Pollsmoor prison.”*
- *“I was twelve and in standard five, I was co-accused in a murder case...When I was thirteen I was arrested for theft. I joined the gang because it made me feel as if I belonged somewhere and it gave me power. At the age of fifteen I was arrested for attempted murder and possession of a firearm and received a fifteen year sentence.”*
- *“When I stayed with my friends on the station, I was eleven or twelve; we were using glue and thinners. That is the time when we started shoplifting and robbing people. When I was thirteen I got caught by the police for theft. We got deeper involved in crime and when we broke into the church and stole some stuff from the church, we were sent to Porter School in Tokai. I decided to run away again to Cape Town. Back on the streets I had more power as a Scorpion than in the Form. On the streets I continued with my life of crime and was caught by the police again. This time I was sent to a juvenile court and they sent me to Pollsmoor Juvenile Prison.”*

- *“I lived on Cape Town streets with friends after I ran away. I was eight years old. We started robbing people and broke into houses for money and drugs. The police caught me and sent me to a place of safety. I decided to join the Scorpions in order to survive and to belong to a group of people. When I was fourteen I was sent to Porter School in Tokai. I was sent on a charge of housebreaking and theft for two years. At fifteen I ran away from there and was caught for robbery. I was sent to Pollsmoor prison...I ran off with friends and broke into a house. We saw a woman in the kitchen and tied her to a chair. I had one goal in mind: to rape and kill the woman. When I was raping her, I felt such hatred that I just wanted to kill her. I stabbed her several times and left her for dead.”*
- *“...but she made a living of shoplifting and she taught us to shoplift... He used us children to smuggle drugs for him. I started with the crimes when I was almost eight years old. When I was nine years old I was sent to Bonnytoun by Social Workers. When I was twelve I ran away from the Form and went to my dad’s house. I continued with my life of crime, I was also using drugs with the boys of the neighbourhood. I got caught for armed robbery when I was sixteen and received an eighteen year sentence.”*
- *“I was twelve when I started shoplifting with my brothers. After a while it got easier and we got away with it, so we started breaking into houses. I lived on the streets for two years robbing people and doing drugs before the police caught me for attempted murder. I stabbed a man on the parade. I was sentenced for ten years and sent to Pollsmoor prison. I was sixteen years old when I went to prison.”*
- *“I was nine when I broke into a house and caught by the police. I hated it so much at Porter School that I ran away and lived on the streets of Cape Town for a few years. When I was seventeen, the police caught me again for housebreaking and theft. I was sent to Pollsmoor prison. A year after I left Pollsmoor, I was sentenced again, this time for rape. I received a twenty year sentence.”*

The aforementioned statements from participants show that they got involved in crime from a very young age. As revealed, this is due to ineffective parenting, dysfunctional family lives and material and emotional deprivation. Paschall *et al* (2003:18) are of the opinion that, in

addition to parenting and father absence, affiliation with delinquent peers may be an important determinant of delinquent behaviour among African-American male adolescents.

Participants tried to escape the unhealthy home environment by running away from home to live on the streets with peers. They got involved in acts of crime and eventually got drawn into a life of gangsterism and crime.

Furthermore Standing (2005:2) argues that recruitment of gang members involve the targeting of youth, the most vulnerable are singled out, including those whose family situation is unstable.

Fleisher (1997) argues that for the youth, the gang plays the role of a surrogate family. Explaining the modus operandi of the 'Fairview Hawks' in the US, he mentioned that this type of gang fills the social needs of its members, whose early family lives left them alienated, emotionally unstable and without educational aspirations.

Gordon (2000:51) concurs by stating that many street gang members wanted to escape from, and find rewarding alternatives to, exceedingly unpleasant family lives. Most had physically abusive parents resulting in a lack of bonding, fear and frequent absence from home.

Cox (1996) and Joe & Chesney-Lind (1995), as cited in Sharpe (2003:52) contend that when the family is unable to provide for the needs and emotional development of the individual, the gang becomes a surrogate family and fulfils the needs not being met by the family, such as activities, affection, loyalty and sense of belonging.

Herrendorfer (2004) on the other hand, argues that many males are drawn into gangs by the attraction of money, power and glamour because of the poverty stricken environments they come from. In most instances parents are either unemployed or both parents are working, leaving the children unattended or with strangers. This is the perfect situation for the gangs to take advantage of the children, offering them a "surrogate family" which gives the children a sense of belonging.

According to a number of participants, it gave them power and a sense of belonging to operate with peers and in gang formation. They became more audacious and progressively the crimes became more serious in nature. This is also borne out by Standing (2005:9), stating that participation in gang activities is mostly driven by group identity, self-protection, pride, boredom and turf.

Herrendorfer (2004) confirms that, from the moment they join the gang, their lives become an orgy of murders, robberies, rapes and drunkenness that they would sometimes not understand or have wanted.

3.2.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS RELATING TO EXPERIENCES OF GANG INVOLVEMENT IN CORRECTIVE INSTITUTIONS AND PRISON

The following table structures the discussion of the themes that emerged in relation to the topic of experiences of gang involvement in corrective institutions and prison

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES FROM THE THIRD QUESTION: EXPERIENCES OF GANG INVOLVEMENT IN CORRECTIVE INSTITUTIONS AND PRISON

<p>First Theme:</p> <p>3.2.3.1. Motivation for membership</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Sense of belonging to the groupb) Hunger for powerc) Protection and survivald) Forced participation <p>Second Theme:</p> <p>3.2.3.2. Condition for access to the 28-gang</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Former involvement in community gangsb) 'Taking blood'c) Coerced sex with a gang leader

3.2.3.1. Motivation for membership.

There were various factors that motivated participants to become part of a gang. Gangs could either be community gangs, gangs in the Juvenile Detention Centres or Prison gangs. A number of participants joined the gangs to feel a sense of belonging and to be part of a group. There was also the hunger for power and control. Some participants joined the gangs in places of safety and in prison for protection and survival. Others became victims of rape and sexual assault as they were violently forced by gang members to join the gang.

a) The sense of belonging to a group

Within the group, there was recognition that they couldn't find in their dysfunctional homes. To some extent, their destructive needs were being met by the group they now belong to.

- *“After six months in Bonnytone my friends talked me into joining the Scorpions. I wanted to be part of the group and I wanted to be respected by them, so I agreed.”*
- *“I wanted to be part of them so they convinced me to join the 28's.”*

For the participants, it was important to belong to a group, to be seen and respected by their peers. This is echoed by Esbensen (2000:5) by stating that association with delinquent peers is one of the strongest predictors (risk factors) of gang membership.

b) The hunger for power

The association with a gang gave participants as members of the gang a sense of power and recognition. Gang members were feared and respected by the prisoner community at large as well as in places of safety. The position in the hierarchy of the gang also gave individuals a certain level of status which in return gave him self-worth as person. The higher the prisoner was in the hierarchy, the more power and control he had. The lower the prisoner was, the more prone he became to abuses at the hands of other prisoners.

- *“Because I was a Scorpion, I wasn't scared to be in a gang and I thought it will give me some power to be with a prison gang.”*

Tyson (1997:1) gives an example of the power of gangs in prison, by stating that gangs are so powerful at Stateville maximum-security prison in Joliet, USA, that they control entire cell blocks, run a profitable drug trade, corrupt guards and gain unsupervised interviews with wardens.

c) Protection and survival

According to participants' experiences, within the prison setting, there is a constant fight for survival. The stronger prisoners prey on the weaker ones. The notion in prison exists that, in order to survive and to be protected, you need to be part of a gang.

- *“I realised that I had to join the 28’s just to survive in prison.”*
- *“They told me to join the Scorpions or I will not be able to survive in there. I agreed, but I didn’t know what was waiting.”*
- *“I decided to join the Scorpions in order to survive and to belong to a group of people.”*
- *“They told me to join them in their gang so that we can stand together and protect each other.”*

The above statements are borne to by Dissel (1996:8) when she mentions that many young prisoners are forced to join gangs as a form of protection in prison.

d) Forced Participation

According to accounts given by participants, one of the most insidious aspects of the prison gang is the system of coerced sex. Stronger gang members forced younger or new prisoners to have sex with them. Some of these perpetrators were no older than the victims, the mere fact that they’ve been in the gang for a longer period, gave them the power and control over the newcomers.

- *“I was forced to have sex with one of the ‘officers’ of the Scorpions, who was not older than sixteen, but we all feared him. I felt angry and sad at the same time and I couldn’t understand why I should have sex with another man. I felt like a woman. I was humiliated in front of the others and I didn’t want to get up the next morning. After that I was a member of the Scorpions...”*
- *“I was ten years old when I was forced by one of the older boys to have sex with him in order to become a Scorpion. The Scorpions are similar to the 28’s in prison. I was very scared when the boy told me to have sex with him. I felt bad in my heart and guilty afterwards. I thought to myself that this man is forcing me to be a woman even though I am still a child. I thought that I would never know what it feels like to be a man. I never told anybody about the incident, I felt embarrassed. It was bad and I felt weak.”*

Mariner (2001) finds it ironic that sexual victims may be coerced, threatened and intimidated into long term sexual slavery and continuous degradation in order simply to survive. This view is confirmed by Gear (2002:17) explaining how prisoners become involved in situations of long-term sexual exploitation, i.e. how they are turned into women and wives.

3.2.3.2 Conditions for access to the 28-gang

Participants revealed that they could get access to the 28-gang through either their former involvement in the Scorpions-gang (which is the equivalent of the 28-gang in prison), by stabbing a Correctional Official or by having sex with a gang leader of the 28-gang.

a) Former involvement in Community gangs

The Scorpion gang has its origin in the community and is similar to the 28-prison gang. Members get initiated into the Scorpion gang by being raped and it is expected of members from the Scorpion gang who go to prison, to join the 28-gang.

- *“He told me that they know I was a Scorpion and because of that I must now join the 28’s.”*
- *“The ‘indota’s’ from the 28 told me that I have to join the 28’s because I was a Scorpion and the boys at the Form already had sex with me.”*

Participants were reluctant to expand on the relationship between the Scorpion gang and the 28-prison gang, only that the basic principles were the same and that, in both gangs, new members get initiated into the gang by sexual intercourse with the leaders.

b) “Taking Blood”

It became clear, from the discussions with participants, that, according to the structure of the 28-gang, there are two directions which gang members can follow. Participants either went in the ‘white/silver line’ or the ‘red/gold line’. Participants, who followed the red/gold line, were expected of to stab a Correctional Official or fellow prisoner. This act is also known as ‘taking blood’. The individual then became a fighter for the gang and it was not likely that he would be used for sex.

- *“I chose to go into the red line, which meant that I had to stab a warder.”*
- *“The 27’s claimed that I belonged to them because I took blood and the 28’s said I belonged to them because the instruction came from them to stab the warder.”*

- *“I decided to go into the red line because I already took blood and I didn’t want the ‘indotas’ to have sex with me.”*

In a study done by KC Goyer in 2001/2002 at the Westville Medium B prison in KwaZulu-Natal, Goyer (2003:36) it was found that prisoners may be required to attack another prisoner and draw blood in order to be initiated into a gang. For members of the 26-gang the practice of stabbing another person, usually a non-gang member, is referred to as *phakama* and allows the gang member to move up in the hierarchy of the gang depending on the severity of the attack and the situation of the person who is attacked.

This practice is also followed by members of the 28-gang, as seen in the above statements of the participants.

c) Coerced sex with a gang leader

If a gang member chooses to go into the white/silver line, he becomes a ‘private’ by having sex with a leader and from then onwards he has to execute duties like washing, ironing and cleaning for the ‘indotas’ or leaders. He will now be the designated wife to a specific gang leader or ‘indota’. While still a ‘private’, he can be used by the leadership of the gang, but as soon as he becomes a ‘wife’ he is the sole property of only one leader. The following quotes attested to the above:

- *“That night one of the ‘indota’s’ came to me and told me that he has to make me a proper 28. He turned me on my stomach and told me that he must now have proper sex with me because I refused.”*
- *“In the cell members of the 28-gang came to me and told me to join them. I refused and there they choked me and four of them raped me on the spot. When they were finished they told me that I was now a part of the 28-gang.”*
- *“I was forced to have sex with one of the leaders.”*

According to Harvey (2002:47), initiation rapes in South African prisons also serve a social purpose, creating a category of men in prison who are made available for sex.

3.2.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS RELATED TO REFLECTIONS ON FORCED SEX IN PRISON

TABLE 3

SUMMARY OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES: REFLECTIONS ON FORCED SEX IN PRISON

<p>First Theme:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"><p>3.2.4.1 Experiences of victimization</p></div> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Emotional turmoil and self-destructionb) Loss of masculinityc) Loss of powerd) Feelings of revenge <p>Second Theme:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"><p>3.2.4.2 Experiences of sexual perpetration</p></div> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Number of victimsb) Drive for power and controlc) Revenge motivationd) Physical enjoymente) Justification
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3.2.4.1 Experiences of Victimization

The incidence of inmate sexual assault and rape is quite variable and difficult to predict with accuracy. Victims were reluctant to report cases of sexual assault and rape, in fear of retaliation from the perpetrators.

The physical and psychological effects were devastating to the participants. Participants experienced strong negative emotions after being sexually assaulted. A number of the participants even had thoughts of self hatred and self destruction. They clearly felt that they were disempowered by the perception that the perpetrators ‘made women’ from them. Participants felt that they’ve lost their masculinity. In most cases participants were determined to take revenge on perpetrators.

a) Emotional Turmoil and Self Destruction

The following quotes reflects the feelings of turmoil and self-destruction

- *I felt dirty and embarrassed...*
- *“I was angry but I knew I had to do this because of the number.”*
- *“I was very scared.”*
- *“I felt sad and angry at the same time.”*
- *“I wanted to die...” “I wanted to kill myself...”*

The experiences described by participants are not unique in their circumstances. Dumond (2001:18) explains that many sexual assault victims experience the devastating effects of posttraumatic stress disorder and rape trauma syndrome as a direct result of their victimization. He further argues that the crisis of being a sexual assault victim is pervasive, devastating and global- it affects the individual victim physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. Sexual victimization causes a psychological disequilibrium from a situation which cannot be avoided, and for which a person cannot use their normal problem solving resources.

b) Loss of masculinity

The boundaries of sexual orientation were confusing for the victims and perpetrators in prison and in cases presented false assumptions regarding sex roles and sexual orientation.

Many victims of prison rape felt that they were to blame for the rape. Male victims felt that their ‘manhood’, in other words masculinity, had been taken away from them and that their sexuality had been compromised. The following quotes explains:

- *“I hated it to be the property of another man...”*
- *“I took on the role of a woman and after a while it was part of my life.”*
- *“I think in a way I hoped that it would give my manhood back.”*
- *“I felt as if he took a part of me away... I didn’t feel like a man anymore.”*

- *“I was treated like a woman and I didn’t feel like a human being.”*

The above quotes indicate that the feeling of the victim that his ‘manhood’ has been taken away from him has a devastating effect on the individual. He feels degraded, humiliated and ashamed. In his mind it is a reality that he cannot function as a man anymore. He now resembles the pathetic and helpless female figure that he came to know when he grew up.

Harvey (2002:49) confirms this by stating that many male rape survivors question their masculinity, especially around power and sexuality.

According to O’Donnell (2004:243), the consequences of prison rape are destructive psychologically and physically. Part of this is based on the belief that the victim of sexual assault suffers a permanent loss of masculinity. Victims are considered to have forfeited their manhood.

c) Loss of power

Participants’ narratives reflected that they had been in a struggle to obtain, keep and regain power from early childhood. They grew up in homes where the father showed power through victimization and physical abuse. From the home environment they fled to the streets where it was a constant battle to gain power in order to survive. In the end they found themselves in prison where they again had to be in a position of power in order to define themselves.

- *“...they took all the power that I had away from me.”*
- *“I felt powerless.”*
- *“He took all my power away.”*

d) Feelings of Revenge

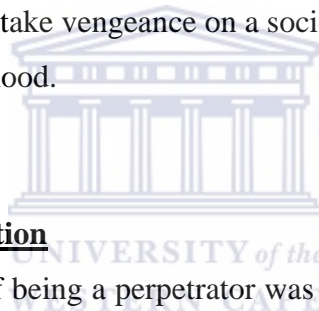
Revenge for the victims, manifested in the form of passive resistance. At this stage the revenge was only in their thoughts. They were living for the opportunity when they could turn the tables and become the perpetrators of the hideous acts that were bestowed on them.

- *“The nightmare started all over again and I decided to become an ‘indota’ myself so I can give to others what they gave me in prison.”*
- *“I wanted to do to others what these monsters were doing to me.”*

- *“I wanted to work myself up in a position of power where I would have the privilege to have sex with the ‘privates’.”*
- *“I decided that I would take revenge and work myself up in the gang.”*
- *“I decided I had enough and even if they have to kill me, I will take revenge for what they are doing to me.”*

The majority of participants found themselves in the position of disempowerment. They are unable to physically show their perpetrators that they do not want to be in the position. They have to endure the abuse, but make the conscious decision to take revenge and get to the position of power where they can be the perpetrator and no longer the victim.

Scacco (1982) as cited in Knowles (1999:274) explains the cycle of abuse, which the participants unintentionally mention by arguing that the most serious cost of prison rape to society is that it takes non-violent offenders and turns them into people with high potential for violence, full of rage and eager to take vengeance on a society which they hold responsible for their humiliation and loss of manhood.



3.2.4.2. Experiences of Perpetration

For participants, the experience of being a perpetrator was directly linked to their experiences of being a victim. Participants' perpetration originated in the early childhood where the father figure resembled aggression, violence, fear and in some cases hate. The mother figure to them was weak, submissive and in some cases pathetic. The victimization, for some, continued on the street and for others in places of safety. Ultimately they ended up in prison where they were victimized to the extent that they wanted to take revenge and aspired to get to a position of power to take revenge on the situation they found themselves in.

Wooden & Parker (1982) as cited in Knowles (1999:270) state that the men's prison environment allows for, and even sanctions sexual aggression and does not approve of sexual affection. Minnie *et al* (2002:54) is of the opinion that male-on-male rape in prison reflects power relations that govern the prison subculture. It is a product of traditional social expectations regarding male dominance and a violent means of social control.

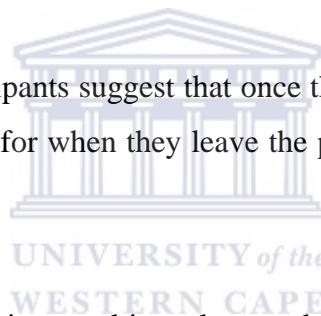
a) Number of victims

None of the participants had only a single victim.

The total ranged from five to forty. This just confirms the continuous cycle of abuse in the Corrective Institutions.

- *“It must be more than thirty five.”*
- *“One can never say, you don’t always count. But if I have to think, it must be almost thirty five.”*
- *“It might be more than ten, I didn’t keep record”*
- *“It can be ten or fifteen.”*
- *“I didn’t keep record, but it must be about twenty.”*
- *“Five or six, but with some of them more than once.”*

The above responses from participants suggest that once they raped, they continued to do so. This has particular consequences for when they leave the prison, as rape has now become an integral part of their lives.



b) Drive for Power and Control

The power and control that participants ultimately tasted was not out of loyalty and respect from the others, but out of the fear that they instilled and the brutal force that they used to accomplish their ultimate goal: to have sex with the other inmates.

The following accounts illustrate:

- *“When it happens that I want to have sex with a ‘private’ or a ‘Frans’ and he refuses, I will use force. Sometimes I will hit the person or I will put a knife against his throat to scare him. It happened before that I had to cut a person with a blade so that he could give in...”*
- *“I have power now and the others respect me... I felt good and proud of myself”*
- *“It is something that gives you authority and respect in the eyes of the others in the camp...If they don’t want to co-operate I will use force to get what I want. I know the number says that you are not allowed to penetrate them, but we all do it. Maybe the*

first time you will sex him through the thighs, but after that you have to show them who is in control, so that they have respect for you.”

- *“I had the privilege to take my own ‘privates’ to have sex with. I was nervous, but I enjoyed the power and the control that the number gave me...”*
- *“I never stabbed a man who refused to have sex with me. I will handle him a bit rough and beat him up, sometimes even choke him...”*
- *“The first time I forced a ‘private’ to have sex with me I felt relieved. I got what I wanted and what I’ve been waiting for so long. After that there was nothing to stop me. I had sex with ‘privates’ all the time. Whenever they refused, I would get violent and beat them up or stab them, just to get my way. I got my power and control back and I was feared by all...I penetrated all of them and it made me feel like God. I was in control of another human being. It felt as if I had a kind of power that no man can take away from me. ”*



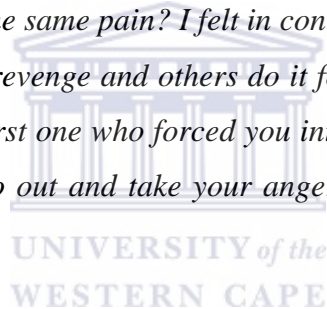
It seems as if participants were driven by a goal of being in a position of power in the leadership of the gang. By coercing another person into having sexual intercourse with them, they feel that they are in control and in a position of power.

Harvey (2002:46) states that the primary motivation of rape is power, with sex as the tool. Therefore, rape, even in prison, is not about a need for sex, but power. Harvey further states that the culture in male prisons asserts power relations predominantly through aggressive forms of masculinity and force. O’Donnell (2004:243), on the other hand, argues that prison sexual violence is only partly related to sexual gratification and is never about mutual fulfilment. It is a stark demonstration of power.

c) Revenge Motivation

The perpetrating of rape by participants was motivated by the feelings of anger and revenge. To them, it was an accomplishment when they finally had the opportunity to be in the position of a perpetrator. They felt as if they compensated for the fact that they were once humiliated and degraded to the weak and submissive female figure that they despised. A number of the participants indicated that they could reclaim their manhood by raping others in the way that it was done to them. Examples:

- *“I think the ‘privates’ see themselves as women, but they must remember that they are just doing a job for their number. A lot of them who get sexed in prison will go out embarrassed and angry. I won’t blame them if they go out and commit serious crimes, even rape, to prove to themselves that they are not women.”*
- *“The first one I had sex with, I was thinking of all the times the ‘indotas’ had sex with me and it felt good to reverse the roles for a change... I know that I humiliate these men when I have sex with them. I know, because I was also in their shoes. I know I make him feel like a woman but it feels good to take revenge.”*
- *“But I do know how they feel, because I was there. I felt like a woman once, like my manhood was taken away, but I got it back when I got an office and I earned the right to take these men to have sex with them.”*
- *“It felt good to penetrate the man, it happened to me so why should I save someone else from going through the same pain? I felt in control again. I got myself back. Some ‘indotas’ have sex out of revenge and others do it for satisfaction... Some might see a man who resembled the first one who forced you into the number and you want to kill him. Or you might just go out and take your anger out on an innocent victim like a woman or a child.”*
- *“I felt that I could cancel out my status as a victim by forcing myself upon someone else.”*
- *“Sometimes it [having sex with ‘privates’] made me think of the time I was abused as a young boy by the gangsters and then I just want to take all my anger out on the man I have sex with.”*
- *“The ‘indotas’ used me as a woman. I decided I had enough and even if they have to kill me, I will take revenge for what they are doing to me. I started making friends with the younger boys and then, when they trust me, I will take them to my room and force them to have sex with me.”*
- *“I know of a lot of inmates who had sex against their will and then later came back to prison with charges of rape or murder. Some of them say they wanted to take revenge*



or to show themselves that they are still men. They use violence because they were forced to have sex against their will. One example is my 'wife' Anthony who was in for theft and now he is serving time for rape."

d) Physical Enjoyment

The feelings and experiences of physical enjoyment were connected to their bodies and the urge to get their manhood back. In a sense it cancelled out the humiliation of being a victim or woman. In a number of cases the physical enjoyment went hand in hand with the power and control motivation as well as force. In some cases participant's experienced detachment of emotional feelings. Gear (2001:10), argues that the sexual component is useful in thinking about situations of enslavement. In these cases the victim may well be considered merely a means to the perpetrator's sexual gratification.

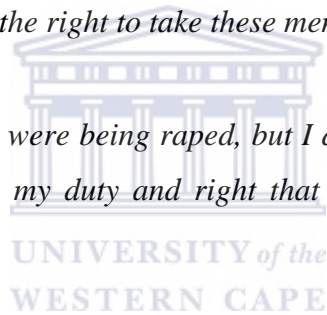
- *"I never think of the feelings of the men I have sex with. After I had sex with the man for the first time, I enjoyed it and I decided that I wanted to do it again. From then on I created opportunities to have sex with the new ones. It is usually more difficult with the 'Franse', because they don't give permission so you have to use force on them... I enjoy sex more when it goes with force. Sometimes I will use more force than what is necessary just to get a kick out of it. "*
- *"The more I had sex with the men in prison, the easier it was and the more I enjoyed it. I just closed my eyes and thought of the man as a woman. Their looks and their bodies started turning me on as well... I never think about their feelings, only what I have to do and what I want."*
- *"I didn't think of the man's feelings, only about myself and what I wanted from this man. From the second time it was easier to reach a climax, I became used to it and enjoyed it more and more."*
- *"I also enjoyed it because sometimes I closed my eyes and it was like having sex with a girl. I felt like a man again and not like the woman that tried to make from me."*

e) Justification

Although the participants' motivation was predominantly power, control and revenge, they tried to justify their acts of perpetration in their institutionalized world of the gang and the number. In retrospect, after having been released from prison for some time, participants

tended to minimize or justify their brutal acts of forced sex and rape in the prison environment. There were however a number of participants who saw it as rape.

- *“I was excited and proud because I finally got what I deserved. I worked hard for the privilege and waited a long time...I didn’t feel bad because it was my right...To have sex in prison with men is part of the number and it is also part of me, because I am the number. It is in my blood and in my veins. It is my right as an ‘indota’. I have worked hard and proved myself worthy of this right.”*
- *“It was the first time that I would have the privilege to actually penetrate a man instead of him doing it to me. I felt I deserved it; I worked hard for it and went through a lot of humiliation... The number says I cannot refuse to have sex with a ‘private’. It was my new job; it is a right and also a kind of privilege.”*
- *“I felt like a woman once, like my manhood was taken away, but I got it back when I got an office and I earned the right to take these men to have sex with them.”*
- *“They might feel that they were being raped, but I don’t think I raped them. I had sex with them because it was my duty and right that I earned through hard work and commitment to the gang.”*
- *“I cannot see that there is anything wrong in having sex with ‘privates’ in the prison. It is part of the rules of the number and we have to keep it. If they don’t want to give it, you must take it.”*
- *“When it first happened to me I thought of it as rape, but now I see it as part of the duties of the gang. It is a way of showing who is in control and who the one with the power is.”*
- *“Yes, but sometimes a person can’t help it. You have to do it then you feel better about yourself, especially when they did it to you.”*
- *“Yea, that is why I decided to do it, because they raped me.”*



The majority of participants are unable to understand that by having coerced sex, they, in actual fact rape the victims. They present excuses ranging from the fact that they worked hard to obtain their position in the gang to the ‘job’ they have to do for the gang. They are not seen labelled as sexual offenders, but merely as “indotas” or leaders of the 28-gang, who are entitled to raping and abusing other prisoners.

O’Donnell (2004:243) shares this opinion by stating that prison rape is the acting out of power roles within a male, authoritarian environment where strength and dominance are emphasized. This is why men who anally penetrate young and vulnerable men against their will are first, not considered rapists and second, do not incur the stigma that such an offence would attract if perpetrated outside the prison walls.

3.2.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS RELATED TO CONSEQUENCES OF RAPE IN PRISON AFTER RELEASE.

The interviews were ended with participants sharing their experiences of consequences of perpetrating rape in prison Table 4 presents the theme and sub-themes that emerged from the analysis.



TABLE 4

THEME AND SUB-THEMES FROM THE FIFTH QUESTION. CONSEQUENCES OF RAPE IN PRISON AFTER RELEASE.

<p>Predominant theme:</p> <table border="1"><tr><td>3.2.5.1 Continuation of power and control after release</td></tr></table> <p>Sub-Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Forced sex with womenb) Experiences with menc) Embarrassment and disempowerment	3.2.5.1 Continuation of power and control after release
3.2.5.1 Continuation of power and control after release	

3.2.5.1 Continuation of power and control after release

a) Forced sex with women

The premise of power, control and violence was still present in the accounts of the participants. A number of participants indicated that they enjoyed having sex with women, but the physical enjoyment still went hand in hand with the need for violence, power and control. It was clear, from the sexual experiences after release that rape victims, turned perpetrators, took with them the emotional scars and learned violent behaviour that continued the cycle of abuse. These prisoners might engage in violent, anti social behaviour when released.

- *“Once I went to a dance in Parkwood with my girlfriend. I saw a young boy dancing and it turned me on... While he was smoking dagga I asked him for sex. He refused and I got angry. I forced the boy to have sex with me, penetrating him from behind. While I had sex with the boy, I felt good. I was thinking about the young men I had sex with in prison and that I forced if they didn’t want to co-operate. I didn’t let them go, so why should I let this one go.”*
- *“I get more excited when I use violence, even with women. While having sex, I cut a woman with a blade; I hit another one with the barrel of my gun ...*
- *“The first time I had sex with a woman was when I just came from prison. I saw her at a shebeen and I wanted to have sex with her. She didn’t want to, but I forced her, almost like I forced the men in prison. I enjoyed the power I showed and the fact that I could prove to myself that I was still a real man.”*
- *“I met my wife after I was released from prison and I can still remember the times I used to beat and kick her the times she refused to have sex with me. It made me angry, because in prison no one questioned me. When I wanted sex then and they refused, I took it by force. So who is this woman to refuse?”*
- *“Since my last sentence I had sex a few times with women. Now I had the power of the sex I had with the other men. It taught me to take what I wanted. The females can’t refuse; I won’t let them. I am used to respect and if I want sex, I will have sex, no one will say no.”*

The experiences of rape and sexual violence formed an integral part of participant's lives. It seems like they are unable to separate the feeling and experiences in prison from their lives on the other side of the prison walls.

Harvey (2002:45) recognises the long term impact of being first a rape victim and then a perpetrator of rape in prison. She argues that men who are raped and sexually violated in prison are more likely to exercise their unprocessed rage on women when they are released. Gear & Ngubeni (2002:76) agree with the statement by proclaiming that the majority of respondents in their research have stories of prison wives who, on release sought violent revenge against their perpetrator.

Scacco (1982) as cited in Knowles (1999:274) concurs with the abovementioned by arguing that the most serious cost of prison rape to society is that it takes non-violent offenders and turns them into people with a high potential for violence, full of rage and eager to take vengeance on the society which they hold responsible for their utter humiliation and loss of manhood.

b) Experiences with men

Participants' prior sexual experiences with men in prison stayed with them and a number of them still get excited by the sight of young men and boys.

- *“I had to block out all the previous experiences with men. It is difficult to take the experiences out of my mind. Sometimes, even now, I get excited by young men and boys, even when I have my girlfriend around me.”*
- *“The experience [sex with a woman] was good, but I kept on seeing the bodies and faces of the men that I had sex with in prison.”*
- *“I was outside for almost six months and I saw a lot of men that turned me on. I found it difficult to resist them but I was forced to...”*
- *“When I have sex with her, I have to block all my experiences out. I am not allowed to think about the men I had sex with.”*

It is eminent that participants had difficulty in erasing the images of the men they had sex with from their memories. They kept visualising these men and boys while being intimate with their girlfriends and wives.

c) Embarrassment/Disempowerment

The following quotes indicate that participants would not share their experiences with their partners after release because it was too embarrassing to consider and because it would be disempowering

- *“I enjoyed it, [sex with a woman] but I also felt guilty because I was sodomised. I couldn’t tell her about it. I am now married to her and she still doesn’t know.”*
- *“”The first time I had sex with her, I couldn’t tell her what happened to me in prison. I had to put it in the back of my mind, but I found it was very difficult. Every time it flashed through my mind I felt weak and embarrassed.”*
- *“While I had sex with her, she mentioned the fact that I had sex with other men in prison. I got angry and started hitting her. I wanted to hurt her for what she said. I knew it was the truth, but at that moment I felt ashamed of it, not for what I did to them, but for what they did to me in the beginning.”*
- *“I was ashamed that she would find out and think that I am not a real man. I never told her about what happened.”*
- *“I sometimes see the faces of the men I had sex with in prison. I will never tell my wife about it. I will also never tell her about the boys in Porter School who raped me or the men in prison who forced me to have sex with them.”*

The majority of participants were victims of rape before they assumed the role of the perpetrator. For them, there was no healing process; they dared not disclose what they had to endure in prison and what the consequences were.

Knowles (1999:273) asserts that the act of rape in the ultra masculine world of prison constitutes the ultimate humiliation visited upon a male by forcing him to assume the role of a woman. This view is shared by Gear & Ngubeni (2002:74) who are of the opinion that the silence that often veils the sexual abuse in prison continues outside the prison when offenders are released.

There is a reluctance to disclose the sexual abuse and rape due to feelings of shame, guilt and humiliation.

3.3 SUMMARY

The primary goal of the study was to investigate how gang members construct their identity in reaction to using sexual violence. In order to explore the social context that might have influenced their constructions of experiences, the following question themes guided the interviews:

3.3.1 PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES OF FAMILY LIFE

The first theme identified was emotional and material deprivation. Participants gave accounts on experiences of aggression and violence in the home, abuse of alcohol and other substances, poverty and inadequate housing and eventually, escaping the dysfunctional homes by running away and living on the streets.

As a second theme, participants described their feelings towards their abusive father figures and a third theme pointed out how they perceived the mother figures.

3.3.2 PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN CRIME

The main theme identified was first involvement in crime. It was evident that participants all got involved in crime at a very early age, initially as minor offences. Participants committed crimes in groups, either with friends, siblings or gang members. With the involvement of crime came the excessive drug use and subsequently crimes became progressively more serious to the point where they were incarcerated in places of safety for boys or juvenile correctional facilities.

3.3.3 PARTICIPANTS' GANG INVOLVEMENT IN CORRECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

The first theme to be discussed was the motivation for membership. Participants gave several explanations for joining gangs in prison. For some it gave a sense of belonging to the group, others joined as a means to gain power. A number of participants became gang members for the purpose of protection and survival in prison and the majority was forced through violence to join the gang.

Participants mentioned the conditions to gain access to the '28' prison gang as: former involvement in community gangs, to stab a fellow prisoner or correctional official or through coerced sex with a gang leader.

3.3.4 PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES OF FORCED SEX IN PRISON

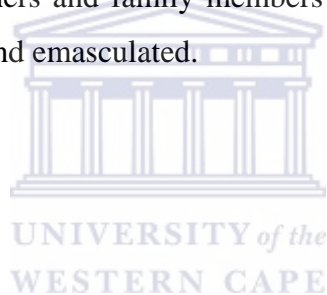
Two themes were identified. Firstly participants described experiences of victimization in prison. They mentioned feelings such as embarrassment, humiliation, anger and sadness.

Participants described their experiences of emasculation, loss of power and subsequently a number of the participants felt like taking revenge on their perpetrators.

Secondly, participants were asked about their experiences as perpetrators in prison. As perpetrators, they saw the opportunity regain the power they lost as victims. Participants indicated that none of them had only a single victim in prison. They did not seem to show any remorse or feelings of guilt towards their victims. They justified and minimized their acts irrespective of the fact that each and every one of them went through the same experiences as victims.

3.3.5 CONSEQUENCES OF RAPE IN PRISON AFTER RELEASE

The theme identified from this question is the continuation of power and control after release. Participants described their need and also enjoyment of forced sex after release. They took their experiences of violent sexual engagements with them when they were released. The forced sex was, according to participants, not only with women, but also with boys and men. Participants experienced feelings of embarrassment and guilt, as they found it extremely difficult to disclose to their partners and family members that they were victims of rape in prison. They felt disempowered and emasculated.



CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of this study was to explore how gang members construct their experiences of victimization and/or perpetration of rape.

The research document consists of four chapters. In chapter one the researcher gives a general orientation to the research and discussion of the research methodology. The researcher gives a theoretical perspective on gang activities in chapter two and chapter three deals with the data analysis and discussion of the data analyzed. This final chapter reports a summary of the findings of the study.

The qualitative approach was selected. The researcher compiled a semi-structured interview guide for the study and open-ended questions were verbally posed to facilitate free flowing response. Data was analyzed thematically, per question theme, as outlined in chapter three. The researcher identified five general themes. These themes in turn, each had several sub themes.

4.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The summary of the findings are presented in an integrated way in relation to the questions discussed, in order to get a coherent picture of the experiences of the participants.

4.2.1 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FIRST QUESTION:

4.2.1.1 Participants experiences of childhood family life.

From participants' experiences of childhood family life, the following themes were identified:

- Emotional and material deprivation
- Feelings of rejections by a father figure
- Submissive and emotionally absent mother.

Deprivation can be conceptualized and measured, at both the individual and area level, in relation to: material deprivation, referring to 'dietary, clothing, housing, home facilities, environment, location and work (paid and unpaid), and social deprivation, referring to rights in relation to employment, family activities, integration into the community, and formal participation in social institutions, recreation and education'. (Kriegler: 2000). The responses of participants indicated that they all experienced emotional and material deprivation during childhood.

Participants grew up in households where they were physically and verbally abused. The parents fought, some used alcohol, mandrax and dagga and the children witnessed violence and abuse between their parents. These children were denied the opportunity to grow up in a positive and supportive environment. Their parents failed to provide security and an environment where they could feel safe and protected. There was clearly no discipline in the homes and the children had little guidance.

The majority of participants felt rejected by their fathers, who ideally should have been their role models. The relationship with the father figure was one of fear, hate, unhappiness and anger. To them, the father was not a protector, provider or care taker. The mother on the other hand was being portrayed as a person present in their lives, but submissive and weak. They witnessed her being verbally and physically abused by the father.

As a result of the dysfunctional home lives, participants reported that they struggled to exert control over their own lives. Literature indicated that if children are allowed to exert a certain amount of power and control over their own lives, they would be able to make decisions, experiment and explore.

If they are deprived of these opportunities, they become disempowered and instead of power and control, they feel guilty for many of their own actions (Craig, 1996:60).

It is thus concluded that participants in this study, as a consequence of the poverty, abuse, violence, neglect and excessive alcohol and drug abuse, decided to run away from home and ended up living on the street with friends. Away from home and in the company of peers, participants commenced a life of crime and subsequently exercising the power and control they didn't experience at home.

From the responses of participants it is evident that they left their dysfunctional homes to live on the streets where they were accepted by peers and drawn into criminal activities.

Literature consulted, Regulus (1995:1046), Dissel (1997), Paschall *et al* (2003:16) and Davids (2001:19) are in agreement that parenting is an important determinant of delinquent behaviour among adolescents in general. Fleisher (1997) concurs with the researcher that most commonly, parents of these children are alcoholics or drug users.

4.2.2 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE SECOND QUESTION:

4.2.2.1 Experiences of involvement in crime

It was determined from participants' responses that they were emotionally and materially deprived in their early years at home. They had experienced feelings of rejection, disempowerment and non-acceptance from parents, caregivers and other influential people in their lives.

Destructive behaviour such as violence and abuse against women and children; drug- and alcohol abuse; lack of value systems and the absence of constructive discipline were all learnt in their homes. As a result of the above, the children left home and ended up on the streets. The children took this learned behaviour with them when they finally made a life of their own away from their parents.

In order to survive on the streets and to gain acceptance, a number of participants indicated that they formed relationships with peers from similar backgrounds. The majority of them engaged in alcohol and substance abuse that subsequently lead to the involvement in crime. Through these formed relationships, the cycle of violence, abuse and substance use learned at home, was repeated.

A common theme from the findings is that they all got involved in crime at a pre-adolescent age.

The feelings of powerlessness that these children experienced at home were substituted by acceptance and a sense of belonging which translated into power, as a participant pointed out. The crimes participants were initially involved in were of a less serious nature. As the relationship with their delinquent peers intensified, so did the nature of the crimes.

The interpretation is made that participants, as young pre-adolescent boys in their various groups, all felt the need to prove themselves in order to be accepted. With acceptance they gained more power and with gaining more power they became more confident.

Several of the participants indicated that they became involved in street gangs after they left home. These gangs became their “surrogate” families, fulfilling their social and economic needs. Through these gangs, members found that they had access to commodities such as weapons, drugs, money etc. that they wouldn’t ordinarily have as an individual.

This finding is supported by Herrendorfer (2004) who concluded that many males are drawn into gangs by the attraction of money, power and glamour because of the poverty stricken environments they come from.

A number of participants indicated that crimes were committed while they were under the influence of either alcohol or drugs, or both. These substances could possibly alter their sense of reality and give them a false sense of power, resulting in more daring behaviour and subsequently lead to more serious crimes.

Participants all indicated that the crimes they committed became more severe and violent in nature and so did misuse of drugs and alcohol.

Literature consulted, for example Paschall *et al*, Standing and Fleisher are in agreement that delinquent peers and gangs fill the social needs and act as ‘surrogate families’ to the individuals whose early family lives left them alienated and emotionally unstable. Fleisher (1997) also concurs with the research findings by mentioning the excessive alcohol and substance use among delinquent peers.

It is confirmed by Herrendorfer (2004) that smaller offences lead to more serious crimes.

4.2.3 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE THIRD QUESTION:

4.2.3.1 Experiences of gang involvement in corrective institutions and prisons

Through the interviews with participants, it was established that, the time they associated with their peers and got involved in criminal activities on the street, was also the time when a majority of them got involved in street gangs. As they became more involved in the operations of the gangs, criminal activities intensified and they eventually ended up in places of safety for boys or juvenile detention centres.

Participants indicated that they joined the prison gangs during their incarceration for various reasons and in different ways.

To many participants, it was important to be part of a group in order to have a sense of belonging, recognition and respect they did not experience in their homes as children. This was explained by a participant stating: *“I wanted to be part of them so they convinced me to join the 28’s”*.

There is a kind of “brotherhood” in the gang. Members support and encourage each other and given the secrecy that surrounds the prison gangs, members feel that they share something important and sacred.

An important element throughout the participant’ experience is the hunger for power and control. From a very early age there was a struggle with the concept of power. As children, they were disempowered through emotional and material deprivation, violence and abuse. They took a part of that “lost power” back when they left their houses and made a living on the street. They joined street gangs and started a life of crime. In the prison setting, it is no different. Gang members are feared and respected by other prisoners, especially the higher ranking gang members. This fear and respect from the others gave them a sense of power and control.

Ironically, a number of participants mentioned that they joined the gang as a means of survival and protection in prison. As the newcomers enter the ruthless world behind the prison walls, the gang members or “indotas” promise them friendship and protection, but little do they know that this protection comes at a price.

The “indota’s” start a grooming process based on deception and bribery by offering the newcomers friendship, protection, food, dagga, tobacco etc. The aim of this grooming process is ultimately to use the person for sex, although the newcomer is unaware of the debt that is being created and the motives of his “friend and protector”.

When this grooming process doesn’t go according to the gang member’s plan and the newcomer refuses to have sex with him, he will then use force and violence to get what he wants. There are certain conditions for prisoners to become part of the 28-gang in prison.

One of the conditions, mentioned by a number of participants is the fact that they could gain access to the gang through former involvement in the Scorpions-gang, which is a well known street gang. The modus operandi of the two gangs is almost similar. As a number of participants revealed, they were expected to have sex with the leaders of the 28-gang in prison because they already belonged to the Scorpion-gang outside.

Several participants explained the structure and hierarchy of the 28-gang by mentioning the two options a newcomer have. The white or silver line is for the 'wives' and 'sex slaves' and the red or gold line is for the fighters. In order to become a fighter for the gang, a person has to 'take blood' or stab a Correctional Official or a fellow prisoner. The participants who did not have the courage to stab an Official or fellow prisoner, were bound to become wives of the 28-gang. Participants revealed that the initiation process included coerced sex with a gang leader. After the newcomer had been raped, the leader will decide whether he is now the designated 'wife' of a specific 'indota', or if he would be used by the leadership of the gang and gets the title of a 'private'.

As there is a limited amount of research studies conducted on the activities and secrecy surrounding the prison gangs in South Africa, reference material was limited.

Dissel (1996) agrees with the findings, stating that many young prisoners join gangs as a form of protection. In addition to the 26 gang, as Goyer (2003) mentions, the researcher found that the 28 gang members can also move up in the hierarchy of the gang by stabbing a non-gangster.

4.2.4 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FOURTH QUESTION:

4.2.4.1 Reflections on forced sex in prison

It was important for the study to look at the participants' experiences of victimization as well as perpetration of rape. The concept of power was very clear when it came to the victimization- and perpetration process.

Participants revealed that they were all victims of sexual abuse in prison and subsequently became perpetrators of rape in prison.

The physical and psychological effects are devastating to the victims of rape. There was explicit reference to the emotions that they experienced after being raped. They felt angry, humiliated, scared and sad. One participant mentioned that he wanted to die and another had the urge to kill himself. These are all feelings familiar to female rape victims. The fact that participants mentioned the same emotions, prove that the experience is just as devastating to males as it is to females.

Explaining their experiences of rape as a victim, participants all concur that they felt 'as if their manhood had been taken away' by the event. They were not in control of their own bodies and the most devastating aspect is the fact that other men used them as women.

The most humiliating fact is that they never perceived the female figure as strong and assertive. They now resemble the weak and submissive female figure they came to know when they grew up.

The implication of this is that the victim feels angry, humiliated, powerless and emasculated and desperate to 'regain his manhood.' In a misguided attempt to prove to himself and to show the world that he is still a man, he can now possibly turn to someone weaker to abuse or even rape.

Participants made it clear that they had intense feelings of revenge and hatred towards their perpetrators. They expressed the desire to do the same to the perpetrators, or someone else for that matter.

As perpetrators of rape in prison, participants saw the opportunity to regain the power that they lost during the process of becoming a victim.

Participants were clear that none of them had only a single victim in prison.

This is most concerning for, if any of these perpetrators were to rape a single person outside of prison, the consequences would've been so much different. In prison, they are not labelled as sexual offenders and they do not have to participate in and complete sexual offender's programmes. A person who commits a sexual offence outside of prison on the other hand, is known as a sexual offender and has to successfully complete sexual offender's programmes in order to be considered for release on parole.

The perpetrators of rape in prison, when released, very rarely had any form of counselling and the consequences could be devastating for the individual and the people in his surroundings. On the one hand he is still filled with anger and humiliation due to the fact that he was a victim of rape and on the other hand he 'progressed' to a perpetrator who exercised violence, power and control on a sexual level.

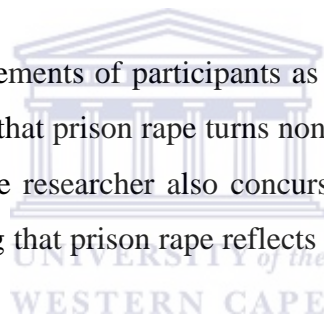
Even though the principal motivation of rape is power, a number of participants indicated that they experienced physical enjoyment while having sex with the men in prison, with or without using force. One participant indicated that he enjoyed the sex more when it was accompanied by force and violence.

Participants experienced emotion turmoil as victims but they didn't show any feelings of remorse or guilt towards their victims. They justified and minimized the acts irrespective of the fact that each and every one of them went through the same experiences as victims. Participants believe that they had the right to rape.

The gang culture is such an integrated part of their lives that they find it difficult to differentiate between 'life in the gang' and 'life outside the gang'. Their boundaries seem blurred and they cannot differentiate their prison experiences with real life outside of prison. This is one of the most alarming facts, as they believe they have the right to rape inside of prison and the consequences would be the same if they had to rape outside of prison.

Referring to the victims of sexual abuse and rape in prison, Harvey (2002:49) agrees with the research findings that male rape survivors question their masculinity. O'Donnell (2004:243) concurs with the researcher by stating that the consequences of prison rape are destructive psychologically and physically.

After carefully analyzing the statements of participants as perpetrators, the researcher agrees with Knowles (1999:274) stating that prison rape turns non-violent offenders into people with a high potential for violence. The researcher also concurs with Minnie *et al* (2002:54) and O'Donnell (2004:243) mentioning that prison rape reflects the power relations that govern the prison subculture.



4.2.5 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FIFTH QUESTION:

4.2.5.1 Consequences of rape in prison after release

Experiences in prison follow people outside. This happens in all spheres; decision making, family relationships, HIV and Aids contracted in prison; but the consequences are particularly severe in the cases of sexual experiences. This can be seen in the fact that sexual practices learned in prison, are often repeated outside.

Perhaps the most important and concerning factor is that participants begin to understand sex as a violent activity because sex was a forced activity in prison.

It is apparent from a number of participants that sex without force is not attractive to them and thus they introduce force into an activity which could be a consensual sexual encounter. Because the prison experience was one of forced sex, the force itself becomes an important element in the enjoyment of sex.

A majority of participants, after release, experienced violence and force as essential elements of sex. They proved that the experiences learned during their incarceration, were being introduced in their lives outside. This was the case, irrespective if participants knew the person they were having sex with or not. One participant spoke about forcing a woman he met at a shebeen to have sex with him, while another said that he forced his own wife to have sex with him after his release from prison.

Sex and power are clearly linked. Participants showed that the hunger for power and the power they got from raping another person continued after release.

Given that so many youth end up in prison, this may create a perception of the dominant role of the man and the subjugated role of the woman in society.

Forced sex after release was not only with women. The interviews made it clear that participant's need to engage in forced sex was not restricted to women as sexual targets but also extended to boys and men. A number of participants revealed the fact that they raped men after release. One even chose to force a young boy to have sex with him even though he was accompanied by his girlfriend at the time.

Most of the above relates to repeating perpetrator behaviour after release, but the divide between perpetrator and victim is not very clear. All the participants interviewed were perpetrators of rape in prison, but they were also victims of rape in prison. In addition, a number of them had been raped and abused before they went to prison.

The experiences and feelings of victims in the prison environment are also carried to the outside when they get released. These are very often strong feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment and disempowerment. These feelings are all interrelated and sometimes confused by the victims who can't adequately voice their deep feelings of the experiences.

The participants found it difficult to disclose to their partners, friends and family that they had been raped because of the embarrassment and shame.

Somehow in the process of being raped, they consider themselves being emasculated. This argument is supported by Knowles (1999:237) by stating that the act of rape in the ultra masculine world of prison constitutes the ultimate humiliation visited upon a male by forcing him to assume the role of a woman.

4.3 CONCLUSION RELATED TO RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study set out to examine the research question: How does a gang member construct the experience of victimization or perpetration of rape?

In doing so the participants were led through in depth, semi-structured, open ended and face to face interviews dealing with a range of issues such as experiences of childhood family life, their involvement in crime, gang involvement in correctional institutions, their reflections on sex in prison and the consequences of rape in prison after release.

From the research it is evident that participants all grew up in households where they were either emotionally or materially deprived, or both. They were victims of abuse without any support, safety and protection. They were disempowered by the constant abuse and neglect. In an attempt to escape the dysfunctional family lives and to gain some power and control, they ran away from home and engaged in relationships with peers on the streets. They started a life of crime and substance abuse with their delinquent peers. The crimes became progressively worse; a number joined street gangs in attempt to earn recognition, acceptance and respect. Participants ended up in places of safety for boys and juvenile correctional facilities.

As the researcher engaged in the constructivism strategy of enquiry to answer the research question, it was important to find out how participants constructed their encounters as victims and as perpetrators of rape in prison.

The participants' **experiences of being victims of rape in prison were traumatic**. Reliving the experiences was equally traumatic. During the interviews, participants were visibly emotional while they described feelings such as disempowerment, humiliation and emasculation. It was evident that the participants detested the experience which made them felt like women. **They experienced emotional turmoil and many had feelings of self-destruction. A number of participants showed anger, started talking louder and faster while describing their experiences of abuse and rape in prison.**

In contrast to these feelings, participants showed no compassion or understanding towards the victims they raped and abused in prison. They spoke with coldness and were clinical in their responses. Their faces were stern and most of them spoke with conviction. They were of the understanding that it was their right and a privilege as members of the 28-gang to have sex with other prisoners. It was part of the revenge for the fact that they were raped in prison. **They spoke about their experiences as perpetrators without any dearness or feelings.**

Even though participants had more than one victim each, they were never seen or labelled as sexual offenders, with the result that they were never counselled and didn't participate in any sexual offenders programme.

Participants took the experiences of forced and violent sexual engagements with them when they were released. It was revealed that, after release, participants continued to engage in violent sexual activities, without consent of the other party. **Participants construct their violent sexual encounters outside of prison as normal and accepted behaviour. To them it is the reality of life, they were used to it in prison, it was their life and it was real to them.**

4.4 RESEARCHER'S EXPERIENCES OF THE QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The researcher's view is that the use of the qualitative approach for this study was no doubt the best approach because the information sought was qualitative in nature, as it was an attempt to understand the social circumstances and meanings in which sexual abuse and rape in prison are situated.

The in depth interviews gave a far better understanding of the dynamics of victims and perpetrators in prison. The open ended questions produced knowledge beyond the expectation of a mini thesis.

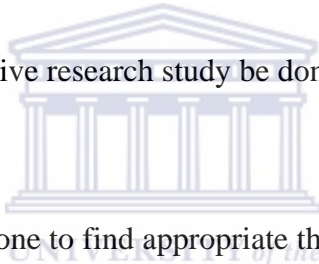
The open ended questioning presented difficulty with the data analysis process. It was a strenuous task to extract themes and sub themes from the vast amount of data collected. What made the process even more complicated was the fact that the researcher was not allowed to use a tape recorder and had to take notes of the interviews as well as the non verbal communication and body language of participants.

It was important to the researcher to adhere to the ethical guidelines as ethics in the prison setting, and in particular the gangs, are very important. In retrospect the researcher is of the opinion that it a dangerous area to venture, given the secrecy and code of conduct of the prison gangs.

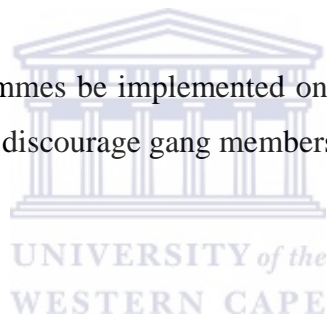
Nevertheless, the findings are informative and contribute to research based knowledge of the experiences of victimization and perpetration of gang members in prison.

4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that:

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- A comprehensive quantitative research study be done to determine the extent of sexual abuse in prisons.
 - A qualitative study to be done to find appropriate therapy programmes for perpetrators of sexual abuse in prison, keeping in mind that the perpetrators were sexually abused when they entered prison.
 - A study be conducted to determine international best practice in terms of bullying, sexual abuse and rape in prison.
 - The Department of Correctional Services invent more sophisticated methods of identifying and separating gangsters from non-gangsters when they enter prison and in the process isolating gang members.
 - The Department of Correctional Services educate all custodial officials on the modus operandi and the activities of prison gangs.

- The Department of Correctional Services put approachable systems in place in order for victims of rape to speak out, receive the necessary medical treatment and counselling and to be kept in a safe space away from the perpetrators.
- Victim/ survivor support programmes such as Friends Against Abuse or Stop Prisoner Rape in the U.S A. be implemented in Correctional Institutions.
- The Department of Correctional Services put measures in place to remove and isolate perpetrators at the allegations of sexual abuse and rape.
- Education and information be given to first offenders concerning the realities of prison gangs and the subsequent abuse.
- Correctional Officials be educated in the extent and dealing with sexual abuse and rape in prison.
- Community based programmes be implemented on educating families how parenting methods can encourage or discourage gang membership and crime.



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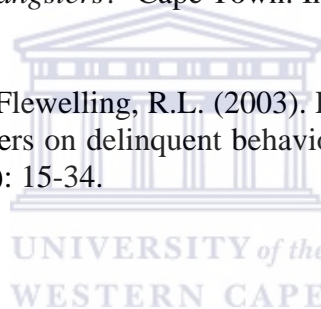
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