

SOCIO-COGNITIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MOFFITT'S TAXONOMY OF LIFE-COURSE PERSISTENT AND ADOLESCENT-LIMITED OFFENDERS

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ABSTRACT

The study's findings support the hypothesis that Moffitt's taxonomy of life-course and adolescent-limited delinquents applies in a Black, developing, semi rural population in South Africa, using a qualitative life-story research design. While the research design did not allow for conclusive proof of early psychoneurological deficits, difficult temperament and conduct disorders, features in the infant and childhood phases of the life-course offender, support for Moffitt's taxonomy arose from many other sources. These were the earlier onset and more violent antisocial behaviour, poorer school performance and peer relationships, greater impulsivity, ineffective goal setting, retarded moral development and lower social esteem of the life-course, relative to the adolescent-limited, offender research groups. Group cognitive difference found by Moffitt did not emerge. Suggestions for a local South African pilot intervention based on Moffitt's principles were made.

DECLARATION

I hereby submit that this thesis is the result of my own work.

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DEDICATION

The child is father of the man

-William Wordsworth. "My Heart leaps up when I Behold"

cited by Avshalom Caspi (2000)

This work is dedicated to all the research participants, each of whom contributed the gift of a small part of themselves in order to improve the well being of future children in South Africa.

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CHAPTER 1. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

OVERVIEW

The literature review is made up of three sections. Section one contains a brief history of society's changing attitudes to crime, as a background to Moffitt's psychological theory of criminal behaviour. It also depicts the unacceptably high prison population and crime rate in South Africa, as a motivation for the present research. The second section reviews the key tenets of Moffitt's taxonomy of two types of delinquents, life-course and adolescent-limited offenders. It argues that Moffitt's taxonomy fits into a broad systems theory of human development. Section 3 discusses the literature on the risk variables for persistent antisocial behaviour identified by Moffitt. It extends beyond these, in order to examine the psychological processes underpinning the development of family and peer relationships, morality, locus of control, impulsivity, goal setting and self-esteem, all of which are related to antisocial behaviour.

1. A Brief History of Crime: The Research in Context

Origins of the Prison System

It was only in the early 19th Century that jail and prison guards replaced torture and the gallows as a response to criminal activity in Great Britain (Beavan, 2002; Gould, 1981). Up to this time, a revenge motive dominated civilized society's response to crime, which resulted in criminals being killed or banished. In addition to the absence of any corrective intention behind retributive punishment, a commonly held view that criminal tendencies were hereditary did not encourage attempts to reform criminals. Vestiges of this view could still be seen in beliefs about the XYY chromosomal link to male criminality in the 1960s (Gould, 1981). The establishment of the major penal codes in Great Britain in the late 18th and early 19th centuries saw the birth of a prison system. The aim of criminal justice shifted from retribution to punishment based on a legally limited view of power. Not only was the intention to protect society from dangerous criminals, but to assist inmates to rehabilitate themselves in order to become useful members of society.

Ineffective Prison Systems

The prison systems in South Africa, the United States and Great Britain today suggests this latter intention has not been realised (Goudine, Hoffman, & Venter, 2006; Indo & Indo, 1999). Rather than reform, the prison experiences of many entrench existing antisocial tendencies. They do this through the removal of any remaining social responsibility possessed by prisoners, by modelling the abuse of power, by driving inmates into gangs, and by reducing ex prisoners' chances of finding legal employment due to the stigma associated with a prison sentence (Batley, 2004; Foucault, 1977). John Indo gives a poignant personal view of this negative process (Indo & Indo, 1999). In South Africa, recent television documentaries about prison gangs, media reports about prison violence and staff corruption, and the difficulty ex-prisoners have re-integrating into society¹, maintain the perception that the prison system has a limited ability to rehabilitate offenders into society. A large prison population also has economic drawbacks. It is costly to maintain and the money could be better spent on social upliftment programs (California reinvents the wheel, 2004). This is especially relevant in a developing country such as South Africa.

The Criminal Population Today

In view of the generally non-rehabilitative outcome of the prison experience, prison populations in major nations such as the USA remain disturbingly large. So does crime. For instance, despite a national decline in crime rates in the USA from the 1990s, violent crime, particularly murder, has been rising (Lichtblau, 2005). In South Africa, the crime rate increased steadily during the pre-democratic election period of 1994, at which time it stabilized (South African Police Service, 2002). The national crime statistics for 2003-2004 showed a slight decrease in crime, although violent crime (in particular, armed robbery and rape) remained high, and the decrease in general crime was from a high baseline (Hosken, 2004, 21 September; Louw & Shaw, 1997; South African Police Service, 2005). NICRO statistics in October, 2004 showed a 5% increase in the number of

¹ Personal communication, May, 2003, from the National Institute of Crime and the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NICRO).

children convicted of violent crime (Lombard, 2004). The stabilization of the crime rate in South Africa in recent years is associated with the positive social and political changes that took place after the election of a democratic government in 1994 (Leggett, 2004; South African Police Service, 2005). Despite this reduction, violent crime remains unacceptably high in South Africa (Hosken, 2004).

Early Intervention - Moffitt's Solution

For some time evidence has emerged that the aetiology and correlates of criminality differ among subgroups of delinquents, identifiable by an age related pattern of antisocial behaviour. This research was formalized into a taxonomic theory by Terrie Moffitt, based on a longitudinal study of a New Zealand birth cohort (Moffitt, 1993). Support for Moffitt's taxonomy was found in other longitudinal studies, such as that involving working class London boys (Farrington, 1982) and from the Philadelphia sample of the National Collaborative Perinatal Project (Piquero, 2001). This distinction of different antisocial types is of particular societal value in terms of crime prevention. According to Moffitt, the most serious violent criminals in society were once young children at risk for persistent antisocial behaviour, in terms of both innate and environmental factors. According to this view, early intervention programs, aimed at altering the antisocial developmental trajectory of such children before this becomes entrenched (around late adolescence), could assist in preventing such individuals entering crime in the first place. A global move, fuelled by high prison populations, towards early intervention programs with children at risk for later severe antisocial behaviour is already in place (Woolgar & Scott, 2005).

In conclusion, a strong case can be made for the benefits, to South Africa and elsewhere, of the kind of early intervention programs generated by Moffitt's taxonomy. Research on Moffitt's theory has been conducted primarily in developed countries. There is the need to confirm whether her tenets apply in a developing country such as South Africa, which is beset by social problems, including one of the biggest wealth gaps between rich and poor of any country in the world.² The primary aim of the current study is to go some way towards establishing this evidence.

2. Moffitt's Taxonomy of Life-Course and Adolescent-Limited Offenders

This section of the literature review presents a detailed examination of Moffitt's theory. It extends beyond Moffitt's tenets to cover additional research relevant to her taxonomy.

For some time, longitudinal studies in several countries have identified subgroups of delinquents with different developmental pathways (Caspi, Elder, & Bem, 1987; Farrington, 1982, 1995; Kratzer & Hodgins, 1999; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1987). Moffitt's study over a 30 year period on a large Dunedin, New Zealand birth cohort confirmed these earlier findings and served as a basis for her taxonomy of two types of delinquents, life-course offenders and adolescent-limited offenders (Moffitt, 1993, 2003). Moffitt's theory brought together in a systematic way the literature showing the existence of different kinds of delinquency, each with different long term social implications, and provided a set of causal explanations for each type of delinquency.

Moffitt (1993) found that a very small group of males displayed high rates of antisocial behaviour over situations and time, while the majority of delinquents presented with this behaviour over a limited time period only, during adolescence. This latter group, whom Moffitt termed *adolescent-limited offenders*, relinquished their anti establishment behaviour in favour of a more conformist and socially approved lifestyle around late adolescence or in their early twenties. A small percentage of those presenting with delinquent behaviour in the studies (about 5%), manifested antisocial behaviour much earlier, in pre-pubertal years, and continued with this behaviour through adolescence into adulthood. Whereas most delinquents did not obtain a criminal record as a result of their antisocial behaviour, the more serious and persistent nature of the crimes of this latter group led to early and repeat prison sentences. This group was termed *life-course offenders* by Moffitt.

² See the following website for details of the Gini Index of South Africa, relative to other countries:
<http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/indices/countries>.

Where Moffitt's theory added value to earlier research was by providing a comprehensive theoretical framework to explain the differences behind the two kinds of adolescent delinquent groups. She hypothesized that gender, temperament, cognitive abilities, school achievement, personality traits, family attachment bonds, child rearing practices, family deviance, mental disorders and socio-economic status were all predictors of life-course antisocial behaviour (Moffitt, 1993). Moffitt's theory has been supported by her own follow-up of her Dunedin sample, as well as by other independent longitudinal research (Moffitt, 2003).

Moffitt (1993) noted that earlier research into delinquency had been conducted on cross-sectional adolescent samples. Here, it was impossible to distinguish between the two kinds of delinquents, as both groups displayed a similar high number and degree of antisocial behaviour and contact with juvenile courts. The different types of delinquents could be identified only by the different long term developmental pathway of their antisocial behaviour. Adolescent-limited offenders' antisocial tendencies emerged in adolescence. Until this point, they led a normative childhood. Potential life-course offenders already demonstrated antisocial behaviour across a range of settings, including school, home and the community, in pre-pubertal years. These behaviours were stable across time, although they took different forms at various ages.

The next following section looks at the key differences between Moffitt's life-course offenders and more normative, adolescent-limited delinquents, emerging in her longitudinal New Zealand cohort study. Support from independent research is included in the discussion. These differences relate to the antisocial behaviour itself, to heritability, gender, cognitive ability, socio-economic status and race or ethnicity.

2.1 Differences in Antisocial Behaviour between Life-Course and Adolescent-Limited Offenders across Time, Settings and Type

2.11 Incidence (Stability over Time)

There is a marked difference in the incidence of crime between the groups. Research shows that only a small group of perpetrators are responsible for most of the serious crime in any given population (Farrington, Ohlin, & Wilson, 1986). This group fits the profile of Moffitt's life-course offenders and reflects *the stability of offending* across time by this group. In a large scale study of 10,000 males, Farrington et al. found that 6% of the group accounted for more than half the crimes in the sample. Robins (1978), in a review of epidemiological studies, found a consistency in prevalence rates (about 5% of males) of those formally classified as having antisocial personality disorders, regardless of age. He concluded this rate was most likely to reflect the reoccurrence of the same life-course individuals in different antisocial categories at different ages (Robins, 1978, 1985). On the contrary, adolescent-limited delinquency is common but relatively short lived, in the male population. Farrington et al. found that about four fifths of all males have some police contact, mainly during adolescence. Adolescent-limited offending begins in early adolescence and by 28, 85% of former delinquents have stopped offending (Moffitt, 1993).

While the antisocial behaviour of the life-course individual is stable across time, it *manifests differently at various ages* (Moffitt, 1993). Around age 4 it involves tantrums, aggression and biting, at age 10, bullying³, truancy, and petty theft around age 15, precocious sexual behaviour, car theft and drug sales at 22, major robbery with violence, rape, murder, fraud and child abuse at 30.

2.12 Onset and Duration of Antisocial Behaviour

Loeber (1982) found that a first contact with the law between the ages of 7–11 was a key indicator for predicting life-course offending individuals. The adolescent-limited offender's delinquency begins typically with the onset of puberty, peaking around 15–16 years (Farrington, 1987) and ceases in late adolescence or early adulthood. Before puberty his behaviour is normative. Until the onset of puberty, these youths do not demonstrate high levels of aggression or other forms of conduct disorders. Life-course offenders present with

³ Around this age, peer relationship problems are a significant predictor of persistent antisocial behaviour, according to longitudinal data from the Christchurch Health and Development Study (Woodward & Fergusson, 1999)

conduct disorders from young childhood. These antisocial behaviours change in form over time, but remain stable throughout adolescence and into adulthood (Moffitt, 1993). The potential life-course offender tends to graduate from a difficult infancy to become a confrontational toddler, progresses into a delinquent adolescence and continues with antisocial behaviour into adulthood. In the pre-pubertal stage life-course offenders present with conduct disorders such as excessive bullying, temper tantrums, cruelty to animals or other children, petty theft and school refusals.

2.13 Stability across Multiple Settings

The antisocial behaviour of the life-course offender is stable across settings, in the home, classroom and neighbourhood, whereas that of the adolescent-limited offender is situational (Moffitt, 1993). An example of the former behaviour is the 4-year-old boy, aggressive and with temper tantrums at home, who is also aggressive at pre-school, hitting and biting peers and having temper tantrums when disciplined by his teacher. The 10-year-old who engages in petty theft at home and also steals money or articles from peers at school and at their homes, is a further example. Adolescent-limited antisocial behaviour tends to occur in one setting more than others. For example, the reasonably behaved teenager in the home consumes excess alcohol, breaks road rules and damages public property when out with friends.

2.14 Variation in Type of Antisocial Behaviour

Delinquent behaviour is classified as either a status offence in both the USA and the UK, or as an index (USA)/indictable (UK) offence⁴ (Henggeler, 1989). In South Africa there is a similar categorization (Schonteich & Louw, 1999). Status offences⁵ are acts for which adults would not be prosecuted, and include drinking alcohol, absconding and underage sex by minors. Indictable offences are those that fall under the criminal justice system. They are further divided into violent crimes such as murder, rape, robbery and assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm (GBH), and property offences such as burglary, car theft and arson. Less serious indictable crimes include activities such as hitting family member or peers, the use or sale of drugs, property damage, petty theft, prostitution, breaking and entering, and disorderly conduct.

Moffitt's adolescent-limited offenders commit crimes that "symbolize adult privilege or that demonstrate autonomy from parental control" (Moffitt, 1993, p. 695). These include vandalism, public order offences, substance abuse, theft, and status crimes such as absconding. According to Moffitt, life-course offenders commit a wider range of crimes than those perpetrated by their adolescent-limited counterparts, extending to acts usually committed by lone offenders, and to more victim-oriented offences, such as violence and fraud. Overall, life-course offenders commit more crimes and more violent crimes than their adolescent-limited counterparts.

2.2 Differences in Heritability, Gender, Cognitive, Socio-economic and Racial Characteristics between Life-course and Adolescent-limited Offenders

2.21 Heritability

This section reviews studies that support Moffitt's contention that persistent antisocial behaviour has a greater heritable element than does adolescent-limited delinquency. It does this by looking at research using twins or adopted children, and by comparing the condition with psychopathology in general.

Twin and adoptee studies.

Moffitt's ten year review of research using twin and adoption studies supported her contention that early onset antisocial behaviour has a stronger genetic component than late onset antisocial behaviour (Moffitt, 2003). The first group of these studies used a behavioural approach. They identified subtypes using the Aggression

⁴ These are the different terms used in the USA and UK to describe similar offences. The UK term is used in this paper.

⁵ More recently in the USA and UK this kind of offence is seldom considered in the classification of serious delinquency and the focus has been on antisocial behaviour that is dealt with by the criminal system (Farrington, 1987).

and Delinquency scales from Achenbach & Edelbrock's (1983) Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL) and looked at heritability estimates of the "aggression" and "delinquency" scales on the CBCL. The Aggression scale is associated with life-course offending, as it measures antisocial personality disorders and physical violence and its scores are stable across time. The Delinquency scale is associated with adolescent-limited offending, as it measures anti-establishment behaviour and its scores rise sharply during adolescence. Twin- and adoption-studies using these scales found higher heritability for aggression than for delinquency (e.g. Edelbrock, Rende, Promin, & Thompson, 1995; Eley, Lichtenstein & Stevenson, 1999, cited in Moffitt, 2003). The second set of studies took a developmental approach and defined life-course offending as pre-adolescent or adolescent onset and continuing or not continuing, to adulthood. These studies showed that early onset and also adolescent onset antisocial behaviour, that persisted to adulthood, were more heritable than that confined to adolescence (e.g. Dilalla, 2002). The third group of studies used large samples of very young twins. These studies indicated that early onset antisocial behaviour is associated with relatively higher heritability than late onset delinquency and is characterised by aggressive behaviour. Taylor, Iacono, & McGue (2000) also found that the risk of early onset antisocial behaviour was substantially greater for co-twins in monozygotic as opposed to dizygotic pairs of twins.

In addition to research reviewed by Moffitt, Rutter's (1997) review of adoptee studies showed that, of all adopted children, those at genetic risk for conduct disorder were most likely to manifest antisocial behaviour if exposed to chronic stresses in their adoptive family. The link between genetically influenced personality traits such as psychosis, neuroticism and extroversion, and serious adult criminality, also suggests a stronger hereditary influence in early- versus late-onset delinquency (Caspi, McGee, Moffitt, & Silva, 1995).

In spite of research support for a stronger heritable element in life-course versus adolescent-limited offending, there has not been agreement on the magnitude of this effect. A meta-analysis by Rhee & Waldman (2003) concluded this process was complex and remained an area requiring further long term research, particularly using twin studies. They suggested that earlier differences in findings were caused by inconsistencies in the methodology of these studies.

Commonalities between psychopathology and the life-course offending syndrome.

There are notable similarities between psychopathology and life-course persistent antisocial behaviour (Moffitt, 1993). The incidence of psychopathology and Moffitt's syndrome are both relatively rare, around 3-5% of the male population (Robins, 1985). As with psychopathologies, the syndrome is inappropriately resistant to change in response to changing circumstances. Other similarities include the biological underpinnings of both conditions, and the co-morbidity of the syndrome with other mental disorders, such as hyperactivity in childhood and mania in adulthood (Stevenson & Goodman, 2001). Moffitt's life-course offending syndrome fits the classification in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (*DSM-IV-R*) for conduct disorder in children and for antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) in adults (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

Of all the psychopathologies, the syndrome is most clearly linked to psychopathy, both in terms of personality traits and overt antisocial behaviours. This has resulted in the classification of both psychopathy and ASPD in the ASPD category of the *DSM-IV-R*. Psychopathy occurs in 2-3% of the population globally but a much higher proportion (20%) of prisoners are psychopaths (Moffitt, 1993). Similarities shared by the psychopath and life-course offender include impulsive behaviour, a need for excitement and irresponsibility, early behaviour problems, adult antisocial behaviour, limited empathy and remorse. While this co-classification has been a problem for some social psychologists (Hare, 1996)⁶, it serves to underline Moffitt's concern about the

⁶ Robert Hare, originator of the Psychopathy Checklist (PCL-R), was against the combination of the diagnosis of "psychopathy" with that of "antisocial personality disorder" (ASPD) under one diagnostic category, albeit the similarities between the socially deviant behaviours of each group. He motivated for a diagnostic separation of these two conditions. His argument was based on personality differences between these conditions. While most psychopaths meet the criteria for ASPD, most individuals with ASPD are not psychopaths. The former differ from ASPD in the interpersonal and affective components of psychopathy, such as the absence of concern for others, egocentricity, superficiality and manipulation of others. Hare found that while psychopathic offenders (as defined by the PCL-R) were much more likely to violently re-offend following release from prisons, a diagnosis of ASPD had relatively little predictive power regarding recidivism in prison populations. This leads to the interesting classificatory question of where Moffitt's life-

entrenched long term negative consequences of a life-course offending developmental trajectory, if this can not be averted in childhood.

2.22 Gender

Moffitt's taxonomy is in accordance with most of the literature by describing a significantly stronger association between maleness and both types of delinquency and with serious adult offending (Friedman, Kramer, & Kreisher, 1999; Kratzer & Hodgins, 1999; Lynam, Moffitt, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1993; Moffitt, 1993; Stevenson & Goodman, 2001). Farrington, in a review of delinquency studies, found a ratio of 5.3 : 1 between male and female delinquents in USA and UK studies (Farrington, 1987). Both genetic and socialising influences are associated with the prevalence of boys amongst delinquents. While these influences are predisposing factors for both Moffitt's types of offenders, the addition of a combination of early psychoneurological deficits and environmental risk in some young boys predisposes them towards a chronic antisocial developmental pathway.

Biological science research has provided some answers to the link between maleness and aggressive adolescent behaviour ("delinquency" in general). The higher level of testosterone to which the male foetus is exposed in utero is responsible for a greater natural tendency towards aggression than is the case for females. A second biological influence is the historically higher mortality rate of baby boys compared to baby girls. The same processes leading to infant mortality in boys may place other boys at a greater risk for Moffitt's early psychoneurological impairments than girls. Another explanatory link is with genetic deficiencies in monoamine oxidase A (MAOA), a gene occurring on the X chromosome, which is related specifically to chronic or persistent aggression in males, if they are also exposed to psychologically adverse early developmental environments, such as poor parenting (Caspi et al., 2002).⁷ The "high risk" variant of the MAOA gene is linked to aggression by reducing the performance of frontal cortex areas responsible for the deliberate managing of behaviour and for emotional control (Carey, 2006).

Differential socialisation traditions of boys and girls also partly account for the higher levels of antisocial behaviour in boys. Farrington (1987) found that caretakers, especially those with poor parenting skills, are more likely to respond with aggression to the difficult behaviour of young boys than that of young girls. Hudson provides an interesting, if empirically unsubstantiated, psychoanalytic explanation of higher aggression levels in males over females (Hudson & Jacot, 1993).⁸

2.23 Cognitive Abilities

There is strong evidence of cognitive differences between early and late onset antisocial behaviour types, with the former showing poorer cognitive abilities (Donnellan, Xiaoja, & Wenk, 2000; Friedman et al., 1999; Hirschi & Hindelang, 1977; Kratzer & Hodgins, 1999; Lynam et al., 1993). These differences are minor, being about one standard deviation below the population average, and are mainly in the area of verbal cognition (Moffitt, 1993; Quay, 1987a).

There are a number of explanations for the relationship between poor verbal reasoning and persistent antisocial behaviour (Piquero, 2001). The first of these suggests that verbal cognitive processes are required for the development of self-control, a deficit that impedes socialisation from the earliest parent-child interactions. A second view explains low verbal intelligence as resulting in the individual being grounded in the present in terms of his thinking, resulting in impulsive and irresponsible behaviour. A third explanation is based on

course offending syndrome would best belong if ASPD and psychopathy were to be given different classifications in a future DSM publication.

⁷ This refers to the "Lyon hypothesis" which holds that in all mammalian somatic cells, all X chromosomes in excess of one are inactivated on a random basis at an early stage of embryogenesis. Thus the normal human female is in effect a mosaic for heterozygous X-linked genes, since the paternal X chromosome is inactivated in some cells and the maternal one in the others. This reduces the chance that female embryos will carry a deficient MAOA gene, whereas in the male, there being only one X chromosome per cell, a defective MAOA gene will remain. See: http://www.ndif.org/Terms/Lyon_hypothesis.html

⁸ Hudson holds that men tend to conceive of people as inanimate, and inanimate objects as if they were people. In predisposed males (e.g. high aggression levels), this makes it easier for them, as opposed to females, to commit crimes of violence against others.

Eysenck's autonomic conditioning theory of antisocial personality disorder. Children with verbal-skill deficits do not respond to the labelling of misbehaviour as leading to punishment.

It has been suggested that that differences in IQ between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders is the result of a moderating variable, such as differential detection by police of less intelligent delinquents, social class or race, but research has shown this not to be the case (Donnellan et al., 2000; Lynam et al., 1993; Quay, 1987a). Furthermore, the consequences and correlates of early onset delinquency are *not the cause of a lower IQ*. Rather, Lynam et al. concluded that low IQ was a *cause* of delinquency, due to both direct and indirect effects. Direct effects arose from neuropsychological deficits in executive functions, which impeded the child's ability to monitor and control its own behaviour. Indirectly, lowered IQ led to delinquency through repeated school failures, which further reduced the child's motivation to fit in with established authority and also closed doors to further education and legal employment.

Moffitt's (1993) theory did not find race to be a direct predictor of life-course offending. Donnellan et al. (2000), using data from the large scale California Youth Guidance Centre study, did find that cognitive ability was linked to the development of criminal careers in Hispanics and Caucasians but not in Afro-Americans. However, the study concluded that ethnicity had a moderating effect on IQ as a predictive feature of early and late onset delinquency. Moffitt (2003) ascribed the race/ethnicity effect in Donnellan's findings to greater environmental risk factors for the vulnerable Afro-American child. The limited job and educational opportunities available to the Afro-American group compared with the other groups, *led to even those students who were relatively bright* having difficulty achieving school grades, obtaining tertiary training and legal occupations. These children therefore did not benefit from their adequate intelligence in terms of better qualifications and job opportunities than were available to the cognitively below average subjects in the study. In short, where schooling is of a generally good standard, the negative effects of low IQ on academic progress is apparent, where it is of a poor standard, the advantages of a higher IQ in terms of progress, are less marked. Donnellan et al.'s finding are pertinent to the current research which investigates "disadvantaged" (although not minority) participants, faced with similar educational and employment challenges as Donnellan's Afro-American subjects.

2.24 Socio-economic Status (SES)

There have been discrepant findings in the literature regarding the relationship between early and late onset delinquency and SES. This arises primarily from a sociological versus psychological research framework. Different definitions of how SES is measured also play a role.

A sociological versus psychological (individual) perspective.

From a sociological perspective, as a group, life-course offenders have a lower SES than adolescent-limited offenders (Henggeler, 1989; Lahey & Waldman, 2003; Moffitt, 2003). However, a review of the literature suggests this is an indirect influence, moderated by different parenting styles associated with different SES levels (Evans, 2003; Snyder & Patterson, 1987). Colvin (2000) broke down this effect into different disciplinary styles, maternal supervision, maternal rejection, and attachment to parents, all of which he found to be associated with different SES levels. Several environmental factors outside the family also have been found to moderate the relationship between SES and early onset delinquency. These include high crime neighbourhoods; delinquent peers; inadequate economic resources to access day- and after school-care and mental health services, pollution, and crowded, noisier and more hazardous surroundings (Evans, 2003; Lahey & Waldman, 2003).

The individual perspective of the effects of SES on chronic offending reinforces a conclusion that the influence is moderating rather than directly causal. SES has not emerged as a necessary predictive factor of either life-course or adolescent-limited offending at the individual level. Moffitt found that controlling for SES, there remained a strong association between the at risk child and an early environment characterized by harsh, inconsistent and unaffectionate parenting (Moffitt, 1993). In related research, Piquero & Brezina (2001) found no relationship between SES and adolescent-limited offending.

Problems of definition.

The general, albeit indirect, relationship between SES and life-course offending is replicated in most, but not all, studies conducted in this field. Aside from the differences in theoretical perspective discussed above, these discrepancies are due to differences in the definitions and operational measures used to assess SES across studies (Henggeler, 1989). Such measures include parental occupation (commonly used); parental educational level and wealth estimates (B Parker, personal communication, March 21, 2003; van de Ruit, May, & Roberts, 2001).⁹

Most studies commenting on SES and life-course offending have been conducted in developed countries. The relationship between persistent offending and SES in a developing population, such as post-Apartheid South Africa, is unconfirmed and was not pursued in the present study, as the present research design, based on the extant literature, used relatively matched research groups.

In conclusion, low SES has both a causal and selection effect on chronic antisocial behaviour.¹⁰ A low socio-economic environment conducive to crime influences a child to develop conduct disorders. This is a causal effect. Individuals with antisocial personalities tend to follow a pattern of downward social mobility (Lahey & Waldman, 2003). The influence of these personality characteristics in leading to poor socio-economic conditions is a selection effect.

2.25 Race (Ethnicity)

The relationship between ethnicity and early onset delinquency has already been touched on in the discussion of IQ and persistent offending above. Moffitt (2003) maintained her theory applied to ethnic minorities as well as to Whites in the USA, even in the face of evidence that the crime rate for Black Americans was higher than that for whites (Donnellan et al., 2000; Farrington, 1987). She held that the poverty and institutionalised prejudice associated with many ethnic minorities acted as moderating variables in the ethnicity/life-course offending correlation: “Life-course persistent antisocials [sic] may be anticipated at elevated rates among Black Americans because the putative root causes of this type are elevated by institutionalised prejudice and by poverty...among poor Blacks, prenatal care is less available, infant nutrition is poorer, and the incidence of fetal exposure to toxic and infectious agents is greater, placing infants at high risk for the nervous system problems that research has shown to interfere with prosocial child development.” (Moffitt, 1994, cited in Piquero, 2001, p. 198). Combined, prejudice and poverty speed up the cycle of “cumulative continuity” (Moffitt, 1993, p. 683) that places Black American children at risk for persistent antisocial behaviour. Moffitt’s view of the relationship between ethnicity and chronic offending has been supported in subsequent research indicating that the developmental processes predicting chronic offending are the same across groups defined by race (Moffitt, 2003, p.69).

As with the socio-economic variable, this tenet was not tested in the current study, as the groups were matched across race.

2.3 An Interactive Model of Persistent Antisocial Behaviour

This sub section examines child and environmental influences leading to a life-course offending pattern. After a digression into topical literature on the “nature-nurture” debate, it examines how these elements interact to produce a downward spiral into chronic antisocial behaviour.

Moffitt is one of the early proponents of the *interactive* model of antisocial behaviour. She held that life-course offenders were children at risk for aggressive, antisocial behaviour due to negative genetic, pre-natal, birth or early developmental factors. These resulted in hardly noticeable minor cognitive deficiencies, low frustration tolerance and a poor attention span. When such children were exposed to an environment that

⁹ These range from income levels in developed populations, to indirect wealth measures in developing populations, such as money spent on clothing and footwear, nature of accommodation and number of rooms per person per house.

¹⁰ See Wright, Caspi, Moffitt, & Silva (1999) for a good discussion of this debate in the developmental literature.

facilitated antisocial behaviour, there was a strong likelihood they would follow a chronic antisocial developmental trajectory. Moffitt and others identified inadequate early parenting, and family systems marked by poor communication and aggression, as key environmental risk factors.

2.31 Child Risk Factors

These originate from prenatal, post-natal and hereditary sources. Moffitt described the infant at risk for later persistent antisocial behaviour as displaying minor adverse “psychoneurological variations” which she defined as the “extent to which anatomical structures and physiological processes within the nervous system influence psychological characteristics such as temperament, behavioural development, cognitive abilities, or all three” (Moffitt, 1993, p. 681). These at risk children do not display neurological problems sufficiently severe to merit immediate intervention (e.g. autism, retardation, physical handicaps) and their sub average cognitive abilities, irascible temperaments and poor attention span are seldom noticed until they enter the formal school system. Even then, the child is seen as a poor academic performer and noncompliant primary school child, rather than as requiring specific intervention (i.e. specific educational and other assistance).

The early cognitive, motor and personality problems associated with clinical psychoneurological deficits in the toddler are wide ranging. They include awkwardness and clumsiness, over-activity, irritability, impulsivity and inattentiveness. Developmental milestones, the ability to assimilate new knowledge, language comprehension and expression are frequently also delayed. At school these children continue to be inattentive and irascible, achieve poorly and have a low frustration tolerance.

Moffitt did not place particular importance on the specific origins of these early psychoneurological deficits. Many sources have been identified in the literature. *Prenatal* factors include maternal substance abuse, maternal smoking or poor nutrition. Birth complications, low birth weight, poor early infant nutrition or infant abuse are *post-natal* predisposing factors (Brennan, Grekin, & Mednick, 2003; Kratzer & Hodgins, 1999; Moffitt, 2003; Piquero & Brezina, 2001; The omega point, 2006). *Hereditary* elements include parents who are temperamentally highly aggressive and who transmit this genetically, as well as through child rearing practices, to the child. The heritability element of persistent antisocial behaviour is shown especially in major twin studies (Dilalla, 2002; Moffitt, 2003).

2.32 Environmental Risk Factors

Environmental risk factors include caregivers with inadequate parenting skills, disrupted family bonds and poverty. Beyond early childhood, the environmental risks extend to poor relationships with peers and teachers. The considerable literature around the key environmental risk variables of parenting and family has been placed in Chapter 5, with the analysis of family research data, to facilitate the discussion of those results. The link between socio-economic status and Moffitt’s taxonomy is dealt with in 2.24 above.

Moffitt’s taxonomy holds that child risk factors interact with environmental variables to create early or late onset delinquency. The relative influence of child versus environmental risk factors has been argued extensively in the literature, under the topic of the “nature-nurture” debate (e.g. (Rutter, 1997). A digression into this debate provides a background to systems theories of child development, including that of Terrie Moffitt.

2.33 The Nature-Nurture Debate

It has long been accepted by sociobiologists that human traits are influenced by both inheritance and the environment (Mayr, 1991). The idea of an interactive process in the development of aggressive behaviour is part of an ongoing research focus in the literature. Recent interest has been on the effects on behaviour of the *interplay* between genetics and the environment, rather than on the relative strengths of nature or nurture on behaviour (Spence, 2004).

The interaction of nature-nurture plays out in Moffitt’s (1993) theory. Her taxonomy examines how child factors (“nature”) such as a low frustration tolerance, inattention, hyperactivity and irascibility evoke a negative hostile responses from a difficult environment, in particular, from maladaptive caregivers (“nurture”

factors). Such responses in turn model for him inappropriate social relationship techniques and teach him to respond to others with distrust and aggression.

Studies have identified three different environmental/genetic covariates, all of which are represented in Moffitt's theory (Dilalla, 2002; Moffitt, 2003; Rutter, 1997). Firstly there is a *passive correlation*, where hereditary elements from the parents (such as aggressive personality traits) influence the behaviour of the child directly, and indirectly, through his aggressive family environment. Secondly there is an *evocative correlation*, in which child temperamental factors generate negative responses from his caregivers. Finally, there is an *active correlation*, where the antisocial child, whose disposition contributes towards his antisocial stance, chooses his environments (e.g. gang membership).

Topical research on the “nature-nurture” interaction.

Early developmental and hereditary risk factors are not investigated in any depth in the present study, due to limitations of the life-story research design. Investigation of early “nature” factors contributing to the “at risk” status of the child is restricted to data obtained from the life-stories and third party interviews. and is discussed in Chapter 3, 1.3. However, recent innovative work in this area supports Moffitt's thesis that early psychoneurological elements place the child at risk for future life-course offending. It is therefore discussed here.

MAOA Levels

The interaction between environmental risk factors and a specific variation of the monoamine oxidase A (MAOA) genotype has been linked to persistent antisocial behaviour. When males with low active genes for MAOA on the X chromosome are placed in an environment where they are maltreated or abused, they show a propensity to develop persistent antisocial behaviour.¹¹ However, reared by parents with good parenting skills, such children are unlikely to manifest this behaviour. Children with high active MAOA genes are broadly resistant to the effects of child maltreatment (Caspi et al., 2002; Ridley, 2003).¹²

Some research in neuroscience has gone beyond the concept of environmental activation of a static gene, to a dynamic explanation of the interaction between genes and environment. “Genes make proteins which are important biochemical baggage for brain cell circuits to work. But they are not a one-off; they are constantly being activated or switched off according to the caprices of the environment, whether it is the micro-milieu of the brain itself, or the external environment in which you are moving.” (Greenfield, 2003, p. 954)

Frontal Lobe Function

An area of current research interest is the interaction between neuroanatomical dysfunction, especially frontal lobe deficits, and environmental risk factors, in the development of persistent, violent offending. Research on impulsive reactive killers found reduced activity in the frontal lobe of the brain (Ishikawa & Raine, 2003). More generally, deficits in frontal lobe development in males are linked to poor executive cognitive functions such as inattention, poor planning, decreased behavioural inhibition and an impaired ability to generate socially acceptable responses. As mentioned earlier, frontal lobe dysfunction is also associated with a poor response to socialising punishments.

Deficits in frontal lobe dysfunction are accommodated in Moffitt's theory, as an early psychoneurological problem in the child. Of particular relevance to Moffitt's hypothesis is research showing the interaction between impaired or delayed frontal lobe development and the environment. Ishikawa and Raine (2003) found that when such children were exposed to secure, loving and organized families, deficits in executive function were minimized. Placed in a risk environment with maternal rejection, family chaos or poor parental discipline, these children manifested persistent antisocial behaviour.

Attachment Behaviour and Frontal Lobe Development: Not only do environments activate physiological deficits in the child, they create these. This is seen in the interaction between early poor parenting and the

¹¹ These results are also true for rhesus monkeys (Suomi, 2003).

¹² More research is required to clarify the influence of MAOA on persistent aggressive, criminal behaviour, as a recent study did not replicate the findings of Caspi and others cited in the Ridley article (Haberstick et al., 2005).

functioning of the hypothalamo-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis in the infant. When an infant is unable to elicit a response from its caregiver, this breaks down the interactive pattern between baby and caregiver. Such a breakdown retards development of the occipito-frontal cortex by inhibiting the actions of the HPA axis which regulate the development of the frontal cortex. The latter is required for learning and relationship formation. The breakdown in the earliest response eliciting pattern between baby and caregiver becomes the neurological underpinning of poor early attachment in the child (Rees, 2005).

The above review of recent research into the interaction between child at risk factors with its environment in the development of persistent antisocial behaviour research provides good neurological support for Moffitt's theory.

Brain Differences and Empathy

Baron-Cohen investigated research into biological differences in the brains of males and females in the ability to emphasise (Baron-Cohen, 2003). He argued convincingly that in normal individuals there are neurological underpinnings for the fact that most males are better able to understand and build systems than most females, and that most females are better at empathizing. At the extreme end of the scale, the inability of males to understand the feelings of others, results in conditions such as autism. Baron-Cohen's review of the relevant research identified several brain areas connected to empathic ability, including the amygdala, the orbito- and medial areas of the prefrontal cortex, the superior temporal sulcus and the corpus callosum.

As discussed in Chapter 8 on moral behaviour, the failure to respond empathically to others is a contributory factor to a life-course offending trajectory. Baron-Cohen's (2003) model suggests young boys, *in general*, have greater difficulty than their female counterparts taking on the perspective of peers, and more importantly, generating the appropriate emotional responses. Baron-Cohen identified both these processes as necessary for responding empathically to others. It can be argued that this general deficit is aggravated in the potential life-course offender, who, due to his early psychoneurological difficulties, fails to fully develop the brain structures required for empathy, and is therefore at an even greater disadvantage than normative young boys in this respect.

Resilience Genes

Moffitt and Caspi's work on allelic variations in the serotonin transporter, 5-HTT gene, suggests that forms of this gene either enhance or reduce a depressive outcome when young children are exposed to early environmental risk factors such as abuse and maltreatment. The effects of this gene are seen to promote an individual's resilience or vulnerability to early risk factors, although additional elements, such as the child's ability to create sound relationships with adults, also assist in his resilience to early environmental risks (Bazelon, 2006).¹³ The relevance of this research to deflecting a life-course offending trajectory, in the young child who already has difficulty with relationships, is yet to be researched.

2.34 The Downward Spiral into a Life-Course Offending Pattern

The Early Years: According to Moffitt's theory, early difficult behaviour of the child "evokes" a reaction from his parents. This evocative response serves to maintain the child's problem behaviours (Caspi et al. 1987). The at risk child's behaviour is testing even for the caregiver with competent parenting skills, but disastrous for caregivers whose parenting skills are inadequate (Rutter, 1997). Such caregivers respond negatively and aggressively towards the difficult child, which aggravates his naturally irritable and easily frustrated temperament and teaches him to satisfy his impulses in an aggressive demanding way. Moffitt cites a range of studies showing that parents with difficult children also reduce their efforts to guide and monitor their children's behaviour (e.g. Anderson, Lytton & Romney, 1986; Lee & Bates, 1985; Macoby & Jacklin, 1983, cited in Moffitt, 1993, p.682). In support of her interactive theory, Moffitt (1993) found significant interaction

¹³ This finding has been replicated in animal studies. Suomi (2003) found a link between 5-HTT and aggressive responses to the environment in Rhesus monkeys.

effects in her New Zealand study between early neuropsychological deficit, family adversity and aggression towards others.

The Cycle Strengthens at School: As the child progresses into preschool and school years, his antisocial behaviour is reinforced by exposure to peers and the school environment (Quay, 1987c). His continued aggression is seen as bullying, and he is rejected by peers with normative interpersonal skills. His only recourse is to associate with other misfits, which perpetuates his deficient social skills. The child also does not succeed at school, as his minor cognitive difficulties make it hard for him to achieve. Poor concentration and impulsivity aggravate his scholastic problems. He is often in trouble with teachers. The only reinforcement he gains in the classroom is through unfavourable attention seeking.

At this stage of the downwards spiral the child begins, by his interactions, to perpetuate his antisocial behaviours. Moffitt (1993) uses the concept of *reactive and proactive interactions* to explain this process. Expecting hostile responses from others, the child always interprets ambiguous social situations in a negative manner. His hostile reactions to perceived threats reduce opportunities to engage in adaptive social relationships even more. Secondly, he actively seeks out social environments that support his interaction style and is thus more likely to mix with antisocial others, such as with gangs. Moffitt's theory is supported by Rutter (1997), whose review showed that antisocial individuals *act* in ways that increase the chances they will experience high risk environments as adults.

Maintenance of an Antisocial Behaviour Pattern: The evocative, reactive and proactive interactions the at risk child has with his environment serve to entrench his antisocial behaviour in two ways (Caspi et al. 1987).

Early maladaptive interactions with his environment set off a chain of *cumulative consequences* that narrows his chances of escaping this life style. He has increasingly less exposure to models of good socialising skills, and his scholastic failures close doors to opportunities to better himself and to acquire legal employment. This makes illegal occupations attractive. In addition to these cumulative effects, the life-course offender's early deficits persist as he progresses towards adulthood and are *continuous effects* that impede his performance at school and work.

Moffitt (1993) draws attention to the difficulty the established life-course offender has in responding to intervention by changing to an adaptive life style. Because his behavioural repertoire is restricted to antisocial behaviours, he does not know how to relate "normally" to others and reverts to an aggressive, impulsive mode as soon as he feels pressure. Even when placed on a program to give him skills, or given a job opportunity, he tends to seek out those with whom he feels most comfortable, namely others who do not fit in. Thus, he foregoes the opportunity to associate with prosocial others. Secondly, he is often caught in the trap created by the consequences of his antisocial behaviour. Due to his impulsive, unplanned approach to decision making, he makes early choices (e.g. committing crime, dropping out of school or becoming an addict), that close the door to future adaptive opportunities for him.

Entrenchment of an Antisocial Behaviour Pattern: At what stage does the potential life-course offender's behavioural repertoire and options become so narrowed that he is irreversibly set on his maladaptive lifestyle and his antisocial personality disorder is entrenched? This remains uncertain, but Moffitt (1993) suggests this occurs during late adolescence. In the adolescent period, the antisocial child wins popular notoriety with teenagers who fall into the adolescent-limited delinquent category. For a change, he is admired. His antisocial behaviour is reinforced by this attention and it is around this time that his maladaptive behaviour becomes entrenched.

2.4 Adolescent-limited Offenders

The present study concentrates on Moffitt's life-course offender type. Other research has investigated the defining features of adolescent-limited (or "normative") delinquency in some detail (e.g. Piquero & Brezina, 2001). In explaining the difference between Moffitt's types in terms of antisocial behaviours, Kalb & Loeber, (2003, p. 641) distinguish between "persistent antisocial" and "defiant" behaviours. Persistent antisocial behaviour involves disobedient, non compliant behaviour which is stable across multiple settings. It is also an

interactive phenomenon. Defiant behaviour is negativism for its own sake, such as tantrums or whining in response to parental requests. While Moffitt's life-course offenders demonstrate both kinds of negative behaviour, the delinquency of the adolescent-limited offender is more in the nature of defiant behaviour.

The most common kind of delinquent in society fits Moffitt's (1993) definition of the adolescent-limited offender. While the life-course offender's antisocial behaviour arises from neuro-developmental deficits, adolescent-limited delinquency originates from social processes alone. The characteristics of this latter group, such as age of onset, duration and content of antisocial behaviour, were dealt with in 2.1 above. The *process* behind the development of this kind of antisocial behaviour is described here. Moffitt maintained that the most common cause of adolescent-limited antisocial behaviour is the gap between physical and social maturation. In most developed societies adolescents are physically mature in their early teens but remain dependent on their parents long after this. This sets up frustration in many teenagers due to an unmet desire to be awarded adult privileges and rights. Delinquency is their response, a challenge to the authority structures that frustrate them. They model their behaviour on other adolescents who appear to have some of these privileges already, youngsters already well known for their sexual prowess and flouting of authority structures. These latter individuals frequently become Moffitt's life-course offenders.

Moffitt (1993) held that adolescent-limited delinquency was virtually normative for many youngsters, serving to enhance their social maturity, win peer approval and autonomy from parents. She suggested that adolescents who engaged in minimal delinquency either did not experience the maturity gap due to specific cultural features, had already found adult privileges through their achievements, or possessed personal characteristics that made them unattractive to peer social groups in which delinquency usually took place. The research by Piquero & Brezina (2001) supported Moffitt's concept of the developmental path of the adolescent-limited delinquent.

In early adulthood most adolescent-limited delinquents begin to aspire towards more conventional social goals, such as a sound job, material comforts or marriage. Most emerge unscathed from their antisocial period and resume conventional lifestyles, due to their adequate social skills and reasonable educational qualifications. Some might not be as lucky if they are caught in the "traps" of a criminal record, imprisonment, addiction or no formal qualification, all of which close the door to future opportunities (Moffitt, 2003).

This latter scenario is a particular problem in a developing country such as South Africa, where job and training opportunities are restricted and financial resources for the greater part of the population very limited. *One of the key aims of the current study was to investigate whether the majority of those research subjects falling in the recidivist prison group demonstrated an life-course offending profile rather than being mostly adolescent-limited delinquents caught in one of the above traps.*

2.5 Low-Level Chronic Offenders

In a review of independent research around her original theory, Moffitt (2003) noted the emergence of an additional group demonstrating child onset antisocial behaviour but no serious delinquency in adulthood. These individuals presented a history of intermittent low level chronic offending. There was some evidence that this group showed long term maladjustment as adults, particular avoidant, dependent, schizotypal personality disorders. Moffitt noted the need for further research into this kind of delinquency. Evaluation of this kind of antisocial group is outside the scope of the present study.

2.6 Support for Moffitt's Theory

Further research on Moffitt's New Zealand cohort (e.g. Caspi, 2000) and that conducted in other countries, subsequent to the publication of her theory in 1993, provided general support for her taxonomy (e.g. Kratzer & Hodgins, 1999; Piquero, 2001; Stevenson & Goodman, 2001; Woodward & Fergusson, 1999).¹⁴ In

¹⁴ See also Moffitt, 2003.

particular, there was support for Moffitt's predicted neuro-developmental correlates in the perinatal and middle childhood periods, although little research has been conducted on the birth to age three period. While only a limited number of studies compared the adult violent outcomes of early versus late onset delinquency, those that did so showed that neuro-developmental and family risk factors remain the strongest long term predictors of violence.

In conclusion, Moffitt's follow-up of her New Zealand cohort, as well as independent large scale British, Swedish and Californian studies, offer solid support for her prediction that early onset antisocial behaviour persists longer into adulthood than does adolescent onset delinquency.

2.7 Placing Moffitt's Taxonomy in a Systems Theory Framework

Moffitt's (1993) taxonomy is comprehensive in so far as it provides a developmental explanation for two major kinds of delinquent behaviour. However, while dealing with developmental risk factors at a macro level, it is more sketchy on the real time processes that underpin the roll out of these risk factors over time.¹⁵ This is not an issue in research aimed primarily at validating the existence of Moffitt's two kinds of delinquents across a range of populations (Moffitt, 2003), but the approach fails to provide an elegant explanation of the interaction of real time processes, such as social learning, with developmental risk factors, such as inadequate parenting skills.

Granic & Patterson, (2006) attempt to redress this deficit in theories of antisocial behaviour with their systems theory approach to antisocial behaviour. The dynamic systems model arose out of Patterson's extensive behavioural observations of family interaction, especially those of mother-child dyads, in families with problem children. He concluded from these that existing coercive theories of antisocial behaviour based on operant learning (including that of Moffitt), inadequately explained the complexities of the interactions between child and environment that produced a persistent antisocial behaviour pattern. He gave three reasons for this failure. Operant learning does not pay sufficient attention the fact that the strength of an association between two events changes over the course of an interaction. Secondly, socialisation, rather than being unidirectional as with operant conditioning, is causally bi-directional. Finally, operant learning is a bottom up explanation of real time learning, while socialisation is both bottom up and top down.

It is outside the scope of the present literature review to examine the dynamic systems model in any depth, primarily because it is based on a structurally different research design to that of the current work. The theory is supported by detailed behavioural observations of mother-child dyads, a technique not used by Moffitt or in this study. The model is relevant to the present evaluation of Moffitt's taxonomy in two ways. Firstly it provides additional theoretical and empirical support for Moffitt's taxonomy, from a broader, but compatible, systems theoretical approach. Secondly, the research methods used have the potential to provide answers to some outstanding issues in Moffitt's taxonomy. These advantages are briefly considered below.

Theoretical support for Moffitt's taxonomy.

While Moffitt (1993) tacitly embraces a social learning developmental theory standpoint in her taxonomy, the theory does not specify exactly how real time processes, such as social learning, interact with developmental risk factors, to produce a life-course or adolescent-limited developmental trajectory. The dynamic systems model of antisocial behaviour spells this out in a logical manner, by explaining the mechanisms underlying both change and stability in behaviours, using the principles of general systems theory.

Relevance of the Dynamic Systems Model to future research into Moffitt's tenets.

Moffitt (1993) could not establish exactly when the potential *life-course offender's aberrant behaviour patterns become entrenched*. She hypothesised this was sometime in late adolescence. The dynamic systems model provides both a theoretical base and practical steps for investigating this, using the mechanisms alluded to in the previous section. It also has promise in identifying *critical stages during which intervention* to avert a

¹⁵ This is also the case for other theories of antisocial behaviour (e.g. Colvin's (2000) coercion theory).

life-course trajectory would be most effective, and the *most effective* behavioural, emotional and cognitive *intervention methods* to use.

3. Psychological Theories Relevant to Recidivist Crime

The remaining, and greater part, of this literature review examines formal psychological theories that explain the association found by Moffitt between several variables and a life-course offending developmental trajectory. In the language of Granic & Patterson's (2006) systems model, these psychological theories define the "real time" processes that interact with developmental phases to produce a cycle of persistent aggressive behaviour. While many of the theories reviewed make a contribution to the psychological processes underpinning the associations found by Moffitt and her colleagues, it is the contention of this review that those with a social learning orientation offer the most comprehensive explanation. Nevertheless, all the theoretical perspectives explored in this review make some contribution towards enriching any intervention strategies generated by the research.

The predictive variables associated with chronic antisocial behaviour that are reviewed below extend beyond those identified by Moffitt (1993). These relate to the broader range of variables investigated in the present research with the intention of strengthening the validity of its findings. This step was necessary for two reasons. The life-story qualitative design used in the present research failed to provide the same degree of reliability and validity in its retrospective investigation of Moffitt's variables as did the longitudinal, large scale studies of Moffitt and her associates. Secondly, it could not rely on the detailed behavioural observations of Patterson and his colleagues.

Variables reviewed below, and investigated in this study, that fall into Moffitt's taxonomy

- * the at risk child's poor relationship with caregivers and family
- * his poor peer relationships
- * his continued impulsivity and aggression

Variables reviewed below, and investigated in this study, that are outside Moffitt's taxonomy

- * goal setting
- * moral behaviour, including locus of control
- * self-esteem

Moffitt did not concentrate on the major psychological theories of behaviour in explaining her taxonomy, focusing rather on the sequence of events leading to persistent antisocial behaviour. Where she did refer to these, she supported a model that combined social learning with trait theory (the early "at risk" traits in the child). In this choice Moffitt sustained the theoretical stance taken by Patterson, although as discussed above, Patterson moved beyond operant conditioning to a wider systems model to explain the development of antisocial behaviour (Granic & Patterson, 2006; Patterson, DeBaryse, & Ramsey, 1989).

The "Tapestried" Research Design

Reference to the breadth of the variables investigated in the present study makes this an appropriate point to introduce the tapestry metaphor used in this thesis to describe the research process. This imagery depicts graphically the way results from the investigation of a wide range of variables, the "threads of the tapestry" were considered as a unit, a "completed tapestry". It was this overall picture that led to acceptance or rejection of the central research hypothesis, rather than this depending on the additive results of individual research variables. As stated, the decision to investigate an extended range of variables relating to persistent aggression and delinquent behaviour was aimed at strengthening the validity of its findings. Each measure, or variable, could be likened to a group of threads in the tapestry. Alone each group was insignificant, together they created a picture recognizable by viewers for what it represented.

The Appropriateness of the Tapestry Metaphor: Some might question the choice of a “static” metaphor to describe the dynamic processes inherent in Moffitt’s taxonomy. This criticism fails to recognise that the tapestry metaphor was not intended to represent Moffitt’s theory. The research method was unable to duplicate the developmental and interactional processes behind the life-course offending trajectory in Moffitt’s taxonomy. The tapestry metaphor *depicted the alternate research strategy used, a static, cross sectional measuring of many variables*, whose collective patterning formed the basis upon which the research hypotheses stood or fell. Tapestry is an excellent image for this approach to testing Moffitt’s hypothesis as I outline in the concluding chapter of my study. Its value revolves around the concept of “gestalt”. The whole (i.e. the tapestry picture; overall pattern of successful hypotheses) is greater than the individual parts (i.e. the characters and background of the tapestry; individual hypotheses). It is only on the completed picture that the research can be judged. Each image alone, out of context, carries little weight.

The tapestry metaphor is a metaphor for Cole and Means’ (1981) use of patterns to assess significance in cross cultural research and does not relate to Moffitt’s theory. Cole and Means, in their seminal book on comparative research, suggest various strategies to reduce the threat of invalid inferences (type 1 errors in particular) in comparative research findings. The strategy selected as most appropriate for the present study was the comparison of several patterns of performance within each experimental group, *across* both research groups. This process involved the construction of a number of hypotheses in a comparative research design, with each hypothesis representing one element of the pattern. Should group differences be found *across the majority* of these hypotheses, these were grounds for accepting the research findings as valid, according to Cole and Means.

Triangulation: The research process depicted by the tapestry method is synonymous with a more standard approach to improving reliability and validity in a qualitative study. This is the “triangulation” validation method of Campbell (Perrin, 1996), where the agreement of several, different measures around the same research question support conclusions drawn about the findings.

The extended discussion that follows below begins by outlining the major formal psychological theories associated with persistent aggression, and positioning Moffitt’s taxonomy in relation to these. It continues with a detailed examination of the literature on how these best fit the range of variables associated with recidivist criminal behaviour.

3.1 Social, Psychoanalytic and Cognitive Psychological Theories of Crime

Social learning theories of crime.

While accommodating learning through reward and punishment, these theories emphasise learning through the imitation of role models. Bandura in particular is associated with research on the acquisition of aggression through imitation (Bandura, 1976). He held that an individual’s behaviour was the outcome of learned experiences, through observation and imitation, and the reward or punishment (consequences) of behaviour in the process of socialisation. Aggressive and violent behaviours developed mainly due to imitation by children of important role models in their environment, especially of caregivers.

Social causation and social selection theories have both been used to explain persistent antisocial behaviour (Wright et al., 1999). *Social causation* models, based on a sociological understanding of crime, held that inadequate early social learning “caused” antisocial behaviour. Individuals were naturally motivated to deviate, and would do so unless contained by social bonds.¹⁶ These bonds tied the young child to the values, beliefs and actions of the caregivers, and later, to those of teachers and peers in his environment. Failing to learn socially acceptable behaviour from these early role models, the child developed his natural deviancy by subsequently affiliating with deviant groups who offered him the acceptance he did not find from caregivers or normative peers. Here, he modelled his behaviour on the antisocial examples of others like himself. *Social*

¹⁶ The initial process of infant bonding to its parent, so that it is primed to learn early social skills from them, and the idea of critical periods when this occurs, is well described by Bowlby’s attachment behaviour theory (Bowlby, 1969).

selection models explained antisocial behaviour as originating from individual child risk features that resulted in a later failure to form healthy peer relationships. Rather than learning socially unacceptable behaviour from others, the child learned poor self-control from early inconsistent parenting. This became an ingrained child risk factor. The child learned to respond to momentary temptation, as there was no reward for delaying gratification. Such a child was impulsive, responded physically to conflict and took risks. This behaviour excluded him from being part of normative social groups.

Theories of crime based on either one of these models alone are no longer popular and a joint social causation/selection model is favoured. Deviancy begun by social selection is maintained by social causation, due to weak social relationships. The developmental theories of Moffitt (1993) and Patterson (1989) fall broadly in this group, although Moffitt adds early child *temperamental risk traits* to the child “risk” factor of early learned poor self-control.

Psychoanalytic and cognitive theories of crime.

These are currently less favoured as explanations of persistent antisocial behaviour. Where they do find a place, this is usually alongside elements of social learning theory.

Psychoanalytic Theories of Crime: These have historic value rather than contemporary application and explain behaviour as the result of physiologically based impulses. Purely psychoanalytic explanations of persistent antisocial behaviour are rejected today as being too static and ignoring the interplay between individual traits and the environment. Exemplifying this approach are theories of crime, underpinned by Eysenck’s personality theory, that rely exclusively on inbuilt child traits (Ainsworth, 2000).

Cognitive Theories of Crime: A review of the literature indicates there are no cognitive theories that alone account satisfactorily for the development of a life-course offending pathway. This is mainly due to the poor explanation of emotion and affect by these theories. However, a cognitive understanding of some variables, such as impulsive or moral behaviour, has contributed towards efforts to avert persistent antisocial behaviour. These are examined later in this chapter.

Social learning theory and Moffitt’s taxonomy.

Social Selection

Social learning (combined with trait theory) is the psychological theory model compatible with Moffitt’s taxonomy (Moffitt, 2003). A major addition of Moffitt to a social learning understanding of an antisocial lifestyle, is the inclusion of risk factors *within the child*. The taxonomy does not ascribe irascibility and low frustration tolerance only to the modelling and negative reinforcement of chaotic parenting, nor only to caregiver failure to form adequate early bonds with the child. Rather, these are temperamental features already present in the infant, due to early psychoneurological dysfunction. They are subsequently *aggravated* by poor parenting (Moffitt, 1993). Moffitt’s psychoneurological deficits fit the social selection stage in a social learning model. Due to his difficult temperament and cognitive deficiencies, the at risk child, rather than *all children* in a family with inadequate caregivers, fails to develop the necessary social bonds for its future normative development.

How does social learning explain the early acquisition of interpersonal skills, reduced impulsivity and a planned approach to life? The young child imitates and models parental behaviour. His behaviour is also shaped by parental reward (positive attention and affection) and punishment (discipline). The young child who does not suffer from a poor attention span, hyperactivity and low frustration tolerance, and who experiences good parenting, learns to control his natural impulsivity (the terrible twos!) and to work for socially acceptable goals. The at risk child in such an environment will prove a challenge to even competent parents, although a structured and consistent environment, and positive reinforcement for socially acceptable behaviour, reduce his chances of becoming persistently antisocial. Conversely the child who is not at risk, placed in a poor parenting environment, is less likely to become persistently antisocial as he does not react with the same degree of intense frustration to inconsistent parenting as does the at risk child. The at risk child in a poor parenting

environment fails to pay sufficient attention to the limited positive reinforcement he *does* receive from his caregivers. His strong negative reaction to their failure to meet his needs evokes aggression from his parents, who themselves have difficulty coping with frustration. Accordingly, his naturally negative response to stress is aggravated by caregiver modelling of further aggression. He remains impulsive, aggressive and lacking in social skills, and fails to learn any form of planning and to delay gratification of his needs.

In summary, this failure is due to the combined effects of early psychoneurological deficits, caregiver failure to reward consistently, and the child's inability to concentrate sufficiently to respond to the few parental behaviours that are adaptive. He also fails to discriminate between adaptive and non adaptive interpersonal responses, as these are modelled non consequentially to his behaviour by caregivers. This interaction between early child factors and the environment in Moffitt's theory fits the *social selection* aspect of social learning theory.

Social Causation

As the child matures, his poor social skills lead to rejection by adequately socialised peers. His cognitive difficulties result in poor school performance. As a result, he looks for a less "punishing" peer environment and gravitates towards other rejects. Failing to win positive responses from authority figures at school, he avoids these, or seeks negative reinforcement from them. He quickly wins a reputation as a bully at junior school. Later, his aggression makes him a natural candidate for gang membership. This stage of the life-course offender's development fits the *social causation* aspect of social learning.¹⁷

Cognitive theory and Moffitt's taxonomy.

Research shows that the poor executive cognitive functioning of Moffitt's at risk child is associated with an inability to plan, to respond adequately to socialising punishment and with hyperactivity and impulsivity (Ishikawa & Raine, 2003). These cognitive functions also tie in with his below average school performance.

3.2 Peer Relationships and Recidivist Crime

An integral part of the life-course developmental pathway is the at risk child's continuing inadequate social skills which facilitate his downward spiral into chronic antisocial behaviour. Other research supports Moffitt in her emphasis on the association between early inadequate interpersonal skills, subsequent poor relationships in adolescence and adulthood, and persistent antisocial behaviour (Dishion, Andrews, & Crossby, 1995; Moffitt, 1993; Woodward & Fergusson, 1999).

Moffitt contended that potential life-course offender children do not form close, satisfactory relationships, despite their affiliation with antisocial peer group gangs. Support for Moffitt is Dishion et al.'s (1995) finding that the social learning processes between 13-14 year old delinquent friends were characterised by poor quality relationships of relatively short duration, were perceived by dyad members as only marginally satisfactory, and usually ended in conflict. These relationships involved aggression, such as bullying, and reciprocating in kind to negative behaviour.

The discussion below examines *social learning* and *social-cognitive* explanations for the life-course offender's poor peer relations. An organizational explanation of peer relationships adds a *sociological* perspective to the discussion.

3.21 A Social Learning Model of Deviant Peer Relationships

A social skills deficit interpretation of childhood poor peer relationships is strongly made in the literature (Henggeler, 1989; Hirschi, 1969; Patterson et al., 1989; Snyder & Patterson, 1987; Snyder, Reid, & Patterson, 2003). This model is also supported by studies on social skills coaching (Asher & Renshaw, 1981).

¹⁷ Moffitt (1993) refers to the *contemporary* and *continuous* influences of these two forms of social learning throughout the life-course offender's life.

The inadequate socialisation skills and aggression that the at risk child brings to early peer relationships results in his rejection by peers with normative social skills. Sound early peer relationships assist in the process of continued socialising, through modelling, direct instruction, exposure to skills and to complex play such as role taking (Asher & Renshaw, 1981). The at risk child's continued interpersonal aggression, exposure to inept parenting and isolation from adjusted peers leads to his affiliation with others similar to himself, children who are also socially unskilled, antisocial and demonstrate limited positive affect. This continued association results in further acquisition and refinement of antisocial behaviours, due to the modelling and positive reinforcement of these by his delinquent associates (Elliot, Huizanga, & Ageton, 1985). This further reduces his exposure to normative social skills, such as cooperative behaviour.

Around adolescence, the life-course offender graduates to being a role model himself to others manifesting late-onset delinquency. This role further entrenches the life-course individual's antisocial behaviour through the reinforcement he obtains from these peers.

3.22 Social-Cognitive Models of Normative Peer Relationships: The Quality of Friendships

Robert Selman's developmental scale of normative peer relations is a social-cognitive explanation of peer interactions based on maturational stages (Asher & Renshaw, 1981; Selman, 1980, 1981).¹⁸ Selman's stage model grew from the work of Sullivan and Piaget (Sullivan, 1953). His stages of friendship related differences in social understanding and interaction between people, to developmental and hierarchical differences in their social-cognitive construction of social relations and situations. His theory looked at social development from a perspective of "the child looking out". Selman found empirical support for his hypothesis that, in order to understand mutuality of perspectives in peer relations, the child must be able to coordinate two relations simultaneously. These he termed the reciprocal social-cognitive operations of: "I know my peer can take my perspective" and its inverse – "I can take his perspective". Selman's stages followed a Piagetian process, in that each new stage arose developmentally from conceptual conflict due to new experiences that conflicted with his existing internal understanding of reality.

Youniss' (1980) theory of "reciprocity" in his *social-cognitive model of peer relations* arose from the same Sullivan/Piaget theoretical base as that of Selman. Selman explained the development of peer relationships as the joint outcome of social learning influences and the child's developmental ability to take on the perspective of others. Youniss supported a similar theoretical framework but applied this specifically to the exploration of two types of socialisation. In the first, a social agent operates much as socialisation theory holds, by offering a meaning which the child moves towards and tries to adopt for itself. This type of conformity works well when the agent is an adult (usually a primary caregiver). It also comes into play with a high status peer (e.g. a gang leader). In the second process, which becomes important around 5 years of age, the child and another peer are both social agents, each bringing meaning to a situation, with neither being seen as "better" than the other. They engage in a joint search to discover which meaning (self/other) is more workable. With developmental maturation, the focus of this search shifts from personal interests to what would be best for both parties.

The theories of Selman (1980) and Youniss (1980) dovetail with research into brain function that suggests males generally experience more difficulty than females in taking on the perspective of peers (Baron-Cohen, 2003), making it harder for them to achieve the in-depth friendships of Selman's higher stages. The implication of these findings for Moffitt's *at risk child* is that early poor development of some brain areas linked to the ability to respond empathically to others (one of Moffitt's "psychoneurological" deficits) would make it *even more* difficult for them to relate well to peers.

This deficit is subsequently compounded by peer relationship problems arising from poorly learned socialisation skills. According to this model, the child at risk for persistent antisocial behaviour does not attain the higher levels of perspective taking required for genuinely mutual relationships, due to his distorted

¹⁸ Selman's stages are covered in chapter 6 which analyses data on peer relationships.

experience of early interpersonal relations. His maladaptive interactions with caregivers teach him primarily *to take and demand* in relationships. His personal social-cognitive structures remain immature, so that he is unable to accommodate later input (e.g. from peers with normal social skills) from relationships that call for *give and take* interactions. As with the social learning model, the individual who does not progress beyond the “self” centred levels of Selman’s stages, loses out in two ways. He is rejected by peers with more mature relationship skills, in late childhood and adolescence. This rejection aggravates his inadequate interpersonal skills. Close friendships, in the form of reciprocal relationships, are important to adolescents, as through these they learn to negotiate and solve problems. The life-course offender’s existing difficulties in containing his frustrations and impulsivity in order to achieve adaptive longer term goals, including interpersonal goals, is therefore worsened by his failure to establish sound friendships in late childhood and early adolescence.

3.23 An Sociological Perspective of Peer Relations

Studies of peer relationships in terms of organisational principles, and those examining the dynamics of antisocial gangs, look at inadequate relationships from a sociological perspective.

Moffitt’s taxonomy explains the life-course offender’s poor peer relationship in terms of a deficit in interpersonal skills. A *sociological rather than psychological perspective* of these relationships helps to better understand why the life-course delinquent associates almost exclusively with antisocial peers, and the poor quality of these relationships. Ahrne (1994) saw human behaviour being transformed into social action through organisational forms, the primary organisation being the family. Others included voluntary, state and business organisations. The organisation offered benefits in exchange for its members providing proof of their group affiliation. These benefits and commitments varied according to the nature of the organisation. Peer groups, which are voluntary organisations, offered the benefits of meeting the adolescent’s need to belong and to share social time. The adolescent potential life-course offender lacks the social skills to be easily accommodated by prosocial peer groups, where a member’s right to belong requires loyalty and the capacity to cooperate. On the other hand, antisocial peer groups (defined as “gangs” in South Africa), given the immature relationships therein, demand group commitment in a more authoritarian way, usually by requiring that the new member commit some kind of offence. This gains a hold on his loyalty through the threat of disclosure to the authorities. From Ahrne’s organisational perspective, it is therefore logical that life-course adolescents affiliate successfully only with antisocial peer groups. Ahrne noted that adolescent-limited delinquents also join gangs, attracted by the opportunity to form bonds with others seeking to establish their identities through common anti-establishment activities. However, they are less dependent than life-course offenders on gang affiliation to meet the basic need to belong, as they also can take part in prosocial groups thanks to their normative social skills.

Criminological research into peer relations in South African gangs also supports Moffitt’s tenets from a sociological standpoint. Maree (2003) found that both types of Moffitt’s delinquents frequently form into gangs. Her findings suggested that good relationship skills were not a necessary requirement for gang membership as gangs served mainly to provide support and status for youths with poor social skills, who came from chaotic and unsupportive family backgrounds.

Ahrne’s model does not generate any hypotheses directly relevant to Moffitt’s taxonomy. However, an extension of the model supports Moffitt’s (1993) theory by suggesting that life-course offenders would associate only, or mostly, with antisocial groups, while adolescent-limited offenders would associate with both antisocial and prosocial groups.

3.3 Self-control, Impulsivity and Recidivist Crime

A review of the psychological theories explaining low self-control and its correlate, impulsivity, identifies those based on social learning principles as best explaining these phenomena in developmental terms, a theoretical perspective compatible with Moffitt’s taxonomy. Other theoretical models of self-control emphasise motivation, conflicting interests and cognitive levels. These provide viable accounts of how impulsive or self-controlled behaviour occurs but fail to explain satisfactorily the *developmental processes*

leading to an individual's ability to exercise self-control. In addition to social learning accounts of impulsivity discussed below, insights gained from cognitive theory are also covered.

3.31 Social learning/Motivational Theories of Self-control

Social learning theories that ascribe persistent impulsivity to weak early social bonds are especially compatible with Moffitt's taxonomy (Baumeister & Exline, 1999; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). In particular, Baumeister's attachment theory makes a clear connection between early poor bonding with primary caretakers, subsequent poor self-control and an antisocial life trajectory. Also discussed is Apter's reversal theory, which while not strictly falling into a social learning framework, contains features compatible with social learning theory.

Baumeister's attachment theory.

Roy Baumeister conducted extensive research on self-control and was a strong supporter of the relationship between self-control and social learning (Baumeister & Exline, 1999). He saw socialised, including moral, behaviour, as the result of the interaction between innate drives and the socialisation process. The key motivational drive identified by Baumeister in the development of self-control was the need to belong. In order to behave in ways advantageous to the group, and hence win the right to belong, the child learns to control his natural antisocial and selfish impulses. If he is unable to exercise this self-restraint he runs the risk of not being accepted by the significant people in his environment.

According to Baumeister, the failure to develop appropriate self-control is due to a combination of child and environmental factors. The child with early natural poor self-control, due to genetic or minor neurological deficits, aggravates this problem by his failure to form sound early relationships with caregivers. This bonding facilitated the growth of self-control through social learning. From early childhood this kind of child is easily frustrated when his demands for instant gratification are not met, resulting in tantrums and difficult behaviour. A limited attention span makes it hard for him to fix on tasks and relationships. Caregivers unversed in appropriate parenting techniques react by distancing themselves emotionally from such a child, often exercising harsh disciplinary measures. This impedes the bonding and appropriate social learning processes between parents and child. At a later stage, the child's continued impulsivity, combined with his minimal social skills, limit effective friendships outside the home. He then follows the progressively antisocial pathway outlined in Moffitt's taxonomy. Compounding the problem is the reduced guilt such individuals feel about their antisocial behaviour, as guilt is also a motivator to reduce antisocial behaviour. The child lacking in self-control has not formed effective relationships and is unlikely to feel guilty about "losing" relationships he never had in the first place!

Apter's reversal theory.

Apter's theory is given a fair amount of attention in this section (a) because of its complexity and (b) because it generates a useful intervention principle for Moffitt's at risk child. Apter's theory contributes to the understanding of impulsivity by highlighting the importance of balanced behaviour (Apter, 2001). While impulsive behaviour as an individual's normative response mode is maladaptive, there is a place for a care-free, risk taking style in certain settings. This style is also more appropriate at some developmental stages than at others. Apter's theory is based on *meta-motivational styles*, each of which is made up of opposing motivational orientations (or pairs). An individual's behaviour at a specific time is determined by the dominant pair member of the meta-motivational style perceived appropriate to a situation. While Apter's theory explains how persistently impulsive and negativistic behaviour occurs, it lacks the developmental perspective as to *why* an individual becomes fixated on an inappropriate motivational orientation within certain meta-motivational styles. Social learning principles fill this gap, and this accounts for the positioning of Apter's reversal theory within a broader social learning theory framework in this review.

Apter (2001) argued that behaviour depended not only on the content of one's motives but also on how one "experienced" these motives. The same content could be experienced differently (e.g. irritation with the antics of young children changed to pleasure after one had one's own child). Apter held that four pairs of meta-

motivational styles explained behaviour. Each of these could be experienced, and each had a subjective meaning. Those relevant to the present discussion are the *means-end* and *rules* meta-motivational styles.

The *means-end* state consists of *telic* (achievement motivation; serious experience) and *paratelic* (fun motivation; playful experience; of-the-moment; risk takers) opposing orientations. The *rules* state contains a *conformist* (fitting-in motivation; conforming experience) and *negativistic* (freedom motivation; challenging experience, anti-authoritarian) opposing orientations. The meta-motivational style, and the preferred pair member within it, that drive behaviour at any one time, depend largely on the dominant style in a given situation. While all four meta-states are present at any time, certain styles and pair members are more appropriate in a given situation. The dominant orientation is also influenced by age. For example, the telic orientation of the means-end state is appropriate in class while the paratelic orientation is better suited for recess time. The paratelic orientation is more common in young children and decreases with age. The negativistic orientation is adaptive in some social situations during adolescence where it assists in identity formation. On the other hand, a degree of conformity in the classroom during adolescence is more appropriate. Associated with each motivational state is an *optimal arousal level* (degree of feeling). *Emotions* arise from the combination of the arousal level and the motivational state. *Reversals* from one pair member to the other in a state are unconscious. Each individual tends to spend more time in one state, his *individual (unconscious) preference*, which is called his dominant state. In addition, people differ in their ability to reverse. Reversals are induced by several factors, including

- * The environment: a threatening event or a clearly defined setting (e.g. church, law court) can induce a switch between pairs in the dominant state. As an example, the adolescent who perceives parents' sanctions as a threat will switch from conformist to negativistic mode within the rules state.
- *Frustration: if the individual is frustrated in reaching the satisfaction of the optimal arousal level of a state, a switch can occur. An example using the telic orientation (achievement mode of the means-end state) clarifies this point. The scholar who consistently fails to achieve may switch to the paratelic mode and make fun of school or look for distractions.
- *Satiation: a force for reversal builds up over time, regardless of changing circumstances and frustrations, so that reversal becomes easier to induce.

Maladaptive behaviour occurs when the socially inappropriate orientation of a state is used in a given situation, or when an individual is fixated on a dominant mode regardless of the circumstances.¹⁹ When an individual persists with maladaptive impulsive or risky behaviour, they are adhering inappropriately to the paratelic orientation of the means-end state and also to the negativistic orientation of the rules state. High arousal levels in these combined states produce provocative, mischievous and exciting behaviours and anger or anxiety.²⁰ Such individuals engage in sensation seeking and oppositional behaviour, including spurious anti-social acts for the thrill of it. *Socially appropriate impulse control* is the result of managing dominant states so that they are appropriate for the situation (even if this is appropriate only for immediate peers rather than the wider community, as in adolescent-limited delinquency²¹).

Apter's views diverge from Moffitt's regarding the perpetuation of antisocial behaviours. He held that once the individual is made aware of (understands) the processes underlying his inappropriate behaviour (e.g. impulsive acts) he can learn to counteract earlier tendencies to adopt the inappropriate orientation in a given situation – if he can be shown the long term advantages of so doing. Moffitt (1993) holds that life-course offenders are unable to correct their inappropriate behaviours.

Placing Apter's Reversal theory in a Social Learning Framework: Apter's reversal theory does not offer a developmental account as to why some individuals find it easier to reverse pairs within a meta-state, and why

¹⁹ A nice comparison emerges between Granic and Patterson's (2006) description of the rigidity of behaviours in deviant parent-child dyads within systems theory, and the rigidity of dominant parts of a pair within a meta-state in Apter's theory.

²⁰ See Apter, 2001, for a detailed discussion of high and low arousal levels in each state.

²¹ Apter's definition of the 'oppositional child', who resists rules and regulations, is synonymous with Moffitt's adolescent-limited delinquent (Apter, 2001).

certain meta-states rather than others become the dominant mode for an individual. According to Apter, the individual possesses alternating motivational states that help him optimise overall value. When the current state does not coincide with situational demands (e.g. young males are more likely to be in the paratelic state), he must have learned ways to switch to an appropriate state. This is especially hard for the child at risk for persistent offending. Early social learning explains an individual's subsequent ability to switch orientations in each of Apter's behavioural states. Inbuilt traits (Apter's meta-states) are selectively reinforced by the young child's unique environment. In particular, his earliest relationships with his caregivers influence his ability to switch at appropriate times between both orientations of the two meta-states most closely related to persistent delinquency, the means-end and the rules meta-states. Moffitt's at risk child learns only to depend on external, usually harsh controls to contain his antisocial behaviour and is not sensitive internally to when it would be appropriate to switch from one orientation to the other within a given meta-motivational style. On the other hand, the child who has a democratic parenting experience develops inner controls (self-control) and has a repertoire of behaviours appropriate for different situations.

Apter's theory adds value to the research around Moffitt's taxonomy in that it suggests intervention efforts directed at changing early negativistic and impulsive behaviour should include teaching the child to identify situations where these are inappropriate responses, rather than aiming at a blanket change of behaviour.

3.32 Psychoanalytic and Cognitive Theories of Self-control

Ainslie's temporal preference ("temptation") theory – a psychoanalytic framework.

Ainslie's theory is included in this discussion as it highlights the value of teaching potential life-course offenders stepwise planning strategies, with each step containing some kind of short term motivator (reward).

This theory is also known as *ambivalence* theory. Ainslie maintained that ambivalent behaviour, such as addictions, and other impulsive non adaptive behaviours, are poorly explained by traditional theories of motivation (Ainslie, 1992), which use utility theory to explain choice making (i.e. a computation of relative values). He held that ambivalence theories offered more satisfactory explanations of why people act impulsively, discounting future goals in so doing. Ainslie reviewed research showing that people have innate tendencies to discount delayed rewards, a process that results in temporary preferences for less rewarding, earlier goals, over objectively better, long term goals. These short term preferences are explained by Ainslie's notion of a "shortage of appetite"-the individual's needs are temporarily sated by the short term alternative and hence his appetite to strive for the longer term goals is reduced.

In so much as a person learns to predict these temporary preferences that create obstacles to obtaining longer term, and more valued, preferences, he is motivated to develop mechanisms to disarm the short term preference behaviour. The most effective of these regulatory mechanisms Ainslie termed *private rules*. Here, the individual perceives a series of confrontations with impulses as similar to each other. Succumbing to one of these impulses reduces the expectation of keeping to the long term goal (e.g. dieting, avoiding prison). He thus stakes his expectation of achieving the whole series of larger rewards on a single choice. This motivates him not to act impulsively. Private rules are in place when a person "sees each individual action in its bearing on some portion of his lasting welfare" (Ainslie, 1992, p. 154).

Although not strictly within the psychoanalytic paradigm, Ainslie's theory is compatible with a psychoanalytic understanding of behaviour if the preference for short term choices is seen as equivalent to Id drives, impulse control to achieve long term goals as reflecting Ego drives, and private rules equated with Superego functions.

Placing Ainslie's Reversal theory in a Social Learning Framework: While ambivalence theory explains how people achieve self-control, it does not account for why some individuals learn to deal effectively with short and long term conflicting interests and others do not, becoming drug addicts, drunks or Moffitt's life-course offenders. To achieve valuable longer term goals, the individual has to compromise between conflicting interests. Ainslie indicates that some individuals lack the skills to establish and maintain the internal

bargaining required to establish private rules, but does not spell out the developmental process by which this takes place.

Social learning principles fill this gap. The challenge to impulse control comes from the temporal characteristics of the rewards on offer. The individual needs to learn to resist powerful (they are immediate) rewards for greater but weaker (future) rewards.²² To achieve the ultimately more desirable (long term) rewards, the individual learns techniques such as private rules. In early childhood, Moffitt's life-course offender is unlikely to learn that greater rewards are to be achieved by longer term goals, as opposed to immediate gratification, because he does not experience the advantages of long term goal achievement, due to both his especially low frustration tolerance and inadequate parenting. The authoritarian, coercive and inconsistent style of his caregivers leads to an external rather than internal locus of control in the child, and to impulsive behaviour. The child *learns* there is no point in persevering towards early important rewards (of parental approval) as these are seldom contingent on efforts he makes to be "good" and frequently, are not present at all (Baumrind, 1971; Colvin, 2000; Patterson et al., 1989).

Vallacher and Wegner's Action Identity (ID) theory. – A cognitive approach.

Action identity theory is of value to the present study as it suggests ways to reduce impulsivity by its detailed breakdown of the cognitive processes that are involved in short term, impulsive, as opposed to longer term, goal oriented, behaviours. In addition, the idea of simple and complex cognitive hierarchies served as a useful tool in the analysis of goal setting data in the life-stories (see chapter 7).

Vallacher & Wegner's (1985) explanation of impulsive behaviour is based on cognitive theory. They acknowledged that their model does not provide a comprehensive explanation for all aspects of behaviour, especially those involving affect and emotions. Action identity theory explains behaviour in terms of cognitive identity hierarchies that underpin actions. The same action has different meanings for different people. An action that is impulsive for one, might be part of a careful longer term strategy for another. Thus, action identity hierarchies are simple or complex.²³ For example, the action "look out of the window" may be to have a change of scenery (a simple or "flat" hierarchy), or to see if a special friend is coming in order to go downstairs to welcome the friend (a more complex "high level" hierarchy). Individuals tend to function overall at a specific level of action hierarchy. While the behaviour of some is regularly underpinned by planning and awareness of consequences (high level action identities), others typically act impulsively, with limited thought for the longer term outcomes of their behaviour (low level action identities).

Although action identity theory was not intended to be an explanation for antisocial behaviour, Vallacher and Wegner (1985) apply their theory to criminal behaviour. They identified two types of criminals. Those who perpetrate carefully planned crimes (e.g. heists, fraud or planned murder) use complex action identity hierarchies.²⁴ Criminals who typically use simple, flatter action hierarchies perpetrate impulsive crimes (e.g. opportunistic theft, a crime of passion). Moffitt's life-course offenders fall into the second group. Much of their antisocial behaviour occurs impulsively, rather than as part of a complex hierarchical chain of action that goes beyond the immediate act. Because they function with concrete, low level hierarchies, they have difficulty identifying *achievable* higher level action hierarchies. A simple example drawn from the life-story data in this research clarifies this point: School is attended for many reasons, including seeing friends, socialising, learning and achieving. The long term goals of education (tertiary study, earning a good salary, security, personal fulfilment) were irrelevant to many life-course offending group members. While they *referred to the value of education*, for example noting that it led to financial security, they *failed to actualise*

²² This requirement assumes that the short term rewards preclude the attainment of subsequent larger rewards. However, an occasional day off school will offer a gratifying short term reward but is unlikely to interfere with the longer term goal of passing examinations.

²³ This is a simplification as clearly there are also varying levels of complexity in between these positions. However, they sufficed for the purposes of the data analysis.

²⁴ It is assumed that most people who function with complex action identity hierarchies are not calculating criminals! On the contrary, Aristotle described the "virtuous man" as a person of "good habits" (Aristotle: Nicomachean ethics). This kind of person behaves in a planned manner in order to live up to his ethical beliefs (hence the good habits), a life style tying in with Vallacher & Wegner's (1985) idea of functioning at a high action identity level.

this in their approach to school. They truanted or misbehaved and did not apply themselves at all to their studies, preferring the gratification of short term peer approval, and the excitement of flouting the rules.

Placing Action identity theory in a Social Learning Framework: Vallacher and Wegner's model has a clear cognitive component, but it too fails to account for why some individuals permanently and inappropriately function at a low action identity level. The authors acknowledge a social learning component to their theory in that rewards play a role in the maintenance of existing behaviour and emergence of new behaviour. The challenge to self-control in an action identity framework arises due to the complexity of action itself. In that some actions must be sustained over a prolonged period, the individual has to *learn* how to think about what he is doing in order to find ways to sustain a long-term action, if he wants to achieve the rewards associated with such actions. In the social learning model, the potential life-course offender has little incentive to learn this skill as he seldom experienced the rewards of persevering towards long term goals when young.

Intellectual Ability: Vallacher and Wegner's (1985) theory complements the negative relationship found between IQ and a life-course offending profile, in particular with the impulsivity associated with this trajectory. It is probable that higher level memory demands and the integration of information are required for high-level identities.

3.33 Risk Taking

Risk taking is an aspect of impulsive behaviour worthy of a small section of its own. Much of delinquent behaviour involves risk taking, including unprotected pre-marital sex; illegal offences and so on. Cooper, Orcutt, & Albino (2003) in research investigating why risk behaviour is adaptive for some, described this behaviour as involving a trade-off between short term gains and potential long term costs. Implicit in this definition is the association between risk behaviour and the absence of long term planning. Cooper et al. held that people took risks for a number of reasons. These included

- * stress reduction
- * maladaptive styles of coping with negative emotions
- * sensation seeking and preference for varied novel experiences
- * maladaptive styles of regulating behaviour, which result in succumbing to urges and immediate responses to stimuli, without reflection and planning

Cooper's points are accommodated by the major theories of impulsivity described above. His third point is reminiscent of Apter's reversal theory. Proponents of reversal theory hold that the individual, whose dominant modes are paratelic negativism, seek the excitement of risk taking, especially if the risks involve rule breaking (Gerkovich, 2001). Cooper's fourth point, forsaking long term goals for short term rewards, is covered in Ainslie's temporal preference theory where habitual selection of short term goals is due to a failure to learn the rewards of longer terms goals.

3.4 Moral Development and Recidivist Crime

To investigate the link between moral development and persistent antisocial behaviour it is necessary to review the literature around theories of moral development and behaviour. Major theories of moral development over the past two decades fall into three categories:

- * *Socialisation theories* - These emphasise learning principles as the process by which moral behaviour is acquired. They include the early work of the learning theorists, Skinner, and later, Bandura. Youniss' (1980) emphasis on interpersonal relationships as a source of moral learning also fits a socialisation view of moral development.
- * *Cognitive theories* - These emphasise reasoning as the mechanism underpinning moral behaviour. Major proponents of this approach are Kohlberg (1976) and Piaget (1965).

- * *Affect theories* – These emphasise feelings of guilt, shame and empathy as underpinning moral behaviour. These theories complement the psychoanalytic viewpoint, which on its own currently is not regarded as a sufficient explanation for moral development (Hoffman, 1976).

Moral theories in the cognitive and psychoanalytic traditions relate to socialisation theories in being “maturational”, in that they see children at different ages having different moral capabilities. The life-course offender, within this framework, is developmentally lagged at an earlier stage of moral development. Other commonalities between the three theoretical frameworks are their acceptance of the presence of individual values; the importance of caregiver input; and peer and community influences. The differences between them lie primarily in their understanding of the process by which these factors influence moral behaviour.

While there is support in the psychological literature for all three accounts of moral development (Blasi, 1980; Shaffer, 2000), Damon maintained that no one of these approaches alone offers a necessary and sufficient explanation for moral *behaviour* (Damon, 1999). The reviews by Blasi and Shaffer support this tenet by showing that the presence of *moral reasoning* or *moral affect* is not necessarily synonymous with *moral behaviour*.

The major components of morality are covered in Shaffer’s (2000) review. Morality implies

- * -the capacity to distinguish right from wrong. This refers to the *cognitive* view of morality or to moral reasoning.
- * -the capacity to act on this distinction or moral behaviour. This view of morality complements the *social learning* approach to morality.
- * -the capacity to experience pride in virtuous acts and guilt/shame over acts violating one’s standards. This refers to the *affective* aspect of morality.

Current major theories of moral development include one or more of Shaffer’s three components of morality. Before examining these, we briefly consider theories of moral development not favoured today, but valued for their historical input, or for the remediation methods they generate.

3.41 *Secondary Theories of Moral Development*

Psychoanalytic theories.

According to the psychoanalytic view, moral development arises from the internalisation of parental values and growth of inner self-controls through the super-ego. Psychoanalysis provided the first fully psychological theory of moral development, using the concept of inner conflict and its resolution as the process by which moral development occurs (Aronfreed, 1976). Freud differentiated between the concepts of knowledge and feelings in the development of an internalised conscience. The psychoanalytic explanation of moral behaviour ties in with the affective aspect of contemporary theories of morality.

The psychoanalytic approach, with its early emphasis on instincts and later, on an inner emotional life, had difficulty accommodating the empirical and conceptual progress made by developmental theories of morality, that emphasised the *interaction* between the child’s predisposition and his experience of the external world. The psychoanalytic framework for moral development could not accommodate an integrated explanation of the affective, cognitive and behavioural facets that were later recognized as integral to the child’s moral development (Aronfreed, 1976).

Ainslie’s (1992) *temporal preference (ambivalence) theory*, discussed in 3.32 above, is an example of a contemporary psychoanalytic explanation of both impulsive and moral behaviour. Choices made for short term rewards reflect the Id function, delay of gratification in order to achieve long term goals reflects Ego drives, and the mechanism by which this takes place (private rules) can be equated with Superego functions. Moral behaviour, in so far as rewards are typically long, rather than short, term, requires the ability to withstand the temptation of short term outcomes at the expense of longer term rewards. As discussed in 3.2, the theory requires the addition of social learning principles to explain the developmental process of temporal preferences.

Psychoanalysis and Social Learning Theory: Some unsatisfactory attempts have been made to accommodate the psychoanalytic approach in a contemporary socialization explanation of moral development, on the basis of a common assumption that moralization is a process of internalisation of cultural and parental norms. However, while psychoanalysis postulates stages, these classical Freudian stages are libidinal-instinctual rather than moral. Morality, as expressed by the superego, is formed and fixed early in development through the internalisation of parental norms. Thus, research based on Freudian moral theory concentrates on the internalisation aspects of moral development at the expense of maturational stage theory (Lickona, 1976).

Cognitive theory: Action identification (ID) theory and moral development.

Vallacher and Wegner's (1985) action identity theory discussed in 3.32 in relation to impulsivity, also has implications for moral behaviour, in as much as it helps understand why individuals who set no longer-term goals also have difficulty adhering to moral values. Two principles of action identity theory are related to moral behaviour:

1. *The level of action identity:* - The theory holds that actions understood at a high (complex) ID level are those to which people tend to stay committed. For example, "not stealing" is a behaviour I am more likely to maintain when it is underpinned by a complex hierarchy of ethical beliefs, rather than only by the fear of a policeman seeing me.
2. *The entry level of the action:* - This influences how a behaviour is maintained. The more complex the original ID behind an action (learning time, complexity, enactment time etc), the more it requires low level "maintenance" actions (stepping stones) in order to be maintained. On the other hand, an act that is initially easy to do, (performable in a few ways, easy to learn and short in duration), is more likely to be maintained at a high level. Chapter 7, which analysis data on impulsivity, gives some good textual examples of this point.

Action identity theory has not received wide support due to its failure to explain affect and certain kinds of behaviour. However, it provides an explanation, with useful intervention implications, of how the mechanism of impulsivity, a key feature of life-course offending behaviour, works. *An impulsive way of life is antithetical to moral behaviour*, as the latter calls for reflection on the implications of actions. Impulsive individuals, whose actions are habitually supported by low-level action identities, have difficulty developing a hierarchy of beliefs, values or moral reasoning levels to direct their actions. Action identity theory ties in with Aristotelian virtue ethics, which describe the "virtuous" man as one of good habits (Aristotle: Nicomachean ethics). Higher level action identities are needed to maintain the complex cognitive hierarchies involved in being virtuous!

Natural biological forces.

This approach, exemplified by Jerome Kagan's (cited in Damon, 1999) work, explains moral behaviour in terms of emotional dispositions that are genetically programmed. According to this view, moral behaviour is an unlearned response. The theory evokes limited interest today and is more likely to form part of a socialisation understanding of morality, where the underlying motivation of morality is rooted in biological needs. It is not dealt with further in this review.

3.42 Major Theories of Moral Development

Social Learning theory.

According to socialisation theory, norms and values are acquired through observation, imitation and reward. These values result in moral behaviours, that are maintained by positive reinforcement during the child's early development. In particular, the pattern of punishment and reward experienced by the young child has a strong influence on the development and maintenance of moral behaviour. This approach accepts that innate traits, or biological needs, are the root upon which social learning shapes moral behaviours.

In social learning theory, operant conditioning underpins moral development. Antecedent stimuli elicit "moral" acts such as sharing and helping. Conflicting tendencies, such as hoarding or aggression often emerge at the same time, and the action performed depends on the relative strength of all stimuli eliciting behaviour in

a situation. Socialisation theories emphasise needs, with responding actions tendencies that are most adaptive to the individual at the time. In the socialisation view, moral development is seen as process driven.

Socialisation theory has been the most common developmental explanation of morality in psychology in the recent past (Blasi, 1980). The number of moral tendencies, their generality and the processes by which they originated or led to action, varies between theories. However, there are common elements extending across the different theories of social learning. These are highlighted below.

1. Moral behaviour is context bound and varies from situation to situation, often independently of stated beliefs.

The early studies of Hartshorne and May (cited in Damon, 1999), found that children's decisions to cheat depended on whether they thought they would be caught (i.e. reinforcement expectations). This finding was supported in later research conducted by Mischel, Shoda, & Peake (1988). The experiments of Milgram also showed how ordinary "moral" people willingly hurt others in response to authoritarian role models, in a socially pressurising situation (Milgram, 1974). In a similar vein, Arendt (1964) investigated atrocities committed by the Nazi, Eichmann, in the 2nd World War and concluded that Eichmann was not a brutal sadist but an uninspired bureaucrat who slavishly responded to party orders. Arendt termed this kind of immorality "the banality of evil".

Later evaluation of the Hartshorne and May study questioned their conclusions and found that children were more likely to cheat than adolescents, indicating a degree of stability of moral behaviour across situations as children mature (Damon, 1999). Today it is generally accepted by socialization theorists that there is *some* stability of moral behaviour across situations with maturation, and that moral action is not entirely situation-determined. An extension of Ainslie's Temporal Preference theory (see 3.32 above) suggests this stability occurs as an individual develops "private" or inner rules that help him resist situational temptations. In the socialisation framework, these can be seen as having been learned through imitation of early caregivers and rewards from caregivers for goal directed behaviours. Such early learning is influenced by the degree of attachment of the young child to its caregiver (Hoffman, 1976).

The preceding explanation introduces a common theme in this review of moral development. It demonstrates the interaction between different theoretical explanations of moral development and shows that, while any one theory may have a social learning, cognitive or affective bias, other theoretical positions are necessary to achieve a *comprehensive* explanation of the process.

2. Parenting practices, and later, peer relationships, are central to the development of moral behaviour.

In a detailed study of the development of moral behaviour, Youniss (1980) concluded that this was initiated by the child's relationship with primary caregivers, through systematic reinforcement of the child's socially adaptive behaviour. Youniss' research also underlined the importance of peer relations in moral development. Reciprocal peer relationships helped the child see matters from the perspective of the other, which in turn developed empathy, an important element of moral behaviour.

Applying Youniss' trajectory to Moffitt's taxonomy, the life-course delinquent has a limited period in which to learn moral behaviour²⁵, through early socialisation with primary caregivers. Impulsivity and low frustration tolerance reduce his capacity to observe the environment closely and he learns less well from caregivers and other role models than do his siblings. In addition, harsh and inconsistent discipline from caregivers fails to reinforce early behaviour that is orderly, replicable and socially acceptable (moral) across situations. From about five years of age, the peer group becomes influential in creating socially acceptable behaviour in the child. He learns to negotiate order in his life, through positive reciprocal relationships with peers. The potential life-course offender child is generally disliked by peers, due to his aggression. He is also more

²⁵ Moral behaviour here is understood to be action which is socially acceptable or prosocial (i.e. at Kohlberg's 3rd stage of moral development).

focused on his own needs than on establishing reciprocal relationships. Thus, again, he fails to learn what society regards as socially appropriate behaviour.

3. *Resistance to temptation.*

Ainslie's temporal preference or ambivalence theory (see 3.32.) explains self-defeating behaviour as the choice of one action over the other to the long term detriment of the individual (Ainslie, 1992). While ambivalence theory does not emphasise social learning, succumbing to short term choices is synonymous to giving in to "temptation", a concept common to social learning interpretations of moral development. In social learning terms, Ainslie's *private rules* give the individual strategies to delay immediate gratification and to work for longer term, usually more prosocial goals. In terms of Moffitt's framework, certain children who temperamentally are impulse driven, are unable to develop and apply such private rules.

Other research on the impact of short term temptation on the achievement of more satisfying long term goals supports Ainslie's findings, albeit using different terminology (Fishbach, Friedmann, & Kruglanski, 2003). Fishbach et al. investigated the nature of automatic associations made between short term motives or temptations and the overriding goals with which they interfered. They found that temptations activated high priority goals, and these goals in turn tended to inhibit the temptation. However, this process varied as a function of subjective goal importance as well as of general self-control in the individual. The useful association between short term temptation and long term goals outlined by Fishbach et al. is unlikely to assist the life-course offender resist short term temptations (i.e. immoral/ antisocial acts). Firstly, the chance they have any strong high priority, long term goals in place is low, and secondly, they have a poor history of self-control. Although Fishbach et al. (2003) suggested the link between temptation and long term goals is automatic, most social learning theorists accept some volition in developing the kind of self-control implied in Ainslie's concept of private rules.

Baumeister and Exline (1999), in their work on self-control and antisocial behaviour, identified individual risk factors that impeded the development of Ainslie's personal rules. (They likened this process the growth of moral muscle!) These risk factors are synonymous with those posited by Moffitt (1993) and her colleagues in the early development of life-course offenders. They include temperamental and biological developmental factors in at risk children which make it very difficult for them to exercise the self-control needed to overcome early natural selfish impulses in order to learn from caregivers how to behave in ways that benefit the group. Children with normal self-control processes, driven by the need to belong, build up their self-control (or moral muscle) in order to behave in socially adaptive ways that win acceptance (positive reinforcement) from primary care givers.

Cognitive theory - Kohlberg's theory of moral development.

In the cognitive explanation of moral development, the situation is read and interpreted according to rules, or alternately, rules are applied to a situation. The development of these rules parallels the child's intellectual development. Piaget and later, Kohlberg, are the best known proponents of a cognitive theory of moral development (Gibbs & Widaman, 1982; Piaget, 1965). Moral cognitive theories are structural, rather than process driven as are socialisation theories of morality (Hugo & Van Vuuren, 1996). They unpack the structure and functional mechanisms of moral reasoning. Social experience is given a role in this development, but only in so far as it helps the child move to the next cognitive stage. Kohlberg and Piaget coined the term "social intelligence" (Social IQ) to explain moral development, seeing this as an evolving, progressively maturing capacity. Thus, moral values are more than content learning. They have a basic, structural capacity. Although Kohlberg's theory is generally not accepted as a sufficient explanation of moral behaviour, it has featured extensively in the literature as a cognitive account of moral development.

Accordingly, the theory is dealt with in some detail below.

Kohlberg, using hypothetical moral dilemmas to investigate individual levels of moral reasoning, concluded that moral concepts were universal. He described each stage of moral development as a further growth in *reflective sociomoral thinking*. "Reflective" indicated the need to reflect to justify the decision, "socio", that the decision must be right not only for self but for others, and "moral" highlighted the prescriptive nature of

decisions made (Gibbs, 1982). The overview below of Kohlberg's stages is drawn from reviews of his theory (Damon, 1999; Hugo & Van Vuuren, 1996, p. 13).

Kohlberg's Stages

Level 1- Pre-conventional or self-interest level

Stage 1 – The punishment and obedience orientation: Correctness of an action is determined by the physical consequences thereof. E.g. "I won't do it as I don't want to be punished."

Stage 2 – Naïve hedonistic and instrumental orientation: Correctness of action is determined by the extent to which one's immediate needs are met. Human relations are characterised by reciprocity. E.g. "I won't do it as I want the reward."

Level 2: Conventional (or Social approval level)

Stage 3 – Interpersonal relations (good girl/bad girl orientation): E.g. "I won't do it because I want people to like me."

Stage 4 – The law and order orientation (social order): E.g. "I won't do it because I do not want to break the law."

Level 3: Post-conventional or altruistic level

Stage 5 – The social-contract legalistic orientation: General individual rights and standards which have been accepted by society form the basis of right action. E.g. "I won't do it because I am obliged not to."

Stage 6 – The universal ethical principle orientation: E.g. "I won't do it because it is not right, no matter what others say."

Stages 1 and 2 are socially immature. Stages 3 and 4 are adaptive and involve adherence to regular societal norms (enlightened self-interest best describes behaviour at this level). Most people do not go beyond these conventional stages. In stage 3 there is movement from a one-way, or limited two-way, vision to an appreciation of genuine mutuality of "we-ness". Caring for others becomes a value in its own right rather than primarily self-serving. Kohlberg saw this level as offering sufficient reflective maturity in small communities but not for pluralistic urban societies, where ethical problems require an expanding frame of references beyond dyadic relations.

The theory of moral development has generated much research and some criticism. A summary of these criticisms appears below.

Criticisms of Kohlberg's Theory

1. *Conventional and higher levels of moral reasoning do not necessarily translate into moral action:* This is the strongest reason against relying wholly on a cognitive explanation of morality. Research has shown that, while delinquents are disproportionately at the pre-conventional stages, many are at higher stages (Arbuthnot, Gordon, & Jurkovic, 1987).

Differences in the affective loading of the contents of a belief system can influence the way an individual responds to others (Lickona, 1976) as do variations in self-control (Mischel, 1986). Parenting and community factors also lead to discrepancies between moral reasoning and beliefs, and moral behaviour (Damon, 1999).

2. *Methodology:* This criticism holds that Kohlberg's subject range is limited to Westernised groups, and his data gathering techniques are poor. The dilemma situations used by Kohlberg to gather data focus on verbal interviews and on analytic modes of thought, which may not be valued in some cultures (Lickona, 1976).

3. *The stages are not cross cultural:* This criticism holds that Kohlberg's stages apply only to individuals from Westernised cultures, although this is a controversial point.

Kohlberg and his supporters asserted that moral concepts were universal. They based this on the assumption that moral *structure* and *content* differ. The latter is defined by the cultural group, and the former is how a person thinks about his moral beliefs. A 2001 review of the cross-cultural literature on moral development

found support for the universality of Kohlberg's stages (Ferns & Thom, 2001). Support also arises from a South African study using moral dilemma situations with a fixed response format. The content of each stage varied significantly between Black and White university student groups but the stages followed the same sequence (Hugo & Van Vuuren, 1996).

An opposing view holds that social, cultural and historical factors differentially affect the stages of moral development across cultures (Ferns & Thom, 2001; Shaffer, 2000). While Kohlberg's stages idealise the value of individual human rights, some non-Western countries do not do so to the same degree, leading to differences in the content *and* structure of moral thinking between Western and non-Western groups. This argument is applicable to the community focus in the African culture. A study using Black and White adolescent South African subjects found that the moral reasoning stages of White adolescents followed Kohlberg's stages, while those of the Black adolescents did not (Ferns & Thom, 2001). The Black subject group progressed from Stage 2 (naïve, hedonistic and instrumental orientation) to Stage 4 (law and order orientation), missing out Stage 3 (good boy/bad boy orientation). Ferns and Thom hypothesised this was due to the emphasis placed in South African Black culture on the ideal of being a good family and community member. Group welfare superseded the ideal of Western, individual self-actualisation as a societal goal, with a traditional authoritarian parenting style and exposure of Black families to discrimination in the apartheid era explaining the reduced emphasis on individual development.

Vygotskyian theory also supports the non-universality of Kohlberg's stage, with moral function seen as being mediated by words and language. As language is a social medium, moral development *must* be shaped by the social, cultural and historical context in which it occurs (Ferns & Thom, 2001).

Lickona (1976) provided a useful conceptual means of accommodating the structuralist's universality of moral development while still allowing for cultural differences. He theorized that *the stage of moral development reached by the individual acted as a filter that determined the meaning and impact of his particular cultural content*. In that most individuals function at Kohlberg's "conventional" level, which is by definition, influenced by the situational context, content *must* play a part in moral beliefs and actions. Content (or "culture") can even overwhelm structure, as is the case when a culture's adult belief system brings a return to an earlier level of judgement. Content also affects what structures are operationalised in behaviour, and how this takes place.

4. *The stages are not cross-gender:* Kohlberg's moral principles are based on "masculine" virtues of justice and equality, according to Carol Gilligan, who held that Kohlberg's higher stages are relevant for men but not women (Gilligan, 1982). In a review of literature in general, and psychological literature in particular, she concluded that women hold different moral values at Kohlberg's post-conventional levels, replacing justice and equality with duty to obligations, responsibility to others and concern for the feelings of others.

5. *The moral reasoning stages are not as invariant as the theory holds:* This criticism is supported by cross cultural studies such as that of Ferns and Thom, 2001.

6. *The theory underestimates the moral level of young children:* Damon (1999) found that young children have a richer sense of morality than Kohlberg suggests, and that they act out of fairness as well as from fear. He maintained that Kohlberg's lower levels focus on legalistic concepts of morality and underestimate the moral sophistication of young children, who tend to use non-legalistic forms of moral reasoning, such as considering the needs of others. Research has also shown that preschool children can decide on the wrongness of an action based on the intention, not only the outcome (Shaffer, 2000).

7. *The theory neglects the affective aspects of morality:* The affective loading of the content of a person's belief system influences how he responds to the behaviour of others and therefore must be considered in addition to how a person reasons about his beliefs (Lickona, 1976). Shaffer also concluded from his review that the theory neglected the impact of strong emotions that could influence moral thought and action, such as pride, guilt or remorse (Shaffer, 2000).

8. *The relationship between IQ, moral reasoning and moral behaviour:* The criticism is levelled at cognitive explanations of moral development that a moderating intelligence factor influences moral development through the level of moral reasoning attained. It is not the low level of moral reasoning habitually used by an individual that links to antisocial behaviour but the fact that they have overall limited cognitive ability.

There is strong research support for a negative relationship between IQ and criminal behaviour (Donnellan et al., 2000; Friedman et al., 1999; Hirschi & Hindelang, 1977; Holden, 2003; Kratzer & Hodgins, 1999; Lickona, 1976; Lynam et al., 1993; Quay, 1987a). At pre-conventional levels of Kohlberg's stages, IQ is likely to be a co-correlating factor with moral reasoning and delinquency. However, the criticism under point 8. does not hold as there is evidence that moral behaviour is not synonymous with having good intelligence (see point 1. above).

Conclusions about the criticisms of Kohlberg's theory: The criticisms of Kohlberg's moral reasoning theory lead to a conclusion that a low level of moral reasoning is a likely contributor to antisocial behaviour, but alone, does not explain aberrant behaviour. This conclusion is supported by other reviewers of the literature on moral development (Blasi, 1980).

3.43 Morality and Good and Evil

Differences in extremes of moral (altruistic) and immoral (evil) behaviour between life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups were not directly relevant to the present study. However, an examination of these kinds of extreme behaviour provide insight into the overall process of moral development.

Morality and evil.

Research has linked the absence of values, an external locus of control, societal forces and conformity to social norms, with large scale acts of evil.

Absence of moral values: There is evidence to suggest that evil can be merely the absence of moral values, as covered under "Social Learning Theory" in 3.42 above. By implication this absence leaves the individual highly susceptible to reinforcements from his immediate group, albeit these generate "immoral" acts. Simonton investigated the inhumane behaviour of historically infamous perpetrators of social evil, such as Mengele and Eichmann, Nazi elite in World War 2. He concluded that these individuals were often quite ordinary people, rather than psychopathic criminals and that "sometimes evil is not so much an active force as a passive agent permitted by the absence of good" (Simonton, 1994, p. 261), a reference coinciding with Arendt's (1994) "banality of evil". Arendt's research into similar atrocities found that perpetrators lacked compassion and empathy.

External locus of control: An individual whose actions reflect an external locus of control is more likely to perpetrate evil acts than one whose behaviour is governed by an internal locus of control. Milgram's studies showed how some ordinary people, if pressurized to conform, will inflict harm on others even when they have the moral understanding that this is wrong. He found that even where empathy exists, the capacity to externalise responsibility for one's actions acts as a counterforce to empathy (Milgram, 1963, 1974). Milgram's research corroborates findings (Mischel, 1986; Shaffer, 2000) discussed in 3.44 below that the presence of an external, rather than internal, locus of control plays an important role in antisocial behaviour, particularly that which can be described as social evil.

Societal Forces: An external locus of control is influenced by societal forces, in addition to an individual's early interactions with others (Rotter, 1966). Milgram concluded that the problem of evil went beyond psychological developmental factors and was influenced by the society at the time of his experiments, where narrow job definitions in the post World War 2 period led to individuals failing to take responsibility for the impact of their actions on wider society. This tenet applies to South Africa, where the break down of cultural

values and traditions in some Black cultural groups is a societal factor that contributes to a sense of an external locus of control in many people (Vilakazi, 1962; Q. Zungu, personal communication, April 4, 2005).²⁶

Social Conformity: While conformity to social norms is associated with Kohlberg's third, conventional, stage of moral development (Gibbs & Widaman, 1982), evil acts can also represent conformity with social norms. This occurs where the prevailing social norms of a subgroup induce immoral behaviour towards certain groups outside of the particular subgroup. In this case, social norms service the interests of a particular group, at the expense of those outside this group. An example of this is the behaviour of the Nazis towards the Jews during the 2nd World War. (Lickona, 1976). As already noted, this is especially the case when there is an absence of moral values in the individual.

The above points illustrate how serious immoral behaviour is often not the outcome of deliberate evil intentions but *the absence* of a social value system to direct behaviour. Rachel Seiffert in "The Dark Room" illustrates this in a fictional story based on real post World War 2 events (Seiffert, 2001). The story records the meanderings of an old Belarussian collaborator, Kolesnik, who participated in atrocities against the Jews. In an interview with a young researcher, Misha, the old man is clearly aware that his actions were immoral. His explanations for his actions echo those identified in the psychological literature that are used to justify inhumane behaviour: obedience to authority, and de-personalizing others (Jews) into those who were the cause of his family's pain.

- M: Did you aim to kill or miss?
 K: Someone else is always responsible.
 M: What does this mean?
 K: Someone else said it was the thing to do. Even if they didn't order it, not really order it, they still said it was the thing to do. So you weren't responsible, you see? And then you did it, even though they did not order you to do it. So you did it voluntarily. And that way, the ones who gave the orders weren't responsible either. (Seiffert, 2001, p. 338)
- K: They [communists] took my father from me. I was angry and hungry, my whole family, and the Germans came and they told me the Jews were to blame. They... Everyone said that, you see....Which wasn't true.
 M: You knew it was a lie?
 K: Yes, but it was lie that made sense.
 M: What does that mean?
 K: I know it is bad to say it. I knew it was wrong. I knew it then too. (Seiffert, 2001, p. 343)

Kolesnik acted as he did, even though he felt some sorrow for what he had done and knew he had acted wrongly. This also supports Damon's view that an understanding of wrongness (cognitive level of moral reasoning) and even empathy, do not necessarily translate into moral behaviour.

- K: I cried in prison [placed there by the Russians after the war]. I cried some nights after I shot Jews. Others did too. I was wrong to do it and I was wrong to cry. (Seiffert, 2001, p. 355)

Which of the four factors covered in this sub section are relevant influences in the formation of a life-course offending trajectory? In terms of Moffitt's taxonomy, the absence of moral values and an external locus of control would be important factors. Social conformity to prevailing "gang" peer group norms, and current societal trends are sociological influences that would impact on both life-course and adolescent-limited offenders. Moral values and locus of control are both variables considered in the analysis and discussion of moral data in chapter 8.

Altruism.

At the opposite end of the moral continuum is altruism. Whereas social evil may be perpetrated mainly by those with neutral values, altruism implies positive moral development beyond Kohlberg's conventional level of moral reasoning (Stages 3 and 4, the social approval stages). This is a level few individuals attain. Altruism involves a genuine concern for others (Mischel, 1986). Hoffman defines altruism as "any purposive

²⁶ The current study controlled for societal factors in that equal degrees of societal problems, associated with cultural grouping, were present in both life-course and adolescent-limited offenders.

action on behalf of someone else which involves a net cost to the actor” (Hoffman, 1976, p. 124). Eisenberg & Mussen (1989) define altruism less restrictively, in terms of its intended consequences rather than in personal cost or motivational terms. They describe altruism as a specific kind of prosocial behaviour, a voluntary act intended to have positive outcomes for the recipient, regardless of the actor’s motives. These could be more or less selfish. This latter definition is operationally more useful than that of Hoffman, where it is hard, if not impossible, to measure “true” altruism, due to the difficulty in assessing the motives behind a prosocial act.

The genetic benefits of altruistic behaviour have been demonstrated for insects and mammals but behavioural evolutionists have not reached consensus on the adaptive significance of altruism to humans. A current line of research relates to the concept of “strong reciprocity”, where both cooperation, and punishment of those who do not cooperate, are seen to have long term benefits for humans (Buchanan, 2005; Levine, 2003; Vogel, 2004). Regardless of the debate around the evolutionary purpose of altruism, the developmental trajectory of altruistic behaviour in humans is pertinent to the present research. An inductive parenting style emerges as an important factor in this process, as shown in the next section.

Inductive Parenting

Parenting is the key variable in the development of altruism according to the literature. Research into the underlying motives of altruists who risked their lives to help their Jewish neighbours in Nazi Germany during the 2nd World War found these individuals shared a strong sense of moral obligation, obtained from their parents at an early developmental stage (Simonton, 1994). Hoffman (1975) noted that in a “healthy” home, even the average child develops some sense of altruism, mainly due to the effects of adequate parenting.

Hoffman’s definition of altruism describes altruistic motives as the outcome of a synthesis of empathic distress and the child’s increasingly sophisticated cognitive sense of others. According to Hoffman, empathy is “the involuntary experiencing of another person’s emotional state” (Hoffman, 1976, p. 126), arising when the unpleasant affect that accompanies one’s own painful past experiences is evoked by another’s distress cues. A cognitive sense of others arises through a role taking process, as understood in Piagetian terms. This is initiated by the development of object permanence in early childhood, followed by the understanding of people permanence at around 2 years of age. Once the child has the idea that the other has a sense of self, he can begin to infer the other’s emotions in situations. With further cognitive maturity, his understanding of this other grows. For altruism to develop, the young child needs to recognise similarities between the distress of others and his own pain.

A parenting style that is warm, consistent and non-coercive facilitates the development of empathy and role taking in the child (Colvin, 2000; Hoffman, 1975). Parental discipline that points out to the child the harmful effects of his antisocial action on others arouses empathy for the victim. This style, termed *inductive parenting*, occurs mainly in families that have open and adequate channels of communication. An inductive parenting style, according to Colvin and Hoffman, offers the following benefits:

- * It fosters the child’s sensitivity to others by allowing him to experience the full range of normal distress experiences.
- * It gives the child opportunities for role taking and helping others, plus corrective feedback.
- * It encourages the child to place himself in the shoes of others.
- * It engages the child in dialogue about moral values, which helps him develop his own moral views, through “cognitive conflict”. Cognitive conflict has been shown to promote growth to the next moral stage (Garbarino & Bronfenbrenner, 1976).

It is clear from the preceding discussion that parental influence which assists the child develop some altruistic characteristics provides him with protective factors against a life-course offending trajectory.

3.44 Moral Behaviour

A significant criticism of Kohlberg's theory of morality is that moral reasoning is not synonymous with moral behaviour. This review of the literature on moral development and crime concludes with an investigation of the factors that result in *moral behaviour*, as defined in William Damon's idea of a moral identity (Damon, 1999). This discussion highlights the importance of perceived locus of control in moral behaviour.

Damon's moral identity theory.

Unlike earlier theorists, Damon placed less emphasis on how young children developed their early moral system and more on what made them *enact their moral ideals* (Damon, 1999). He compared delinquents with young American Peace Corps volunteers and found that the former lacked any long term plans and positive role models, while these were present in the lives of the latter. He concluded that moral behaviour occurred when a person adopted moral values (e.g. altruism) as a central part of his/her *moral identity*. *With this identity in place, the individual was more likely to perceive every day situations as moral dilemmas, and to act on these*. Damon's account of moral behaviour integrates Shaffer's (2000) three domains of moral development. Moral identity is partly a construction of concepts of right and wrong, hence has a moral reasoning element. The child learns from primary caregivers, peers and the community how to behave morally, hence the socialisation element. The child's inclination to act on what he has learned and also knows to be right, is influenced by the degree to which he empathises with the condition of others. This is Shaffer's affective element of moral behaviour. It is fostered by primary caregivers through exploration of the consequences of the child's actions on others and by allowing him to take on different social roles. In comparing the moral behaviour of young American Peace Corps volunteers and delinquents, Damon identified three key elements in the development of a moral identity. These were

- * primary caregivers
- * peers
- * the community

As with the moral theorists discussed earlier, Damon placed central importance on parenting in the child's moral development. Parenting styles dictate the kind of moral guidance parents give. At the negative end of the continuum, harsh, inconsistent parenting works against the growth of a strong moral identity in the child. At the positive end, "authoritative" (Baumrind, 1971) parenting provides firm, consistent rules and limits, encourages open discussion, and promotes clear communication. When children move out of early childhood, peers become an important factor in moral development, although parents continue to play a role by encouraging the correct types of peer relations. These interactions spur moral growth through peer discussions that clarify for the child differences between his preconceptions and reality.²⁷ The community also facilitates the growth of a moral identity. In communities where consensus on expectations for youth is high, there is a strong level of altruism and low levels of antisocial behaviour. The opposite is true in socially fragmented communities.

Locus of control in moral behaviour.

Walter Mischel, using the term *moral competence* to refer to the ability to act morally, stressed the importance of self-control if moral behaviour is to occur (Mischel, 1986). Self-control (non-impulsive behaviour) is assisted by the presence of mature moral reasoning and judgement, but also requires the ability to regulate behaviour in the face of situational pressures over long time periods, without the aid of immediate external rewards. Empathy and the ability to consider the long term consequences of actions on others play a part in developing this self-control. Ainslie's (1992) temporal preference theory similarly places importance on the delay of gratification in order to avoid inappropriate impulsive acts.

²⁷ This picks up on the importance Youniss (1980) places on peer relationships in the child's overall social development.

Another way to understand self-control is to see it as a shift from an external to an internal *locus of control*. This term originated from Franz Heider's attribution theory in the 1950s. Today it is associated with Rotter's social learning theory. Rotter (1996) based his concept of locus of control on social learning theory, moving away from a Freudian understanding of physiological motivating factors behind behaviour. He saw behaviour as an interaction of the persona and his environment, with the empirical law of effect²⁸ as his motivating factor. Locus of control describes an individual's general expectations about what determines whether or not he gets reinforced in life. Those who have a strong "internal" locus of control expect their own efforts to be the primary source of their reinforcements. Those with a strong "external" locus of control believe that reinforcement is controlled by luck, chance or others. The latter kind of individual is less likely to set goals, and more prone to act in an impulsive, unplanned manner. Locus of control is not immutable to change. However an internal or external orientation becomes part of a person's response style as a result of his past learning experiences. Social learning theory explains the origins of locus of control well, as shown by Colvin (2000). Looking at the effects of punishment on early development, he found that where earlier behaviour is shaped by the fear of punishment, rather than the desire to do good, the individual perceives the locus of control to be external. When the punishing agent is removed, he no longer feels obligated to behave in a "moral" manner. This reiterates the importance of appropriate early parenting styles.

Shaffer (2000) in his review, concluded that a growth towards an internal locus of control was crucial for moral maturity. Mischel (1986) found that a lack of individual responsibility for behaviour was a factor increasing aggression and diminishing altruistic behaviour.

3.45 Conclusions

The length of this section on moral development in the literature review mirrors the complexity of current thinking around this topic. A conclusion drawn from the overview of research above supports Damon's (1999) view that no one theory fully accounts for what makes an individual behave in a moral way. The review also suggests that, as with the acquisition of relationship skills, social learning theory makes the strongest contribution to an understanding of moral development. s

A final comment places this discussion of moral development in relation to the investigation of Moffitt's types of antisocial behaviour in this research. To appreciate this point, moral behaviour, as the term is used in this paper, is understood as *prosocial*, rather than altruistic, behaviour.

The criterion for adequate moral development, used to investigate differences between the life-course and adolescent-limited groups in the present study, was a general bias towards prosocial behaviour in either group, rather than evidence of the presence of only prosocial behaviours in a research group. This review of the literature indicates that *some* rebellious behaviour in adolescence has benefits in the progression from childhood towards autonomous adulthood, as some opposition to authority (negativism) helps the pubertal child establish his personal identity (Apter, 2001). Moffitt (2003) concurred that a degree of antisocial behaviour during adolescence was adaptive as it bridged the *maturity gap* (Moffitt's term) experienced by pubertal youth in many developed societies. She found in her Dunedin cohort that "abstainers from delinquency" (Moffitt, 2003, p. 60) were rare. According to Moffitt and her colleagues, antisocial behaviour only became non-adaptive when it persisted *beyond the normative period into late adolescence or early adulthood* after which most youth adopted socially conforming, adult behaviour roles (Moffitt, 2003).

3.5 Aggression and Recidivist Crime

Defining aggression.

Discordant finding have emerged in the literature on aggression in children and adolescents. This is due mainly to different methodologies used. In particular, there are several different definitions of the term "aggression" (Dilalla, 2002). These include physical harm, shoplifting, overt versus covert aggression, and reactive versus proactive aggression. This range mirrors differences in conceptual understanding of the term

²⁸ The empirical law of effect holds that rewarded behaviour tends to increase in frequency.

across studies.²⁹ For example, the term “hostility” is sometimes used interchangeable with “aggression”. While the former term refers to spur of the moment anger (a common understanding of aggression), it also implies a set of prejudices that motivate aggressive acts. Aggression, as considered in the present study, does not refer to the psychopathic violence of Gray et al., nor to behaviour that arising from negative attitudes or prejudices. Common definitions of aggression, and that used in this paper, appear below:

Behavioural Descriptions

- a. A common definition of aggression is the “intentional physical or psychological injury to another person” (Goldstein, 2002, p. 170). Shaffer (2000, p. 490) adds the proviso that the victim “is motivated to avoid such treatment”. Aggression is usually seen as an emotional and fairly short lived reaction (Kernis, Grannemann, & Barclay, 1989).³⁰
- b. A variation in this kind of descriptive definition of aggression indicates whose perspective is being taken in rating the seriousness of the injury, be this the victim, perpetrator, or a third party.
- c. Aggression may be proactive or reactive, depending on how the individual processes the social information in a situation (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Reactive aggression arises if the individual attributes hostile intentions to another’s act. In proactive aggression, the individual does not feel especially disliked but does not let potentially hostile incidents pass.

Developmental Descriptions

A second approach defines aggression in developmental terms, either as a stable trait from early childhood to adulthood or, as characteristic of a single developmental time period (usually during adolescence). Studies describing the developmental aetiology of life-course offending use a developmental description of aggression. It is seen as an early, extended developmental time period of low level aggressive acts, which progress to more harmful and intense aggressive behaviour (Goldstein, 2002), occurring across situations and over time. This is the aggression Moffitt (1993) describes as a psychological characteristic of the life-course offender.

The Definition used in the Present Study

In the current study, the term “aggression” is consistently used to identify the antisocial aggressive behaviours of both Moffitt’s life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups. It is understood to be a violent action arising from a failure to control emotionally impulses, due to a heated situation, or lowered control due to drugs or alcohol. It incorporates definitions (a) and (c) under “Behavioural Descriptions” above. The developmental definition of aggression (pervasive, restricted mainly to adolescence) is also implicit in that used in this study.

The relationship between Moffitt’s types and aggression.

Longitudinal studies indicate that the degree of aggressive behaviour shown between age 3-10 years predicts adult aggression and persistent antisocial behaviour (Farrington, 1995; Hawkins et al., 2000; Henggeler, 1989; Shaffer, 2000). Serious recidivist criminals demonstrate aggressive behaviour at an early stage, which manifests in a stable form across situations and time, although the nature of the aggressive acts change as the individual develops (Caspi, 2000; Loeber, 1982; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1987). The changing shape of aggression over developmental stages described by LeBlanc, 1996 (cited in Goldstein, 2002), ties in with that identified in Moffitt’s (1993) taxonomy. Around age 8-10 there is petty theft and homogeneous and benign antisocial acts. From age 10-12, offences diversify and escalate and include shoplifting and vandalism. Around age 13, as the child enters adolescence, there is an explosion of antisocial behaviour, of an increasingly

²⁹ Although not central to the point just made, an interesting study was conducted showing that even perpetrators themselves can have a different understanding of what “aggression” implies. A study on aggression in psychopaths imprisoned for murder (Gray, MacCulloch, Smith, Morris, & Snowden, 2003), suggested psychopaths process certain abstract words, including those relating to violence and evil, differently to non-psychopaths. Gray et al.’s research showed that psychopathic murderers found the concept of violence significantly less disturbing than did non psychopathic murderers and concluded this was the likely cause of the former’s perpetration of violent crime, rather than this being due to impulsivity or poor decision making. Other work by Canadian and American researchers, looking at the way psychopaths processed photographs of graphic depictions of accident scenes, reinforced the conclusion that psychopaths have a different cognitive perception of violence to normal individuals (Carey, 2005).

³⁰ While short lived, it may be habitually repeated, as is the case with Moffitt’s life-course offenders.

varied and serious nature. This includes public disorder, burglary and personal theft. From age 15, the antisocial nature of the crimes grows to include drug dealing, car theft, armed robbery and personal attack. The final stage of aggression includes violent crimes such as murder and rape.

Genetic influences on aggression.

Genetic studies have found a stronger heritable link between the aggression of life-course offenders than that of adolescent-limited offenders (Caspi et al., 2002; Dilalla, 2002). There has also been increasing evidence to show that a genetic predisposition to aggression is activated only by certain early environments (Dilalla, 2002).³¹ In particular, the presence of the monoamine oxidase A (MAOA) genotype is associated with high levels of aggression in the child. However, animal (Suomi, 2004) and human (Caspi et al., 2002; Haberstick et al., 2005) studies suggest that this is manifest *only* when the individual is exposed to maltreatment in its early development.³²

Cultural influences on aggression.

Social class differences in the manifestation of aggression suggest that children from lower socio-economic groups, and those in larger urban areas, are more aggressive than middle class children living in the same area. As discussed in 2.2 above, differences in *the child rearing practices associated with social class* are more likely to account for this relationship than wealth differences associated with different social classes (Colvin, 2000; Evans, 2003; Snyder & Patterson, 1987). Parents in lower socio-economic groups rely more on physical punishment to discipline, while middle class parents make greater use of reasoning. Parents in the former groups thus are better models of aggression for their children than are middle and upper class parents. This finding is relevant to the present study in that most subjects came from the lower end of the socio-economic scale.

Theoretical models of aggression.

Instinctual Theories

These arise from a psychoanalytic tradition. In this framework, aggression might be redirected to become socially accepted, but is never removed. The view is typified by the instinctual theorists, Dollard and Miller, who saw aggression as a response to frustration (Mischel, 1986).

Combined Trait and Social Learning Theories

Dollard and Miller's views were rejected by social learning theorists, who held that frustration produced an arousal state, which *might or might not* lead to aggression. Bandura's (1976) work exemplified a classic social learning model of aggression. In his theory, aggression depended on the expected outcome of a situation. If aggressive behaviour is modelled and rewarded by early caretakers (as is the case with Moffitt's at risk child) this will be the response of choice of the individual in the future. However, if consequences to an aggressive response are negative, such as consistent removal of reinforcement, or punishment, an habitual aggressive response to frustration can be avoided (Mischel, 1986).

An Interactive Model of the Cycle of Aggression

Moffitt (1993), Patterson (1989) and Granic & Patterson (2006) agreed that neither poor child rearing practices nor predisposing early traits, alone, resulted in persistent aggression in the child. Rather, persistent aggression was the outcome of an interactive process. The child's initial frustrations, due to low impulse control, evoked aggressive behaviour from its caregivers. This in turn exacerbated aggressive responses in the child, and thus interactions settled into a habitual aggressive pattern. This pattern drew in other family members, leading to the families of life-course offenders demonstrating overall high levels of conflicted interactions. In short, the early maladaptive environment of the antisocial child was both the cause and result of his aggressive behaviour.

³¹ See also 2.33 in this chapter on the nature-nurture debate.

³² Findings on the interaction of MAOA and the environment are not yet conclusive, as Haberstick et al., (2005) was able to only weakly replicate Caspi's (2002) findings.

Upon leaving the home to interact with peers and teachers, the child's aggressive behaviour and other poor social skills led to his rejection by normal peers and propelled him towards other misfits, many of whom were also aggressive. This too perpetuated his aggressive behaviour, through modelling, and the absence of adaptive social skills learning that might provide alternatives to an aggressive response to a situation.

3.6 Self-Esteem and Recidivist Crime

Although Moffitt did not investigate the role of self-esteem in a life-course offending trajectory, it is associated with persistent antisocial behaviour in the literature. In particular, there is a relationship between chronic aggression and self-esteem. As with the association between moral development and recidivist crime, this relationship is complex and difficult to measure.

Definitions of self-esteem (or self-concept).

A generally accepted definition of self-esteem is that it describes an individual's perception of his worth or competence, relative to his perceived potential (Henggeler, 1989). This perception arises from the interaction of a person's inherent characteristics and his life experiences. "Self-esteem" is a term reflecting the positive or negative weight an individual gives to his self-concept (Arbuthnot et al., 1987). Mboya adds a cultural aspect to the definition, citing Shavelson, Hubner and Stanton's description of self-concept as the individual's perception of self that reflects perceptions formed through interactions with important others, through general experience in the social environment, and attributions about one's own behaviour (Shavelson, Hubner & Stanton, cited in Mboya, 1993).

Traditional definitions of self-esteem were unidimensional. Currently, a multidimensional conceptualisation is favoured, with self-esteem seen as consisting of several components (Wild, Flisher, Bhana, & Lombard, 2006). These include physical, social and academic esteem.

Although there is a culturally dimension to self-esteem in terms of Mboya's (1993) definition, efforts have been made in the past to develop self-esteem measures that avoid cultural influences and tap into universal self-esteem qualities. Those developed by Coopersmith, (1987) and Battle (1992) are in this mould.

Persistent aggression and self-esteem: Too high or too low self regard?

There are two opposing views in the literature on the link between chronic antisocial behaviour and self-esteem. The first, and traditional, body of opinion holds that individuals with very poor self-esteem adopt a "victim turned perpetrator" role in order to "get back" at society for the perceived injustices they have experienced (Arbuthnot et al., 1987; Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996). In this framework, the chronic delinquent is seen as having an uncertain and fragile self image, that embodies a negative self view and negative beliefs about how others value him. This is the "esteem enhancement" model of the antisocial behaviour/self-esteem relationship (Kaplan, 1980, cited in Arbuthnot et al., 1987). It assumes low self-esteem is a drive mechanism that propels individuals to behaviour choices leading to increased self regard. In this light, deviant, particularly aggressive, behaviour is an adaptive or defensive response to self devaluation, where conventional behaviour choices provide insufficient opportunities to create a positive self regard.

This perception was challenged by the view that aggressive individuals have an overly high opinion of themselves. Roy Baumeister conducted seminal research on the association between self-esteem and chronic aggression. In the 1970's his work mirrored the then perception that low self-esteem was a key factor in persistent violent behaviour. By the 1990's, his own subsequent research, and extensive investigation of the literature on the relationship between low self-esteem and violence, led Baumeister to conclude that the studies reviewed: "did not uncover any one definitive or authoritative statement of the theory that low self-esteem causes violence" (Baumeister, 1996, p.6). Where aggression was present in the obviously low esteem individual, Baumeister concluded that this was directed towards safe, helpless targets, from whom the aggressor has little to fear. Further research led Baumeister (2005) to conclude that threatened egotism rather than low self-esteem was the root of much violence. Violent individuals thought very well of themselves and became aggressive towards those who failed to give them the inflated respect they felt they deserved. Central to the dynamics of this process was the inflated, unstable or tentative nature of the individual's high regard for

himself. This made him prone to respond defensively to threats to his self view, directing anger outwards in order to avoid a downward revision of his self image.

It remains unclear what determines whether threatened egotism leads to aggressive or alternative responses (Baumeister et al., 1996). In the context of Moffitt's (1993) taxonomy, aggression would be the habitual response to ego threats *in the at risk child, who had not learned any other way to respond to threats from its environment*.

One definition of aggression (3.5 above) is that it can be proactive or reactive, depending on how the individual processes the social information in a situation (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Similarly, the violence perpetrated by individuals with an inflated self-esteem and fragile ego may be either reactive or proactive. In that they react strongly to discrepancies between their view of themselves and the lower opinion held by others, their aggressive responses are reactive. In that they are regularly defensive (experience having shown their inflated self image not to be shared by others) they are overly sensitive to perceived slights when this is not the case. Here their aggression is proactive.

Problems in measuring self-esteem.

It became evident from the literature on self-esteem that measuring this variable in the present study would be a difficult, even impossible, task, due to its complexity. However, the "tapestry" aspect of the research design encouraged a preliminary investigation of self-esteem, using the limited means at hand, the results of which appear in chapter 9. The present section highlights the debates surrounding the assessment of self-esteem in the literature. These relate to the conceptualisation, measurement and cultural aspects of self-esteem.

1. Conceptualisation

A recent comprehensive review outlines the problems besetting both the definition and measurements of self-esteem (Campbell & Foddis, 2003). It is a general tenet in psychotherapy that boosting self-esteem improves individual functioning. This view was challenged by Baumeister et al. (1996) when they concluded that an inflated self-esteem led to persistent aggressive behaviour. Campbell and Foddis note however that this controversy rests largely on the way self-esteem is measured (and consequently, defined) in a study. If the high esteem measure reflects an unconditional value of the self, without conditions or criteria, or if it is based on a realistic consideration of the realities of the individual's situation, this results in adaptive, achieving behaviour rather than antisocial behaviour. This kind of self-worth is defined by Nathaniel Branden as *genuine self-esteem*, and is supported by several psychological theorists. Brandon (cited in Campbell & Foddis, p. 5), describes the two aspects of this definition. Self-esteem is

- * an evaluation one is competent to deal with life's basic challenges (self-efficacy)
- * an evaluation that one is worthy of happiness (self-worth)

These sources of self-esteem are internal and less dependent on external validation of the self. On the contrary, *pseudo self-esteem*, as defined by Branden, relies on external sources of validation such as admiration or approval by others, status or physical appearance. It is this latter kind of esteem that, when inflated, leads to the persistent aggression observed by Baumeister (2005).

2. Measurement

Measurement of self-esteem is a second problem area in accurately understanding the relationship between self-esteem and persistent aggression (Arbuthnot et al., 1987; Baumeister et al., 1996; Campbell & Foddis, 2003). Until recently, self-report questionnaires were the only tool used to measure self-esteem. There are several criticisms of this measurement technique, around its failure to distinguish between a realistic self-esteem that draws on internal sources, and an inflated self-esteem, dependent on external validation. Problems such as psychological defensiveness, social desirability and difficulty in checking the objectivity of the ratings underpin this difficulty. Self-esteem questionnaires are particularly criticised for evaluating an individual's *perception of his competencies but not his satisfaction with that perception* (Wild et al., 2006). Baumeister

also questioned the positive value implied in *high* self-esteem items on tests. He held that test items should rather hold neutral value, in order to dissociate high self-esteem from good mental health.

In response to these problems, work on implicit measures of self-esteem, using reaction times to computer-based word associations, has had promising results, although there is the need for more research in this field (Campbell & Foddis, 2003).

3. *Cultural Issues in the Measurement of Self-Esteem*

Mboya investigated the contradictory findings in the literature regarding the cross-cultural nature of self-concept (Mboya, 1994). Most measure of self-concept (and self-esteem) have been developed in an Euro-American context. In developing his test of self-concept, the Self-Description Inventory, (Mboya, 1993), Mboya found that the Western combination of *global and specific elements of self-concept held true* in a non-eurocentric, African adolescent subject group, and that there were no significant differences between Black and White students on the test (Mboya, 1994). However, he found *differences in the content of the values* that constructed the self-concept between the groups. Black students placed more importance on school and physical appearance and White students valued physical appearance and emotional stability.

The majority of participants in the present research also came from non-Western backgrounds and Mboya's findings underlined the importance of a measure that accurately tapped the elements that made up self-esteem in the groups. However, a literature search revealed no further completed research into specific measures of self-concept or self-esteem in an African context.³³ Nor were further peer reviewed studies found that validated Mboya's (1993) Self-Description Inventory. Given this dearth of locally developed measurement tools, a "culture-free" measure of self-esteem, rather than a specific measure designed for a rural South African group, was selected in the present study (see chapters 3 and 9).

Related issues: Narcissism and the stability of self-esteem.

Baumeister (1996) suggested that greater clarity on the relationship between self-esteem and aggression would be achieved if a broader assessment was made of how the self is viewed. These additional measures included the stability of self-esteem and narcissism.

Narcissism

Campbell and Foddis (2003, p. 8)) defined a narcissistic person as one who: "harbours grossly inflated opinions of his competence and his worth, regarding himself as superior to others." They cited research showing that the narcissist has a similar over reliance on external sources to affirm his grandiose sense of self as does Baumeister's inflated self-worth individual.

High narcissism scores complement Branden and Baumeister's idea of an inflated, fragile, self-esteem versus genuine self-esteem.³⁴ Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan (1991) investigated the relationship between narcissism, self-esteem and aggression, and concluded that narcissism was a form of self-esteem management. They defined narcissism as: *a love of self: as a person, was, is, and hopes to be*. When this self is threatened, as is the case with a rejecting early caregiver, self doubts arise. To protect self-esteem, the child may develop a grandiose self image. Carey (2005)'s description of *malignant narcissism*, a term describing a personality type displaying grandiosity, fantasies of unlimited power, deep sense of entitlement and a need for excessive admiration, could well describe many of Moffitt's life-course offenders.

The Stability of Self-Esteem

Another promising area of research, to facilitate the measurement of self-esteem, is the investigation of the stability of self-esteem. Kernis et al. (1989) found that unstable high self-esteem was related to a strong tendency to anger and hostility, while stable high self-esteem was linked to a weak tendency to anger and

³³ Wild et al. (2006) are currently working on a self-esteem measure for young isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English speaking adolescents but the work on this is incomplete.

³⁴ Unfortunately the main tool for measuring narcissism, the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) (Raskin & Terry, 1988) is subject to the same drawbacks as self-report measures of self-esteem.

hostility. Complementing this finding is the review by Campbell and Foddis (2003) showing the instability and fluctuations of the self-esteem of narcissists.

An investigation into differences in narcissism and the stability of self-esteem was beyond the scope of the present research, but is a fruitful topic for future in-depth research on the link between a life-course offender type and recidivist crime.

Theoretical models of fragile self-esteem.

The Psychoanalytic Model: Baumeister's inflated self-worth and fragile ego, and Raskin and Terry's (1988) model of narcissistic behaviour, fit into a psychoanalytic mould, relating to the different kinds of love experienced by the developing infant and his drive to be accepted.³⁵ The at risk child fails to meet this need through his inadequate caregivers, hence his fragile sense of self-worth. The interaction of environmental factors with the child's need to preserve ego intactness would explain the continuation of high, fragile, self-esteem as he develops.

A Social Learning Model: The challenge to the individual is to obtain reinforcement of his self-view from his environment. Mboya's (1993) culturally sensitive model accommodates a social learning model of self-esteem well.

SUMMARY

This prolonged literature review places the findings of the present study in context. It briefly revisited how society has dealt with crime over the past century, examined in some depth Moffitt's taxonomy of life-course and adolescent-limited offenders, and investigated the variables identified by Moffitt and others that are associated with a developmental trajectory of persistent antisocial behaviour.

The remaining chapters present the hypotheses, methodology, results and discussion of the research described in this paper.

³⁵ See Raskin, (1991). It is beyond the scope of this paper to pursue the concept of narcissism. The introduction of the concept serves mainly to support Baumeister's recommendation that the link between narcissism, self-esteem and aggression merits more research

CHAPTER 2. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The relatively large number of hypotheses investigated in the study are justified in terms of the exploratory nature of the research. The variables related to Moffitt's taxonomy that are discussed in the literature review, are examined to assess the applicability of Moffitt's taxonomy to a developing country such as South Africa. The range of hypotheses in the current work is intended to strengthen the reliability and validity of the findings, as the design lacks the robustness of a large scale, longitudinal research design such as that used by Moffitt. The way this occurs is described in two ways below. The first explanation is a formal one, that considers the key assumption of an experimental design. The second, is informal, and expands on the tapestry image used to describe the research process in the preceding chapter. This metaphor is a useful means of helping the reader comprehend more easily the overall research process used in this study.

Comparative research: comparing patterns of performance to enhance validity.

In research, the experimental method is intended as a technique to isolate and test individual variables in order to demonstrate cause-effect relations. The inability to isolate and manipulate any one subject variable in a comparative study violates a basic principle of the experimental method. This is a concern for the present research, which, despite its qualitative design framework, bases most of its findings on an experimental method design, seeking to identify cause and effect relations in a life-course developmental pathway.

In non-comparative research, different versions of a task are presented to equivalent or randomly assigned subject group to investigate the impact of variations in the task on performance. In cross-sectional developmental research a cause-effect relationship is harder to measure because no such randomisation is possible, due to pre-existing research groups (e.g. the life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups in the present study). As Cole and Means (1981) note, in comparative research it is not possible to ensure that groups are equal on all variables except those under investigation. This is due to unaccounted for pre-existing differences between the groups which could influence the comparison.

In the current study, an effort was made to match the groups on some variables, such as age, socio-economic status (SES) and race. Subjects in both groups fell in the post-adolescent, 23-30, age range, as Moffitt held that it is only after adolescence that group differences emerge. The literature has not found SES to be a discriminating variable, thus the groups were matched on this variable. Regarding the variable of culture (synonymous with race in the study), the groups were matched. Several other variables were numbered amongst the research variables, thus reducing their potential to act as unwanted sources of group variance. These included religious beliefs and parenting practices.

In spite of the preceding comments, Cole & Means' (1981, p. 35) view that it is impossible not to violate the "all other things being equal" assumption in the experimental method of comparative research applies to the present study. It was clearly impossible to match subjects on *all variables extraneous* to the factors investigated in the study. The impact of family or subject affiliation with different religions; family size; the standard of schooling experienced by each subject, and so on, remained potential sources of extraneous variance.

Cole and Means (1981) suggest strategies to reduce the threat to valid inferences from comparative research findings. The strategy suggested by Cole and Means that is used in the present study is that of comparing patterns of performance *within* each experimental group, *between* the two research groups. This pattern is demonstrated in the significant number of hypothesis or "research questions" investigated in the study and presented below. Together, this set of questions depict an expected pattern of differences between the research groups. Should group differences be found across the majority of these hypotheses, there are grounds for accepting the findings of the study as valid, in terms of Cole and Means' tenet.

Revisiting the tapestry metaphor.

The image of a tapestry, alluded to in the previous chapter, provides a graphic depiction of how the large number of variables investigated in this study works to enhance its validity. The metaphor can be explained in

parallel to the progressive stages of the research process described in this study. The research hypotheses in this chapter are likened to the groupings of sets of tapestry threads, that jointly create several colour patterns in the tapestry. Each set of hypotheses at levels two and three below makes assumptions about how well certain thread groupings will combine to create a particular pattern in the tapestry. The completed tapestry demonstrates the effectiveness of the proposed groupings, thus providing an answer to the key research question below, through how closely it resembles the overall image that is desired. The following chapter, dealing with research method, describes the method to be followed in executing the weaving of the tapestry, in order to create patterns that conform to the desired standard across the entire work. The set of results chapters represent critical observation of various sections of the tapestry, in order to assess whether each has achieved the desired aim, or pattern, (i.e. levels two and three in each research hypothesis). The summing up chapter that follows, represents the finished product, hanging in its appointed place for all to see the story it tells. The final tapestry effect is as yet uncertain. It will arise from the gestalt created by its assorted parts.

The Research Hypotheses

Each research hypothesis below contains a three levelled tier of hierarchical questions. All these dovetail towards answering the central research question. The response to the investigations at the lowest levels of each hypothesis tier confirms or repudiates the hypothesis at the next level. Ultimately, the combined responses to each hypothesis lead to the overall rejection or confirmation of the key research hypothesis.

The term “investigation” is substituted for the term “hypothesis” at a point in the preceding paragraph. This highlights the *exploratory nature* of the current research. The study is exploratory for three reasons:

- * The study is the first application of Moffitt’s taxonomy to a South African semi-rural subject group. In fact, it is the first attempt to test her theory in a South African context.
- * The study uses a radically different research design to that of Moffitt and her colleagues, who drew on data from longitudinal cohort studies.
- * Arising from the preceding point, additional variables to those contained in Moffitt’s taxonomy are measured in the study, to add depth to the findings. While differences are expected between the research groups on these variables, the *direction* of these differences are uncertain.

The key research hypothesis and its confirmatory, sub-hypotheses, are presented below. Each second level hypothesis is presented with its attached third level hypotheses.

2.1 The Key Research Hypothesis

It is hypothesised that marked differences emerge in the expected direction, between the life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups, on the variables measured.

The choice of the term “marked” rather than “significant” is used in all the hypotheses, for the purposes of accuracy, as statistical differences could be calculated on some, but not all, variables. Furthermore, given the qualitative research tool used, there was more interest in *trends* emerging from the qualitative data, rather than in statistically significant differences. Nevertheless, where possible and appropriate, tests of statistical significance were carried out.

2.2 Second and Third Level Hypotheses

Hypotheses Directly Relating to Moffitt's Taxonomy

Antisocial Behaviour

Second Level

1. It is hypothesised that the life-course offender group demonstrates markedly more antisocial behaviour than the adolescent-limited group.

Third Level

In particular, it is hypothesised that life-course offenders as compared with adolescent-limited offenders

- 1.1 perpetrated more serious crimes
- 1.2 perpetrated more victim oriented crime
- 1.3 committed a similar number of minor crimes and status offences
- 1.4 began with minor crime and status offences earlier and continued with crime over a longer period

Early parenting and family interactions.

Second Level

2. It is hypothesised that the life-course offender group experienced markedly poorer quality early parenting and family relationships than did the adolescent-limited offender group.

Third Level

In particular, it is hypothesised that life-course offenders as compared with adolescent-limited offenders

- 2.1 experienced harsher, more inconsistent discipline
- 2.2 had colder, more rejecting early caregivers
- 2.3 experienced less parental vigilance
- 2.4 had families where communication between members was poorer
- 2.5 experienced higher levels of family conflict
- 2.6 had "unstable" family composition (e.g. single parent family)

Peer relationships.

Second Level

3. It is hypothesised that the life-course offender group have markedly poorer peer relationships than do the adolescent-limited offender group.

Third Level

In particular, it is hypothesised that life-course offenders as compared with adolescent-limited offenders

- 3.1 associated more with groups whose prime activity was antisocial behaviour, while adolescent-limited offender subjects associated with both antisocial and prosocial groups
- 3.2 interacted with peers at a lower level of Selman's friendship stages
- 3.3 experienced poorer quality peer relationships, as measured by the duration of friendships, and the presence/absence of conflict in the relationship

***Developmental history, cognitive ability and school progress.*³⁶**

Second Level

4. It is hypothesised that the life-course offender group showed a markedly poorer early developmental history, lower cognitive ability and poorer school progress than did the adolescent-limited group.

Third Level

In particular, it is hypothesised that life-course offenders, as compared with adolescent-limited offenders

- 4.1 experienced more pre- and post-natal problems and developmental lags
- 4.2 measure significantly lower on the Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices
- 4.3 progressed less well at school

³⁶ The outcome of this hypothesis appears in chapter 3 "Methods" as it deals with characteristics of the research groups.

Impulsivity.*Second Level*

5. It is hypothesised that the life-course offender group respond to situations in markedly more impulsive ways than do the adolescent-limited offender group.

Hypothesis Indirectly Related to Moffitt's Taxonomy***Goal setting.***³⁷*Second Level*

6. It is hypothesised that the life-course offender group demonstrate markedly less goal setting and planning than do the adolescent-limited offender group.

Third Level

In particular, it is hypothesised that life-course offenders as compared with adolescent-limited offenders

- 6.1 set fewer long term goals
- 6.2 had more difficulty persevering towards long term goals
- 6.3 set fewer prosocial goals

Moral development.*Second Level*

7. It is hypothesised that the life-course offender group lag markedly in their moral development, relative to the adolescent-limited group.

Third Level

In particular, it is hypothesised that life-course offenders as compared with adolescent-limited offenders³⁸

- 7.1 describe fewer incidents of moral behaviour
- 7.2 used lower levels of moral reasoning
- 7.3 have fewer moral values
- 7.4 experienced fewer of the early parent variables associated with moral behaviour, namely
 - * inductive parenting
 - * parents acting as moral role models
 - * parents' assigning responsibility to children
 - * parents' exposing children to moderate social conflict and to prosocial peers
- 7.5 experienced less community cohesion and came from communities with fewer community held values
- 7.6 show fewer altruistic inclinations
- 7.7 have a more externalised locus of control

Self-esteem.*Second Level*

8. It is hypothesised that there are differences in self-esteem between the life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups.

Third Level

In particular, it is hypothesised that life-course offenders as compared with adolescent-limited offenders

- 8.1 show a more inflated, brittle self-esteem
- 8.2 show a more depressed self-esteem³⁹
- 8.3 show lower self-esteem on sub-elements of global self-esteem, namely, academic, social, personal and general self-esteem

³⁷ Goal setting forms part of the "impulsivity" variable. It is separated here from the hypothesis relating to impulsivity as it is not directly included in Moffitt's taxonomy while impulsivity is identified as a characteristic of life-course offenders in Moffitt's theory.

³⁸ The numerous third level hypotheses here indicate the complex influences leading to moral behaviour.

³⁹ 8.1 and 8.2 are antithetical and reflect a current controversy in the literature.

CHAPTER 3. METHOD

OVERVIEW

This chapter describes the research method of the present study. It looks at the research groups, the qualitative and quantitative research tools, the selection and training of interviewers, the data gathering phase, the qualitative and quantitative data analysis processes, reliability and validity concerns, and research ethics.

1. The Research Groups

1.1 Criteria for Subject Selection

Primary selection criteria.

The key selection criteria, based on Moffitt's taxonomy, were previous convictions and age. These were used to select two subject groups, each representing one of Moffitt's two kinds of offenders (Moffitt, 1993). All subjects were male, in line with Moffitt's own findings and other research indicating that both life-course and adolescent-limited delinquents are almost exclusively male (e.g. Kalb & Loeber, 2003).

1. The Presence/Absence of Criminal Convictions. In order to qualify as Moffitt's recidivists, the life-course offender group of subjects required at least two convictions for serious crime, with at least one of these involving significant physical violence. These criteria were met by the prison subjects representing this delinquent type, as shown in Table 1. The adolescent-limited subject group was required to have spent no time in jail and to have had no criminal convictions, but to have been involved in several antisocial activities as adolescents. These criteria were met by the non-prisoner research group. As can be seen from the analysis of antisocial behaviours in chapter 4, all the non-prisoner subjects fulfilled this criterion. There was some initial concern about the "delinquent" status of the Nchanga/Durban non-prisoners subgroup, as "hard proof" of antisocial adolescent behaviour (e.g. a Juvenile Court conviction) was lacking. To counteract the possibility that this group proved not to have been antisocial enough in adolescence, a second non-prisoner subgroup was included in the research design. This group had confirmed teenage delinquent status (viz. a Juvenile Court conviction). It consisted of subjects who had undergone either a Boys' Town Correctional School placement or had participated in the NICRO⁴⁰ Diversion Programme for teenage offenders (The Juvenile Court placements of the NICRO and Boys' Town subset of non-prisoner subjects were not regarded as *criminal* convictions.)

Table 1 Type of Crime and Number of Offences of Prisoners

Crime	Number of Offences			Total % of group*
	1 st Offenders	2 nd Offenders	3 rd Offenders	
Drugs	1			6.7
Traffic Violation	1	1		6.7
Assault	2			13.3
Armed Robbery	10	10		93.3
Rape		1	1	6.7
Murder		5	3	53.3

n = 15

* Some offenders were sentenced for more than one crime.

2. Age. Subjects needed to be beyond the adolescent age range in which life-course and adolescent-limited offenders present with identical antisocial behaviours (Moffitt, 1993). The mean age for each group fell within the target age range of 23-28 years of age. As can be seen from Table 2 below, prisoners had a higher mean age than non-prisoners. This difference was due to the two young age outliers in the Boys' Town subjects.

⁴⁰ National Initiative for Crime Rehabilitation of Offenders

Table 2. Mean Age and Range of the Research Groups

	Prisoners	Non-prisoners*		
		All	NICRO/Boys'Town	Nchanga
Mean age	27.8 years	24.8 years	22.9 years	25.6 years
Range	22.8–30.7years	18-32years	18-28 years	21-32 years

n = 32

* contains NICRO/Boys' Town and Nchanga subgroups.

Secondary selection criteria.

Racial and Cultural Demographics. Although a direct causal relationship has not been found between race and Moffitt's offending types (see chapter 1, 2.25), it was desirable that the research samples represented the racial demographics of Kwazulu-Natal (KZN), as quite strong cultural differences are associated with each of the race groups in the province. This was not wholly achieved. The overall subject selection process was dictated by the content of the prison subject group. Suitable candidates were put forward by the prison authorities, based on the criteria supplied to them by the researcher. While the subject group met most of these, they were not wholly representative of the racial demographics in KZN. As can be seen from Tables 3 and 4, the White and Indian race groups were under represented, and the Coloured group over represented, in terms of KZN population demographics (Statistics South Africa, 2001). The major population group in the province is Zulu, with Indian, White and Coloured groups lagging behind in that order. The subject group representing Moffitt's adolescent-limited offenders was selected to match the racial demographics of the prison sample.

Table 3. Racial Demographics of the Research Groups

	Prisoners	Non-prisoners*		
		All	NICRO/Boys'Town	Nchanga
Zulu	80%	82.4%	100%	75%
Coloured	20%	17.6%	0%	25%

n = 32

* contains NICRO/Boys' Town and Nchanga subgroups.

Table 4. Racial Demographics in South Africa and in Kwazulu-Natal Province (KZN)

Race groups	Census 2001		2006#
	South Africa	KZN	South Africa
Zulu	79%	84.9%	79.4%
White	9.6%	5.1%	9.3%
Coloured	8.9%	1.5%	8.8%
Indian	2.5%	8.5%	2.5%

n = 32

2006 Stats South Africa population update (Statistics South Africa, 2006)

1.2 The Subject Groups

Subject numbers in each group were small, given the time consuming, life-story research method. In order to test Moffitt's theory, the intended sample age range was 23-28 years of age. Subjects older than 28 also would have been relevant, but were rejected due to the lack of subjects as old as this in the Boys' Town/NICRO non-prisoner selection pool. Not all subjects fell into the ideal age range (See Table 2). This was due to the restrictions placed on subject availability in terms the primary selection criterion outlined in 1.1 above. In particular, the only available Boys' Town subjects were in their late teens, due to the local Boys' Town taking only Indian boys until 1994. A similar problem was experienced with the NICRO sample, as the youth

rehabilitation programme from which some subjects were selected had been running for only a few years. Thus most “graduates” in this non-prisoner subgroup were relatively young.

The prison group.

Each of these 15 subjects had been convicted of at least two serious violent offences. They were currently serving long sentences in a large KZN prison. A breakdown of their offences appears in Table 1.

The chief prison psychologist was invaluable to the research. As the prison was not highly computerised, she organized lists, of prisoners who met the selection criteria, to be produced by each section warden in the maximum security wing. This list generated 35 names, and gave information on birth dates, nature of the crimes, number of re-offences, and mother-tongue of the offender. The list was reduced to 22 by the researcher, as some on the list did not meet the selection criteria. A presentation was given to these prisoners, explaining the voluntary nature of participation in the research, and its aims. The presentation was made in English and isiZulu, accommodating the mother-tongue of all those present. The prison psychologist subsequently interviewed all in the group individually to see who wished to take part in the study. Fifteen of the volunteers were ultimately selected. All 15 subjects chosen agreed in writing to participate in the research.⁴¹

The non-prison group.

This group of 17 consisted of two subgroups. The number exceeded that of the recidivist group due mainly to poor planning!⁴² The first of these contained young adults who had been convicted of juvenile crimes such as truancy, minor theft, absconding, gambling and the use of drugs. They had not been to jail but were sentenced by the Courts to either two years attendance at a correctional school, (Boys’ Town) or to a 6 month NICRO rehabilitation programme.

Boys’ Town Correctional School (Tongaat) accepts students of high school age, placed by the Courts for delinquent behaviour. Students spend 2 years at the school, where they undergo rehabilitation group and individual therapy. They attend an outside day school and board at Boys’ Town during this period. The principal of Boys’ Town gave permission for the research team to approach ex-students, and supplied the contact details of the students who met the research criteria and who had agreed to this approach after being contacted by the school’s social worker. While some of those contacted agreed to being approached, there was a general sense these students were not very keen to have any further contact with their past “criminal” period.

NICRO provided the balance of subjects in the first non-prisoner subgroup. These subjects were young adults who had been placed in a NICRO Diversion programme as adolescents. This six week skills programme, held one afternoon per week, is used as a pre-trial “diversion” or as part of a postponed or deferred sentence. Written permission for access to contact potential subjects was given by the NICRO Provincial Head at the start of the study, after these subjects had agreed to this through the NICRO social worker. Even more difficulty was experienced than was the case with the Boys’ Town subjects, in finding willing and suitable candidates. NICRO staff had little idea of the progress of adolescents who had gone through the Diversion programme, which meant some footwork to find suitable candidates. In addition, these also were reluctant to resume contact with the “authorities”.

The second subgroup comprised mainly of young adults from Nchanga, a semi-rural area near Durban, and was called the “Nchanga” group. These subjects were accessed through a local community leader, the parish priest in Nchanga. It could be argued that this access route “prejudiced” the group in so far as they were unlikely to perpetrate criminal acts, being committed Christians. This was not the case. While subjects’ families were loosely connected to the local church, the subjects themselves were contacted through a young adult who knew the community well and who was instructed to find young adults who had “messed around a

⁴¹ More on the research ethics can be found in section 7 of this chapter.

⁴² Subjects from the different subgroups were accepted in random order. Fifteen non-prison subjects had already been selected when it emerged that the Boys’ Town/ Nchanga group was considerably under represented. Two more subjects who fitted this latter group were then recruited.

lot” as adolescents but had no convictions. Indeed, most of these subjects did not attend church services. Included with this group were a few subjects from the Coloured community in a Durban suburb, accessed through the researcher’s personal contacts at NICRO. (They had not been sentenced to a NICRO programme.) These subjects matched the minority Coloured subject group in the prison sample. All of this second subgroup were young adults who had had no criminal record as juveniles or adults, but who had, by their own report, displayed delinquent behaviour as adolescents (e.g. smoking dope; truancy, minor theft).⁴³

Overall, all subjects in the non-prison group were currently leading functional lives. “Functionality” was defined as having no prison sentence and maintaining reasonable peer and family relationships in early adulthood. Being employed was not a criteria of functionality, as almost all the non-prisoner subjects came from socio-economically deprived backgrounds with high general unemployment.

Initially the research design consisted of three groups: recidivists; non-prisoners with no contact with the law; and non-prisoners who had had a juvenile conviction but no further involvement with the law. Given the problems described earlier in making up the numbers for the third group, the two non-prisoner research groups ultimately were compressed into one group for the purposes of comparison in the study.

A concern raised about the Boys’ Town/NICRO subgroup was that their attendance of rehabilitation programmes in their teens might have created a source of unwanted variance in the research. Countering this was the attractive confirmation that these subjects fitted Moffitt’s adolescent-limited delinquent definition very well thanks to their juvenile convictions. They had been very delinquent as youths but not followed a life-course offending path. This concern was reduced by the presence of the second, much larger subgroup of non-prisoners with no juvenile convictions, which was expected to highlight whether the rehabilitation group displayed any unique trends. If this were to be the case, this latter group would be excluded from the study. The data subsequently did not reveal systematic differences on any of the research variables between the two non-prisoner subgroups.

1.3 Other Group Variables

The research groups were compared on several other variables, which were not primary selection criteria. These were

- * socio-economic status
- * cognitive ability and educational achievement
- * the presence/absence of early developmental problems
- * single/dual parent families

Socio-economic status discriminates between Moffitt’s groups but is an moderating rather than directly causal influence (see chapter 1, 2.24). Poor cognitive ability and educational achievement and early developmental difficulties are associated in the literature in a causative way with life-course offending antisocial behaviour. Group differences in cognitive ability and educational achievement form part of the second level hypothesis No. 4 in chapter 2. The outcomes of these comparisons are placed in the “Methods” chapter of this research as they were regarded primarily as descriptive of subject characteristics. Nevertheless, group differences on these were relevant in confirming the applicability of Moffitt’s taxonomy in a South African sample. A paucity of information on early developmental differences between the groups led to this variable also being covered below, in the Methods, rather than in a results, chapter. The family demographics feature is covered in chapter 5 in the analysis of parenting and family influences. Group differences in socio-economic status, cognitive ability, educational achievement and early developmental difficulties are discussed below.

⁴³ The criticism has been raised in the literature that self-report and official conviction rates identify different populations of offenders, due to less intelligent criminals being caught and convicted. However, subsequent research has shown this not to be the case (Farrington, 1987), so the difference in selection criteria (juvenile convictions versus self-report) in the present study was not regarded as compromising validity.

Socio-economic status (SES).

According to the literature (see chapter 1, 2.24) socio-economic status is not predictive of a life-course offending developmental trajectory. While an association has been shown, SES appears to be a moderating variable relating to parenting style, rather than a causative one. Given this relationship, it was appropriate to match the two subject groups for SES in the present study. An initial informal assessment of the SES of prison subjects, from life-story and third party interviews, suggested most came from deprived backgrounds. This background subsequently was matched in the Nchanga non-prisoner group, who came from a deprived semi-rural environment. Two of the five NICRO/Boys' Town subjects also came from a deprived, urban, background. The remaining non-prisoner subjects came from a mix of lower and lower middle class backgrounds.⁴⁴

A more formal measure of socio-economic status, using the Socio-economic Questionnaire described in 2.21 below⁴⁵, confirmed that overall, the groups matched for SES. The t-test for independent means showed no significant difference between the groups on the SES variable.

T-Test for Independent Means - SES

$t = -1.4$; $df = 30$; $sig. (2-tailed) = .17$; $confidence\ levels: lower = -4.22$; $upper = .79$

This finding is in line with Moffitt's own research which indicated socio-economic status was not a predictive variable of a life-course developmental trajectory.

Cognitive ability and educational levels.

These variables are placed together in the discussion, as the literature indicates life-course offenders have poorer cognitive abilities than adolescent-limited offenders and that this is a factor in their inferior educational achievement relative to adolescent-limited offenders. There is also evidence of a direct, causative relationship between IQ and a life-course developmental trajectory. In particular, the life-course offender's impaired executive cognitive abilities are linked to his impulsivity, poor planning and academic failure. (see chapter 1, 2.23)

Cognitive Ability: The Ravens' Standard Progressive Matrices⁴⁶ was selected to measure IQ. This was a workable (in terms of test length versus subject time available), and "culture free" measure of intelligence that overcame the problem of varying mother-tongues, as well as varying levels of literacy, among subjects. The one concern about using a non-verbal measure of intelligence is evidence that verbal rather than non-verbal reasoning ability predicts persistent offending (Nigg & Huang-Pollock, 2003).

Table 5. Non-verbal Cognitive Ability of the Groups

	Group	N	Mean	Std deviation
Ravens raw scores	Prisoners	15	30.67	13.31
	Non-prisoners	17	34.41	13.11

$n = 32$

T-Test for Independent Means – Ravens Test

$t = -.801$; $df = 30$; $sig. (2-tailed) = .43$; $confidence\ levels: lower = -13.4$ $upper = 5.81$

The results are inconclusive. The raw scores indicate a trend in the expected direction, with non-prisoners having a higher Raven's score than prisoners, although this was not significant. They do not exclude the literature finding that IQ predicts persistent offending, if it is accepted that the link is with verbal rather than non-verbal IQ.

⁴⁴ The selection of the NICRO/Boys' Town subgroup and the three Coloured non-prison subjects was dictated by subject availability once the primary selection criteria had been met.

⁴⁵ See also Appendix 3.

⁴⁶ This test is discussed in 2.22 below.

Educational Levels: Despite the absence of significant group differences in cognitive ability, the non-prisoner group achieved a much higher level of education than did prisoners. The mean grade level reached by prisoners was 7.9 and for non-prisoners, 11. While no prisoners pursued tertiary studies, a number of non-prisoners completed short diplomas. These differences are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. *Educational Levels in the Groups*

	Prisoners	Non-prisoners*	NICRO/Boys'Town	Nchanga group
Mean grade	7.9	11	10	11.5
Range	3-12	3-13#	3-13	7-13

n = 32

= tertiary study

*=contains Boys' Town, NICRO and Nchanga groups

In the chi square statistical calculation for significant group differences, the data was arranged in six groups of educational grades (completed grade 3/7/9/10/12/tertiary). The differences were strongly significant.

$$X^2=16.67; \quad \text{Sig.}=0.005 \text{ (2-sided)}; \quad df=5$$

Early developmental difficulties.

A defining characteristic of Moffitt's life-course offenders (see chapter 1, 2.3) is the presence of early psychoneurological dysfunction. This is also part of the second level hypothesis No. 4 in chapter 2. It is included in the methods chapter rather than in a results chapter because of the sparse data obtained on this variable.

Given its retrospective nature and modest budget, the research design *could not obtain "objective" measures of pre- and post-natal problems or developmental difficulties in subjects*. Third party interviews, where these could be arranged with primary caregivers, were the main source of information on subjects' birth and developmental histories. Comments in the life-stories also provided limited information on relevant caregiver factors, such as that mother had been a heavy drinker at the time of the subject's birth. Not all primary caregivers were interviewed. Some had died, others were not contactable and others declined to be interviewed. The third parties of 60% (9) of prisoners and 64.7% (11) of non-prisoners were interviewed. Significantly, more than half (6) of the third party prisoner interviewees were not subjects' mothers, but grandmothers, sisters, aunts, and one father. All the non-prisoner third party interviews were with the mothers of these subjects. This finding ties in with the literature and the results in the present study (see chapter 5) that poor family structure, in particular, the absence of a consistent primary caregiver, is a contributing factor to a life-course offending pathway.

The information obtained from the third party interviews was limited⁴⁷. With the exception of five caregivers, third parties described subjects' birth and developmental history as normal across the groups. Of interest, four of these five subjects fell in the life-course offender group. In the prisoner group the problems associated with these subjects involved, respectively, maternal alcoholism, maternal mental disturbance, a leg deformity at birth, and high aggression and low frustration tolerance in the subject. In the non-prisoner group, the subject was born with a limb deformity and was slightly retarded (placed in a special school).

The above evidence provides slight but insubstantial support for Moffitt's (1993) strong contention that early psychoneurological factors underpin a life-course offending trajectory. While it is clear that anecdotal and retrospective information about subjects' birth histories and early development can never offer the objectivity of such information obtained in a longitudinal study, there are ways an improved third party interview design could assist in accessing developmental information in future studies of a similar nature. These are discussed in chapter 10. A larger budgetary allocation allowing for the follow-up of *all* existing caregivers would also be of benefit.

⁴⁷ See the CD: interviews.

2. Research Tools

Comparisons between the life-course and adolescent-limited research groups in the study were based primarily on a qualitative analyses of subjects' life-stories, told in an interview situation. Third party interviews provided additional qualitative information about subjects' lives, as did official conviction records. Quantitative measures were also used for data gathering, but to a lesser degree. These research tools are described below. Forming part of this discussion, is an important section justifying the use of memory recall as the major data gathering technique.

2.1 Data Access - Qualitative Tools

The *Biographical Interview* was developed for the specific purpose of generating each subject's *life-story* in the interview. Third party interviews were based on a shorter, simple *Third Party Interview* format. These interview tools are covered below.

2.11 The Subject Interview – The Biographical Questionnaire

A semi-structured interview format was used. While the major research interest lay in subjects' stories of their lives *as they saw them*, the same core topics were introduced through prompts in each interview. This allowed for comparisons between the research groups and for all topic areas relevant to the research questions being covered in an interview.

De Waele & Harré's (1979) Biographical Inventory and to a lesser degree, Moffitt's Delinquency Questionnaire used in the Dunedin study (Moffitt, 2002b), formed the basis of the Biographical Questionnaire developed for the present study. These two questionnaires are exhaustive instruments and relevant sections only were selected. The general structure of the Biographical Questionnaire was also shaped by Kvale's (1996) sound comments on achieving reliability and validity in the semi-structured interview.

De Waele and Harré's (1979) Biographical Inventory was chosen as the basis for the Biographical Questionnaire because of its capacity to assess the presence of features relevant to the predictor variables of chronic antisocial behaviour. These include peer relationships, moral development, family structures and practices, self-esteem and delinquent behaviour. De Waele and Harré's Inventory is a systematically organized set of open-ended questions, made up of three sections. The first of these deals with perception of life events, social ecology and socio-economic conditions, using a time periods framework. The second looks at social-psychological life patterns. Included in this are attitudes to family, school and other groups, to prison and rehabilitation experiences (if relevant), and the cultural norms, values and expectations of the interviewee. Finally, individual characteristics, such as self-perceptions, interests, and aspirations, are tapped. The full Inventory was not appropriate for the present study, in terms of time constraints. To shorten the Inventory, a brief Socio-economic Questionnaire was given outside of the interview, and many of the detailed interview questions in specific topic areas were omitted. This latter step also provided subjects greater freedom to cover a topic (e.g. his early childhood) as he saw fit. The resulting interview tool, the Biographical Questionnaire, used in this study is found in Appendix 1.

Moffitt administered her Delinquency Questionnaire (Moffitt, 2002b) to her New Zealand, Dunedin, birth cohort, at the time they reached young adulthood. Most of the questions pertain to details of the legitimacy or otherwise of the subject's behaviour over the period since the study's last follow-up. Moffitt's Delinquency Questionnaire contributed to the "Prison/Rehabilitation" section of the present Questionnaire. These additional items were only included in interviews of subjects who had had contact with the Courts⁴⁸ and investigated subjects' perceptions about, and regret for, "wrong doings".

⁴⁸ Subsequent to the interviews it became clear that some of these items, in particular, the subject's attitude towards his antisocial behaviour, should also have been administered to the remaining subjects, as these also committed antisocial acts as adolescents.

2.12 The Third Party Questionnaire

Corroboration of social behaviour, early biographical details of the subjects and more information about characteristics that placed subjects in either of Moffitt's categories of delinquency were sought from a relevant third person nominated by each subject. A simple questionnaire format was used, as data was gathered mainly through telephonic interviews. The Questionnaire appears in Appendix 2.

2.13 Official Records

Prisoner records assisted in corroborating prisoners' stories, as did records from NICRO and Boys' Town. The weight given to these depended on their accessibility and detail. Offences leading to imprisonment were categorized according to the classification provided by the SA Criminal Services (South African Police Service, 2002). Records held by NICRO and Boys Town provided information of early developmental history in some cases.

2.2 Data Access - Quantitative Tools

Quantative data was accessed in several ways. Quantitative results were positioned in the research as a support for qualitative data, rather than as a primary data source, in terms of the design of the research. The following quantitative measures were used.

1. The *Socio-economic Questionnaire* was developed to measure subjects' socio-economic status.
2. IQ was measured using *Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices*.
3. Self-esteem was measured using *The Culture-Free Self-Esteem Test*.

2.21 The Socio-economic Questionnaire

It is recognized that traditional, Western, monetary based measures of socio-economic status (SES) do not give an accurate reflection of the status of individuals in developing countries, particularly those from a rural background (van de Ruit et al., 2001). A number of "Wealth Ranking" tools have been developed to overcome this problem, that concentrate on visible, non-monetary indicators of wealth (B Parker, personal communication, March 21, 2003; Ravillion, 1999; van de Ruit et al., 2001). Van de Ruit developed an efficient tool to assess living standards, that proved as reliable and valid as more time consuming qualitative household surveys. She found that expenditure on clothing and footwear, the kind of food eaten, and the kind of dwelling, gave a good indication of the economic status of rural Black families in South Africa. In particular, expenditure on clothing and footwear was a key indicator.

The current study adapted van de Ruit's questionnaire to suit the sample group. (See Appendix 3.) Van de Ruit's questionnaire was intended for the head of a household and spouse, rather than the young adults of the present study. In addition, the current research investigated socio-economic conditions experienced by subjects in their childhood and early youth. In piloting the current Questionnaire, it became apparent that the recall of responses to Van de Ruit's items about the kind of food consumed and spending on clothing and footwear was not particularly good, given the time lapse and the nature of the subject group.⁴⁹ In view of these shortcomings, the Questionnaire was modified. Questions on clothing, footwear and the kind of meals consumed were excluded and the questionnaire concentrated on the dwelling-related indicators in van de Ruit's Questionnaire. The occupation of the main breadwinner was added as a response item, as this is a common measure of SES in the literature (Henggeler, 1989). It would have been useful to include parents' educational level, a SES item used by Moffitt (Piquero & Brezina, 2001), but this could not be done as the majority of subjects in both groups did not know the educational level of their parents.⁵⁰

2.22 The Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices (SPM)

This was used to measure cognitive ability. Significant differences in intelligence between Moffitt's life-course and adolescent-limited offenders are documented in the literature (see chapter 1, 2.23).

⁴⁹ In addition to the time lapse causing difficulties, the innumeracy of some subjects and a poor understanding of what kind of clothing to take into consideration interfered with their valid recall of these issues.

⁵⁰ This would not have been an obstacle in Moffitt's longitudinal study as parents were tracked from the birth of the subjects and would have provided this information themselves. Relatively few parents were accessible for third party interviews in the present study.

Culture-Free Intelligence Testing: The SPM is one of a stable of cognitive tests that adopts a learning potential assessment approach. This technique reduces the impact of cultural and language differences on measured intelligence, making comparisons of cognitive ability between different cultural groups more valid (Owen, 1992; Raven, Raven, & Court, 1998). The Draw a Person Test, the Figure Classification Test (Standard Level) and the TRAM-1 were other non-verbal cognitive tests considered for the present research. Of this latter group, the TRAM-1 was attractive as it had been successful applied to South African groups since its inception in 1994. The other tests lacked South African norms. However it was decided the TRAM-1 was too lengthy for the time available with subjects in the present study. The SPM on the other hand is quick to administer. There is also a growing body of South African norms (Van Rooyen, 2002).

The SPM was standardized initially on groups in developed western countries (UK and USA). However, the SPM has proved useful in cross-cultural research, as minority groups tend to perform as well as majority groups on the test (Owen, 1992). There have been instances where groups in developing countries, and more generally, those from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds and rural areas, (e.g. Brazil, Puerto Rico, Black and Native Americans in America) have lagged behind international norms (Raven et al., 1998). Along the same lines, Owen found significant Black/White and Coloured/White differences on the Raven's Test in a South African population (Owen, 1992). However, Raven held that these exceptions reflected real differences in test performance by these groups, due to poor nutrition, as well as to child rearing practices in some communities which led to an unmotivated attitude to test taking in general.

Description of the Test: The SPM consists of 5 sets of 12 problems. Each set begins with an easy problem. A theme is developed in which the problems build on the argument of what has gone before, becoming more difficult. The procedure allows testees five opportunities to become familiar with the field and problem solving methods.

Reliability: Reliability figures are generally high. Item-response consistency is robust across socio-economic, cultural and ethnic groups and ranges between .8 and .9. Test-retest reliability is sound, over a period of one year, with reliability ranging between .8 and .9 (Owen, 1992; Raven et al., 1998).

Validity: In terms of construct validity, the Raven's Test measures both fluid intelligence and Spearman's "g" factor (Raven et al., 1998). The test manual quotes sound validity figures. Criterion-oriented validity with established IQ measures, ranges from .54 to .86. Predictive validity, regarding school performance, lies at .7 according to Raven, although little work has been done on predictive ability in non-Western samples (Owen, 1992). Content validity is acceptable, at .45 (Raven et al., 1998). Raven also notes that the test has good face validity across cultures.

2.23 The Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI-2)

The measurement of self-esteem is controversial, as is the nature of the relationship between self-esteem and persistent delinquency in the literature (see chapter 1, 3.6) In light of this, as much data as possible on the self-esteem status of subjects was desirable. Accordingly, both a qualitative assessment, using life-story and third party data, and a formal quantitative measure, the Culture-Free Self-esteem Inventory (CFSEI-2), were used. The results of this test are presented in chapter 9 which deals with the self-esteem data.

Self-esteem tests arose out of the belief that an individual's effective performance is not dependent on cognitive ability alone, but is also influenced by his beliefs about himself (Battle, 1992; Coopersmith, 1987). Traditional self-esteem measures held a global one dimensional concept of self-esteem. More recently self-esteem tests have adopted a multidimensional view of self-esteem (Wild et al., 2006). The CFSEI-2, developed by Battle, is one such measure, selected for the present research as a reputable, "culture-free" measure of self-esteem (Battle, 1992). Battle saw self-esteem as the individual's perception of his worth, arising from personal characteristics and life experiences. He held that adult self-esteem was made up of three elements: *General self-esteem* reflected the individual's overall perception of self-worth; *social self-esteem*

reflected his perception of the quality of his peer relationships; and *personal self-esteem*⁵¹ his most intimate perceptions about himself.

It was important to select a “culture-free” measure of self-esteem, given that no established self-esteem tests available at the time of the research were developed for a South African context, or offered local norms.

The choice of the CFSEI-2 over other self-esteem tests with similar reliability and validity figures (e.g. the Coopersmith) was influenced by the fact that the test was also being used in other doctoral research taking place at the erstwhile University of Natal at the time⁵² and it was hoped that exercise could contribute towards the establishment of local norms.

Description of the Test: The test has a number of forms designed for adults and children. The Form AD of the CFSEI-2, designed for adults and consisting of 40 items, was used. Sixteen items measure general esteem, and eight items each measure social and personal self-worth respectively. Eight items measure defensiveness (lie scale). The test is quick to administer and can be self administered.

Reliability: Form AD of the test was standardized on cross-sections of a Canadian and USA population. Good test retest reliability of around .81 was given by Battle in a his review of research using the test (Battle, 1992).

Validity: Content validity for the test was established, based on factor analysis. This indicated all items in the test had acceptable internal consistency. Significant concurrent validity was found in a comparison with the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992).

Application of the CFSEI-2 in the present study.

As the first language of all subjects, with the exception of the 6 Coloured participants, was isiZulu, the test had to be translated into isiZulu. This was done by one of the isiZulu speaking student interviewers in the research. This initial draft translation was discussed between all three isiZulu speaking social work student interviewers to iron out translation problems that emerged. A second draft was then produced by the translator. This was further checked by the “back translation”⁵³ method and found to be a reasonable translation by all three isiZulu interviewers.

Problems in Translation: A difficulty with the translation was that some of the concepts in the test did not have isiZulu equivalents. Battle maintained that items were chosen with content that was least sensitive to change across cultures and that these had maintained reliability and validity when translated into other languages (Battle, 1992). However, these translations were predominantly into “Western” languages (e.g. Spanish). In the present study, nuances of meaning in some items lacked comparable concepts in the Zulu language. For example, item 12 asks if the respondent is “easily depressed”. According to a medical specialist with long experience of rural South African medicine, many isiZulu speakers, especially those from semi-rural backgrounds, are unfamiliar with the concept of “mental illness”, and see “depression” as some form of witchcraft, or in terms of a physical ailment (Dr J C Kelly, personal communication, February 12, 2006). The ideas of “sensitivity” (item 36), and of “feeling uneasy” (item 27) were also difficult to translate into comparable isiZulu terms. Translators struggled to provide fitting alternatives for these and a few related terms, and were not fully satisfied with the result.

To reduce the impact of inadequate translation on test validity, an isiZulu prisoner, with good English speaking skills, assisted with the test administration to prison subjects. He was asked to talk around these concepts in

⁵¹ In the questionnaire administered to children and youth, Battle exchanged personal self-esteem for academic and parent-related self-esteem.

⁵² The University of Natal underwent a name change to the University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN) fairly recently.

⁵³ The back translation method ensures a document represents its equivalent in another language. The text is translated by one person into the required second language. It is then re-translated by a second person back to the original language. This version should match the original.

the course of the test administration to help subjects understand their meaning. The isiZulu speaking social work interviewers performed the same function in the test administration to non-prison isiZulu subjects.

3. Interviewers

Selection and Training

The primary interviewers.

The interviewers were volunteer final year social work students at the then Natal University. Their lecturer presented the project and four students applied for the work. Of these one dropped out early in training. The students understood they would be gaining experience and training in interviewing skills, as well as improving their CVs. Each interviewer was paid the going rate for student assistance at this level.

The final group consisted of two female interviewers and one male. One female and the male interviewer were isiZulu mother-tongue speakers and the researcher and the older female student, White, English mother-tongue speakers. The isiZulu speaking interviewers were fluent in English. The ages of the team ranged between 22 and 38 years, in addition to the researcher, who was 50 years of age.

The decision to select relatively highly educated interviewers with a social work background was based on the demanding nature of the interviews. The interviewer needed to understand the focus of the questions sufficiently well not to have to stick to the format of the Biographical Questionnaire. This would give the subjects maximum opportunity to present life-stories in an open-ended manner, while ensuring that the requisite topic areas were covered, and unclear points clarified.

Four training sessions took place. The first introduced the theory behind the research, and covered what was required in the interviewers, research ethics, in particular, confidentiality, and time and cost issues. The students were given a copy of the Biographical Questionnaire to study before the next meeting. At the next meeting mock interviews were role-played and tape recorded and the group commented on the performance of their colleagues. The older student had worked in human resources before her studies and was particularly competent in interviewing skills. The younger students were reasonably practiced in interviewing, thanks to the extensive practical training they received in the social work degree. The role-plays helped iron out a tendency to prompt the interviewee for desirable answers, and to be judgmental. In the third session, any fears interviewers had about working with a group of maximum security prisoners were identified and discussed. (The prison psychologist also spoke to the group later to allay safety concerns.) Transference was another issue dealt with in this training session. The prison interviews were especially open to this as the dependent situation of the prisoners had the potential to evoke sympathy and concern for them from the interviewers. On the side of the prisoners, emotional dependence on the interviewers could arise given their interest in the prisoners. Interviewers were asked to be aware of strong feelings on their part or signs of dependency in the interviewees and to discuss this with the researcher immediately, should these arise.

Training continued into the research, as each interviewer's first interview was read after the session and individual feedback given.

Additional staff.

Other important members of the research team were also recruited and trained at this time, including an additional interviewer for the third party interviews. These interviews were directed at older individuals, with potential to be averse to being interviewed, given the sensitive nature of the research topic (looking at crime in relation to a family member). The third party mature female interviewer was experienced in community based research, a mother tongue isiZulu speaker, also also fluent in English. She was trained on the Third Party Interview tool, which could be administered telephonically or in person. The choice of interviewer proved to be a good one as she was able to interview several initially reluctant third parties.

The second additional member of the team took charge of the transcriptions and translations and her accurate and efficient work underpinned the research. This individual, also a mature and experienced community worker, was assisted in her task by her secretarial skills. An isiZulu mother tongue speaker, her English was of a good standard. She transcribed the interviews onto Word documents and then translated the isiZulu scripts into English. As the study progressed, the time consuming and difficult nature of the transcription work emerged. A fee, higher than that paid to the student interviewers, was negotiated for both the additional staff members.

4. Process

The pilot.

Once the Biographical Questionnaire was constructed, it was tested on three young adults from the researcher's community. This was not ideal, as these White, middle class testees were not representative of the lower socio-economic, Zulu and Coloured research subjects. However this was unavoidable as the researcher wished to assess the flow of the Questionnaire and could not do this through a third party, isiZulu, interviewer. Some suggestions for a more useful pilot stage in the research are made in chapter 10.

The prison interviews.

Once clearance was obtained from the Department of Correctional Services and from the local prison authorities, the research process began with recruiting the prison subjects, as covered in 1.2 above. Two sessions were spent at the prison, during which all subjects were interviewed for approximately one hour each. Permission to tape the interviews was given by all subjects. Taping was helpful as it allowed the interviewer to concentrate on the content of the interview itself. While some of the group were being interviewed, the remainder completed the cognitive, self-esteem and socio-economic questionnaires described in 2.2 above. Prison policy did not allow any form of payment to the subjects for their contribution, but a party for the group at the end of the interviews was acceptable. Here, the research team thanked all the group for their assistance and undertook to provide feedback to the prisoners, through the prison psychologist, at the conclusion of the research.

The non-prisoner interviews.

Boys' Town, NICRO and Durban subjects were interviewed at community centres convenient to all parties. Transport costs and a standard nominal payment was given to all non-prisoner subjects in recognition of time and effort given. The Nchanga group met together at the local church and the interviews and questionnaires were completed in one day, using the isiZulu speaking interviewers, as this group were all mother tongue isiZulu speakers. As with the prison group, the Nchanga group were promised feedback, to be arranged through the parish priest, at the end of the study. This offer was not made to either the Boys' Town or NICRO groups. Instead, feedback was arranged with their ex-institutions. The Durban subset was also offered feedback under the auspices of the local NICRO office.

Follow-up interviews.

It became apparent in the early analysis of interview transcripts that some quite important data was being omitted from some life-stories, especially concerning peer relationships. This led to a post hoc decision to conduct follow-up interviews with as many subjects as possible. These would also serve to clarify some of the facts gathered in the first interviews.

Due to the long time lag (nearly one year) between the initial interview and the decision to follow-up, interviews with *all* the original subjects could not be arranged. Some prisoners had been transferred. Boys Town and NICRO subjects had been initially reluctant to engage in the interview process and it was decided not to ask them to participate in a further unplanned interview in case this biased their input. The Durban subgroup of non-prisoners had produced comprehensive data and re-interviews were unnecessary. Ultimately, eight prison subjects (53.3% of the prison group) and six Nchanga subjects (35.3% of the non-prison group) were re-interviewed. The original interviewers had graduated and were no longer available. The researcher

re-interviewed the three English speaking prisoners. The most mature, competent (having worked in community health for some time) Nchanga isiZulu speaking subject was recruited to complete the isiZulu interviews. While not ideal, this was a pragmatic arrangement as funding and time constraints precluded the recruitment of a set of new senior social work students to conclude the interviews.

The inclusion of follow-up data for some, but not all, subjects in the data analysis created a potential validity problem. Some of the differences between the research groups might be due to the additional information obtained, rather than to differences relating to Moffitt's taxonomy. However, analysis of the additional information indicated this was not the case. In all instances, the new information corroborated with that obtained in the initial interview with the subject. At no point did the additional information *contradict or add new directions* to the knowledge already obtained. It was thus decided to include the information into the data analysis. The extracts in Appendix 5 demonstrate this point.

Third party interviews.

These took place as soon as possible after the subject interviews to facilitate compliance by the third parties. Permission was gained from each participant to contact the primary caregiver. Failing this, participants selected another close family member. While these interviews were subject to the same analytic process as that conducted on the subject interviews, the value of third party input depended largely on the variable being analysed. Their contribution was limited in the analysis of some variables (e.g. moral, impulsive, goal setting and self-esteem) and more relevant in others (e.g. early development, peer relations and antisocial behaviour). While third party information enriched the qualitative results, it did not contribute to the *quantitative* results. This was due to the varying input of each of these interviews, relating to the cooperativeness of third parties, and to the fact that not all third parties could be interviewed.

5. Data Analysis

5.1 Translation and Data Presentation

5.11 Transcription and Translation

The transcription and translation of the taped interviews into English was time consuming. As the transcriber was part time, this led to delays between interviews and results analyses, which in turn caused a time lag between the initial and follow-up interviews. Accuracy of the translations from isiZulu to English was checked on an ad hoc basis by a colleague in the Zulu department at the UKZN and was satisfactory. The accuracy of the transcription process was checked by the researcher, also on an ad hoc basis, using tape recordings and transcriptions of some English interviews.

All transcribed interviews, translated into English where necessary, can be examined in the **Interviews** folder in the accompanying CD.

Transcription Style: Some transcription styles record all aspects of the audio recording in the text transcription, including tonal and pitch changes, pauses and so on.⁵⁴ In the present study this kind of detail was impractical and also not required in terms of the research aims, which focused on interview content. In addition, the process of translation from isiZulu to English minimised the value of tonal changes, pauses and other presentation details. At the same time, interviewers and the transcriber were trained to note *marked* non-verbal cues. For example, extreme anger or light heartedness indicated by tone or laughter in a response was noted in parentheses. This training was assisted by van Dijk's useful and practical guidelines for transcription (van Dijk, 1997).

⁵⁴ An example of this is transcription conducted in a conversational analysis framework (Pomerantz & Fehr, 1997; van Dijk, 1997).

5.12 Data Presentation

Conventions and terminology used in this paper.

Conventions when Displaying Text Extracts

The conventions used when displaying text extracts follow the recommendations of the American Psychological Association (APA) publication guide (American Psychological Association, 2004). These include the use of three or four ellipsis points to denote excluded text, and the use of brackets rather than parenthesis when explanations are inserted into direct quotations. The position of the text in a life-story, as allocated by NVivo, the ID number of the subject, whether it is a first, follow-up or third party interview, are noted at the end of each extract cited in the paper. For example, “3-3rd, P 24” tells us the extract is from the interview with ID 3’s third party and that it can be found in paragraph 24 of this interview transcript in the relevant CD file. “27-2, P 200” tells us the extract is from ID27’s follow-up interview, located at paragraph 200 in the transcript. Where the third party is not the primary caregiver, the relationship is also noted (e.g. paternal aunt).

Other Conventions

References to the accompanying CD: This usually occur in a footnote. Reference to files and folders on the CD are denoted by the use of a different font in the text (e.g. the file: **prison interviews** in the folder: **interviews**).

Gender: For convenience, the masculine gender is used throughout this thesis when describing the life-course and adolescent-limited delinquents in general. This is in recognition of research findings that it is predominantly males, not females, who become delinquent.

Racial Identity: The APA publication guide’s (2004, p 67) recommendation, that that capitols be used to define “Black, White” and other race groups, is followed.

Terminology used in the Presentation of Results

Codes: The term “code” was used when referring to a main research variable in the discussion of the results (e.g. moral development; antisocial behaviour).

Subcodes: The term “subcode” was used when referring to the different measures that together made up a particular code (e.g. values; moral reasoning; locus of control were all subcodes of the code moral development). Broadly, the terms “code” and “subcode” equate with the variables tested at the second and third levels in the hypothesis hierarchy in chapter 2.

Categories: Some subcodes were further divided into “categories” as a result of information emerging in the data analysis. A good example relates to the subcode, moral values, of the code, moral development. Several categories of values emerged in the analysis and these were compared and discussed in the results section of the moral development chapter.

5.2 Qualitative Analyses

5.21 The Rationale behind a Semi-Structured Qualitative Analysis

The semi-structured style of the life-story data analysis arose naturally from the key research questions of the study. These were hypotheses about certain expected differences between the research groups based on Moffitt’s taxonomy of two kinds of delinquents (Moffitt, 1993, 2003). They investigated group differences in parenting, social relationships, impulsivity and goal setting, moral development, antisocial behaviour/aggression and self-esteem.

Purists in the qualitative school of research might argue that using life-story data to *compare* groups is incompatible with a qualitative research design. They might further contest that such a design is compatible with data gathering techniques based on a theoretical framework that makes no presuppositions about which themes *should* emerge from data, such as a grounded theory approach. In the same vein, they might support a phenomenological interpretation of the data, seeing each story as a reflection of that individual’s unique world, which can not be generalised to conclusions about different types of delinquents. These theoretical frameworks generate analytic styles that place importance on more than the text content. Linguistic details of

subjects' comments and non-verbal cues such as pauses, emphases and emotion are significant. Conversational analysis is a good example of this data analysis style (Pomerantz & Fehr, 1997). Kvale (1996) helps formulate a response to the above criticisms. In his in-depth analysis of the aims and capacity of a structured life-story interview, he concludes that the validity of this method is based on what "truth" is sought in social science research. While a qualitative technique such as the semi-structured interview does not offer the equivalent validity of a quantitative measure, Kvale holds that the latter kind of validity is not appropriate in qualitative, social science research. At the same time, Kvale takes pains to underline the need for *measurable reliability and validity* in a qualitative study, if this is in keeping with the research aims. The current study makes certain assumptions, and the researcher wishes to generalise to a wider group of individuals than those participating in the research. Steps have therefore been taken to ensure that the *appropriate* reliability and validity measures are in place. These are covered in section 6 of this chapter.

A more pragmatic defence can be offered in response to the phenomenological position. The validity of the life-story technique indeed centred around its open-ended capacity to obtain information on the research variables *in the context subjects chose to present them* (see 6.3 below). However, in terms of the research aim of comparing groups on Moffitt's variables, it was necessary to ensure that *some information on all the research variables was present in each life-story*. Using a grounded theory or phenomenological approach to data gathering would not achieve this goal. In response to the "uniqueness of a person's view of the world" point, it is argued that, by looking at the data from many angles, the present research was able to extract in a valid manner patterns that had applicability outside one individual's view. This would be the case should the patterns specific to a research group emerge across stories, across variables, be corroborated by third party data, and sometimes also by formal measures of the variables (e.g. the cognitive and self-esteem tests). This multifaceted style of data gathering represents Campbell's "triangulation" method of enhancing validity (Perrin, 1996) and is captured by the tapestry metaphor describing the research process.

A general content analytic approach best describes the data analytic method used in the present thesis. Data analysis focussed on extracting content from the life-stories and other data, in support of the research hypotheses. The analysis however went beyond a mere notation of the presence or absence of aspects of a specific variable. In so doing, it drew on the richness of the open-ended interview technique. The analysis of the impulsivity variable demonstrates this point well. While the presence or absence of impulsive thinking was noted and the sum of stories demonstrating this in one research group compared with that in the other, *the number and nature of impulsive statements* made in stories were also compared across the groups, as was the omission of data, despite a standard prompt question being in place.

Concluding the defence of the data analytic techniques used in the present study is a further pragmatic point. The translation process from isiZulu to English of most life-stories effectively obscured the meaning of non-verbal cues and linguistic details, making it impossible to use these aspects of the data in the analysis.

5.22 NVivo Software

As the principle analytic method was content analysis, Nvivo software was used to code the research variables as they emerged in the stories and third party interviews. The NVivo coded extracts were then transferred to Word documents, for further processing by the analyst into subcodes where appropriate. All the Word extracts associated with each research variable are available on the accompanying CD, in the **Research codes** folder.

5.23 The Data Analysis

Three kinds of qualitative analyses took place. In the *thematic analysis*, the data was searched for themes relating to the research variables. The *content analysis* of life-story data investigated the relative importance of themes within, and between, groups, by counting the number of times a theme emerged. Thirdly, the *narrative analysis* provided background information about the cultural framework in which the themes played themselves out.

Narrative analysis looks at how an individual constructs the narrative around the “facts” he presents in his life-story (De Waele & Harré, 1979; Silverman, 2000). The temporal order in which topics are presented, what is given importance, the links between aspects of the story, and how these interweave with each other, are investigated. The value of narrative analysis to the present study was its portrayal of how subjects saw their world and their place in it. While the focus of the analysis was on theme and content, the narrative approach enriched to conclusions based on themes and content. As an example, the juxtaposition of a participant’s impulsive statements and the goals to which he aspired in his story was of interest, as it was hypothesised that very impulsive individuals do not plan effectively enough to set and achieve longer term goals. Narrative style was also informative about an interviewee’s relationship with early caregivers, when he *omitted* to pursue a discussion about these in response to a prompt.

5.3 *Quantitative Analysis*

5.31 *Counting Units*

In the life-stories, counts were made of the frequency of appearance of themes within stories or across subjects. Two kinds of counting units were used, the decision to use one or both units depending on the nature of the variable being measured.

Statement Units: A statement unit might occupy one line or as much as a paragraph, but dealt with the same topic. A statement was given a count of “1” when it provided information about a certain variable, as in the following measure of the subcode “I want it now” of the code “impulsivity”.

I stole the sweets because I was hungry and felt like something sweet.

This statement contributed a score of “1” to this subject’s score on this impulsivity subcode (see chapter 7). More statements at this level in the story additively increased his score, showing the degree to which he was impulsive. The same process was applied to scoring each of the impulsivity subcodes. The sum for one research group of all impulsive statements across the impulsive subcodes was then compared, both statistically and as a percentage, with the same total count for the second subject group.

Statements were relevant scoring units on variables where the strength, rather than the mere presence or absence, of the variable in a story was important. This was the case in the scoring of subcodes of the impulsivity, goal setting and moral variables. Thus, the impulsivity of a given subject was judged on the *number* of impulsive statements he made; his inclination to have long term goals was measured by the *number* of different goal statements he made; his moral values were assessed by the *range* (rather than the number) of value statements in his story. Further scoring examples are given in the results chapters on the above variables.

Life-stories as Counting Units: The number of subjects whose life-stories contained examples of a subcode was also counted. This was relevant where the presence or absence of a variable subcode in a story was measured. An example relates to the discipline subcode of the parent and family code in chapter 5. Regardless of the number of statements supporting a particular disciplinary style, only one text example was required to score for the presence of that style in a subject’s story.

Using both Statements and Subjects as Count Units: For variables where statement counts were relevant, both statement and subject counts took place. The two kinds of counts together were necessary to clarify the real prevalence of each subcode in the two groups. Using only statements could lead to the incorrect assumption that one group was very different to the other, when this differences may have originated from many statements in the subcode being present in only one or two stories. Similarly, using only counts of life-stories in which a subcode appeared, would not indicate the strength of individual subjects’ tendencies to think in a certain way about a value, their level of reasoning and so on.

Group comparisons of statements or life-stories: As the non-prisoner group contained two more subjects than the prisoner group (17 : 15), an adjustment was made in all comparisons of group differences where the *number of statements* in a subcode was the counting unit. To allow for meaningful comparison, the number of statements from the larger (non-prisoner) group was multiplied by 4/5 on each occasion. When subjects' *life-stories* were compared for evidence of a certain subcode, the comparison was made meaningful by expressing the number of life-stories as a percentage of the total number of life-stories in a given group. As an example, if 10 subjects from the prisoner group and 12 from the non-prisoner group generated statements in a certain subcode, they were compared as two percentages, namely, $10/15 \times 100$ and $12/17 \times 100$, i.e. 66.7% and 70.8%.

Overlap: In codes where statements were counted, the same statement could fall into two subcode categories. Whether it was counted twice in this case depended on the nature of the particular scoring of the code. When the duplicate count reflected two different aspects of a code (e.g. two moral subcodes) and where the scoring on each of these subcodes was not summed to a total score that indicated the overall strength of the code, this was permissible. As an example, the following statement was scored in two subcodes of the moral code: locus of control and Kohlberg's Stage 1 moral reasoning:

I decided to take control of my life and stop hanging around those bad friends when I was 18 years old as I was scared of going to jail.

However, for the impulsivity and goal setting codes, where *total statement counts* were made for each group, any one statement was not counted twice (i.e. through being scored in more than one subcode). In this instance, the stronger categorisation, as judged by the analyst, was chosen. Using the above example, the analyst felt that this statement was a stronger measure of locus of control than of a Kohlberg's reasoning stage.

5.32 Statistics and Graphs

Graphs were used in the quantitative reporting of the analysis results of all the research variables. They served to clarify and summarise the discussion of qualitative findings. A major factor in the choice of statistic was the small cell sizes created by most of the quantitative data. The statistical techniques used in this thesis are reviewed below.

A Defence of The Use of Multiple Statistical Tests: The statistical procedure carried out on the data involved the repeated use of t-tests and other statistics *on the same data*. This process could raise a concern for some that control over the possibility of Type 1 errors in the research findings was reduced, due to the absence of statistical measures to contain this error (Howell, 1997). The following section argues that this is not the case.

The t-test and chi-square statistics were not subject to the above, "family-wise error" in the sense it is understood in most text books on statistics, such as. Howell (1997), due to the fact that the same concept was not being measured across the tests (i.e. there was more than one dependent variable), nor was the same narrow data set used for each test. The stories were very rich and each data set per hypothesis was barely related. In addition, third party interviews, administrative records and three independent tests (cognitive, socio-economic status and self-esteem) contributed to the data analysis. If anything, the statistical analysis was more likely subject to "per experiment" error rates as described in Howell, which work on frequencies rather than products. However, even here, the chance of a Type 1 error across the 31 experiments conducted was negligible ($31 \text{ multiplied by } .05 = 1.55$, i.e. not even 2 of the 31 tests would be erroneous purely by chance).

The above defence is complemented by viewing the experimental design in terms of Bayesian rather than Fisherian logic. The tests used in the research were each a semi-independent measure, derived mainly from the rich quantitative material, to establish comparisons. Bayesian logic (or Laplace's logic) is a better system than Fisherian logic for understanding how these variables related to each other (Urbach, 1987). The investigations, looking for a pattern and finding significance across this pattern, added confirmation to the key research hypothesis using Cole and Means' (1981) logic, because they occurred as predicted. In Bayesian logic, as more and more hypotheses were successful, these increased the belief that the process measured in the tests was not a stochastic one but a property of the real world.

Categorical data.

Much of the quantitative data arising from the analyses of the different research variables (e.g. impulsivity; moral development; antisocial behaviour; family and parenting) took the form of a categorical, two-by-two contingency table, with small cell sizes, of the form

e.g.

*Group (prisoners/non-prisoners) * the Yes/No condition (e.g. family stability present or not)*

The conventional chi-square for data with small cell sizes, Fishers' exact test, was used. The less frequently cited log-linear statistic was also calculated for this kind of data on the grounds that log linears, based on likelihood ratios, are especially powerful with small cell sizes. Their additional power lies in the ability to partition out irrelevant sources of association. Here, the simple one-dimensional case was used (Howell, 1997).

Some other results took the form of a two-way set of classifications (prisoners/non-prisoners) crossed with a set of ordered classifications (e.g. Kohlberg's moral stages). While the chi-square is generally appropriate for this data, the low cell numbers failed to meet the basic assumption of chi-square, namely, that 80% of the cells have a count > 5. In these situations, the logistic regression statistic was chosen as it is not bound by this assumption. It also uses more of the information when there are ordered categories and a classification (such as prisoner-non-prisoner) than can be treated as a binary criterion.

Rational data.

Some of the quantitative data took the form of an additive score.

e.g.

*Group (prisoners/non-prisoners) * the number of antisocial acts committed*

And

Scores on formal measures such as the cognitive and self-esteem tests

In these cases the t-test for two independent samples was used (Howell, 1997; Tredoux & Smith, 2006).⁵⁵

6. Reliability and Validity

This is dealt with first in general terms below, followed by a specific argument for the reliability and validity of the life-story method.

Until fairly recently, qualitative research methods were rejected by social scientists, in favour of quantitative methods, as the latter provided better traditional reliability and validity measures. Conclusions drawn from qualitative research were seen as suspect, anecdotal and with limited application outside the immediate context of the research. This viewpoint has shifted more recently, leading to increasing use of qualitative research methodology within the social sciences (De Waele & Harré, 1979; Patton, 1987; Silverman, 2000). Rather than indicating a rejection by social scientists of the value of reliability and validity, this shift demonstrates a re-interpretation in the social sciences of these concepts. The following section discusses reliability and validity in the present study, in the context of this re-interpretation.

6.1 Reliability and Validity of the Research Process

6.11 Reliability

Several steps were taken to maintain reliability in the data accessing and analysis procedures:

1. *The Biographical Questionnaire* – This provided a framework to facilitate the access of information on the same core topics across all subject interviews.

⁵⁵ The "equality of variance assumed/ not assumed" statistic chosen in the t-test depended on the significance of Levene's test.

2. *Taping* - Tape recording interviews prevented data loss through poor interviewer note taking.
3. *Interviewer Selection and Training* – Interviewers were selected for their expected competency (social work training) and for their acceptability to the research subjects. Thus, most were isiZulu speaking and came from a mix of semi-rural and township backgrounds, as did the subjects. The researcher and one interviewer did not fit this mould, being White and older. Counterbalancing this was the extensive interviewing experience of both, and the fact they interviewed only mother-tongue English participants. Interviewers also were sensitised to observe whether subjects' perceptions about gender or race (in White on Black/female on male interviews) were impacting on the quality of the interview. The third party interviewer was a mature, isiZulu speaker, compatible with the older age of most third parties.

Training was as thorough as possible, given the complexity of the interview process. Mock interviews and the monitoring of interview standards during data collection maintained an adequate standard, as demonstrated by the thoroughness of most transcripts. The transcripts also showed that interviewers maintained a supportive but unemotional approach, which facilitated subjects presenting *their view* of their life-stories. The assessment of interviewer competency after the first set of interviews helped avoid systematic style bias by individual interviewers.

4. *Translation and Transcription* – This process was checked on an ad hoc basis for accuracy by the researcher and a lecturer in the Zulu department at the University. The transcriber was trained to use certain systematic recording conventions to maintain reliability. For example, evidence of emotionality, recorded for one transcript but not another, leads to misinterpretations of the data. The transcriber was instructed not to record linguistic and non-verbal cues present in the transcripts but to concentrate on content. This approach did not ignore evidence of strong feeling in an interview as each tape was accompanied by the interviewer's notes which contained comments about the general demeanour of the subject.

5. *Inter-rater Reliability* – The codes arising out of the text analysis by the principal rater were checked by an independent rater, using the well regarded and conservative reliability statistic, Cohen's Kappa, chosen because the data was neither nominal nor ordinal (Howell, 1997). Reliability figures were calculated for codes or subcodes on two stories randomly selected from each group. In general these reliabilities were sound and are presented with the respective codes in the results chapters. Many of the codes and subcodes were complex (e.g. the values subcode of the moral code, and the self-esteem code. Inter-rater reliabilities were initially poor on these but improved once the second rater's training was extended beyond mere familiarisation with the description of a code or subcode, to a practice run on one life-story. Inter-rater reliability was then calculated on the match achieved in two further stories.

In the **Reliabilities** folder in the accompanying CD, the training guide, code matching and the kappa calculation for the self-esteem code are provided as an example of the inter-rater reliability procedure. Similar details for the other variables are available on request.

6.12 Validity

Self-presentation.

Goffman's classic work on self-presentation showed that some people deliberately misrepresent the truth to boost their self-image in an interview situation (Goffman, 1956). They do this by presenting themselves in a more favourable or more notorious light, depending on their needs. In every day situations, we all tend to adopt "fronts" appropriate for the social situation in which we find ourselves (e.g. as parents, lovers, or business colleagues). According to Goffman, in the interview situation, both parties take cues from the appearance, conduct and perceived attributes (stereotyping) of the other.

Validity problems arising from interviewees' adoption of persona were expected in the present research, should a participant perceive the interviewer as having the potential to positively or negatively influence his situation. A prison subject might portray himself as the victim of circumstance; or even exaggerate past evil to underline his newly reformed character. Ex-NICRO and Boys' Town subjects might see the interviewer, due to his/her connections with the authorities, as a source of further problems with the law and therefore adopt a defensive, non-informative front. There appeared to be little to bias Nchanga and the Durban subjects to adopt a particular front, with the exception that they might hope, by presenting themselves very well (i.e. to disclose

little about earlier antisocial behaviour), to obtain employment through their contact with the research project (most were unemployed).

Goffman (1956) used the concept of “team allegiance” to expound his persona theory, holding that, in the interview, both parties see themselves as representing a “team” and act accordingly. For example, in the present study, the prison interviewee might have seen himself as being part of the “team of victimized people”, who had the right to manipulate the authorities in order to survive. The interviewer might have felt guilty about being part of the “privileged team” and allowed him/herself to be taken in by a tale of woe from the subject. This stereotyping of the other party had potential to reduce insights about how a subject truly saw his life-story.

While preconceptions about expected roles in the interview could not be wholly removed, the research design aimed to reduce this effect through the introductory talk given to participants in each interview, and through the training of the field workers. The negative impact of self-presentation was especially a concern in prisoner interviews, as these were seen as being most susceptible to the effects of unwanted personas. In training, interviewers were alerted to how personas occurred. They were encouraged to present themselves as one of the “team of experts” (to encourage subjects to make an effort); whose function was to “help other young potential offenders” (to remove themselves from roles where they were seen as having influence on the prisoner’s fate); and who “firmly believed that a story of what went right and wrong in the subject’s life would help achieve this” (to encourage cooperation). In addition, interviewers discussed with the subject his rights and warned him not to reveal information that might be incriminating, as the interviewer would be obliged by prison authorities to pass this on. This information placed them in the “team who were on the side of the prisoner but who were limited by prison regulations”.

The age and race of the interviewer was also expected to impact on the persona participants adopted. Subjects were young, predominantly Zulu, male adults and it was expected they would be more comfortable with young Black, interviewers. Gender differences were discounted, as the female interviewers were skilled, and the discussion unlikely to enter a “male only” domain unless initiated by the subject. Feedback from the younger interviewers indicated that this reasoning was accurate. Some subjects also commented on how comfortable they felt with interviewers near their own age and culture. This was particularly the case with a female student interviewer who came from a township background, and could slip into township slang. Despite the above comments, the English speaking Coloured subjects also seemed comfortable interacting with the older White female interviewers.

6.2 Validity and Reliability of the Life-story Technique

This section presents both practical and theoretical arguments in support of the reliability and validity of the life-story technique used in the present study. The tapestry metaphor, already introduced to describe the research process, encapsulates the main argument for this reliability and validity. As with a complex tapestry, the conclusions drawn from the research do not depend on any one set of results alone. Instead, the main research hypothesis is interrogated in many different ways, through the investigations of the secondary hypotheses. Multiple measures are used to draw conclusions about the key research question, namely that Moffitt’s taxonomy is applicable to a developing country, South Africa. Each secondary hypothesis represents a grouping of threads in the overall tapestry. Alone, the threads are fragile and meaningless. Together, they create a picture that has form and relevance. The additive information gained from each research variables was considered to see if a pattern emerged that supported or disproved Terrie Moffitt’s life-course theory.

The remainder of this section contains a less poetic discussion of reliability and validity concerns associated with the life-story data gathering tool! It has already been noted that, as a qualitative research tool, this technique lacks the statistical validity associated with quantitative research methods. As the key aim of the research was a comparison of the two research groups on Moffitt’s taxonomic variables, the validity of this main data gathering tool was an important issue. The ability of the life-story technique to provide an accurate reflection of past events is challenged by the potential for inaccurate recall of earlier experiences and by

conscious and unconscious distortions of these memories. These obstacles and their impact on validity are discussed below, within a framework that questions whether “objective truths” about earlier experiences are possible or even desirable in this kind of research. This framework is supported by a combined Freudian-narrative analytic theoretical model.

It is argued in 6.23 below that subjects’ *perceptions* of past events, rather than the factual recall of these, is relevant in the current study. At the same time, very distorted recall, or the deliberate attempt to fudge recall, go beyond the “normative” alterations of experience through recall that are acceptable in terms of the research’s theoretical framework. It is these unacceptable distortions of memory and the steps taken to counteract these in the study, that are discussed first below.

6.21 Memory Processing Factors Negatively Influencing Recall

There is no doubt that memory lapses occur in recall. The two main sources of memory loss or maintenance are forgetfulness and misconstruction of the past (Baddeley, 1982; Erdelyi, 2006; Schacter, 2001).

Forgetfulness or Transient Memory: These are two kinds of forgetfulness. The first, more of a problem for people over the age of 50, is the loss of memory detail over time, combined with confusion of the memory with other similar experiences at a later stage. The second type of memory loss is the distortion of memories over time. In recall, we practice and rehearse an event. It is often the memory of recalling the event, rather than the event itself, that is recalled in subsequent memories of that event.

Misconstruction of the past: Recall errors due to misconstruction usually occur to preserve cognitive consonance. There are several kinds of these errors.

1. Past memories can be coloured by present feelings about the topic. For example, a subject who now feels positive towards his parents, may recall early unpleasant experiences associated with them in a more positive light or forget these altogether. Alternately, where an individual believes he ought to have changed, he is likely to exaggerate changes through recall. The prisoner who undergoes a “born again” Christian experience in prison may exaggerate the wickedness of his early ways to confirm his current repentance.
2. The exaggeration or denial of memories of emotionally charged early events is a different effect of emotional association on recall. The earlier impact of the experience on the subject therefore may be either over- or understated in the recall process.
3. The power of suggestibility, such as leading interview questions, also results in the misconstruction of recalled events. An interesting exploration of this was conducted by Elizabeth Loftus at the University of California. In an experiment, past events that had never occurred, were suggested to subjects. A third of these later were convinced the memories were real (Beckman, 2003; Grossman, 2003). Suggestibility that is harder to control is the stimulus of cue words unwittingly used by the interviewer that triggers recall of one aspect of an event rather than another (Baddeley, 1982).

Countering the impact of recall errors.

Some of these problems were of more concern in the current study than others. The *transience of memory* was of limited importance as subjects were all well under 50 years of age. In addition, general impressions (e.g. of parental discipline, of crimes perpetrated) were required rather than detailed information. Interviewers were trained also to revisit hazy points of recall at a later stage of the interview. Some key points regarding differences between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders also could be checked in the third party interview and from other records. This information included crimes committed, school progress and early development.

The primary potential recall bias in the study related to subjects trying to maintain *cognitive consonance*. In the main this excluded difficulties around suggestibility, as interviewers were trained to keep questions as open-ended and emotionally neutral as possible. That they generally achieved this style can be seen when reading the transcripts of the interviews. The research design tried to counter misconstrued recall due to emotional distortion. This was done by training interviewers to be alert for inconsistencies and to re-visit these later in the interview. In addition, during the analysis of the transcripts, information was cross checked across the entire life-story and in third party interviews, for conflicting descriptions of individuals and events.

6.22 Psychological Factors Negatively Influencing Recall

Moving away from problems of accuracy, other validity threats were related to the tendency of individuals to adopt persona, and to certain psychological characteristics. The topic of self-presentation or persona has already been dealt with in 6.1.

Psychological characteristics.

Certain psychological characteristics also have the potential to interfere with the validity of life-story data. Gudjorisson (2003) found that mental illness, personality disorders and learning disabilities rendered the accounts of police suspects unreliable. Included in these categories are subjects with a distorted view of reality, those who are pathologically manipulative, or those who lack the cognitive ability to recall events clearly. Using the arguments in 6.23 below, it might be held that these characteristics merely result in stories reflecting the desired subject's perceptions of reality. However, recall distortion at this level is undesirable as it is beyond the "normative" recall problems besetting the average person.

Countering psychological characteristic problems.

It was concluded that neither persona nor aberrant psychological characteristics created serious validity concerns for the study. Regarding the adoption of personas, certain practical steps were taken to reduce this effect (see 6.1). Should a subject adopt strong personas after these measures were taken, this was seen as part of important information he wanted to communicate *about his view of life*. For example, should he consistently inflate or deflate his image in his story, or present himself as the victim of events, this information gave insight into the hypothesised processes underlying the presence or absence of a life-course offending trajectory (e.g. self-esteem, locus of control).

The selection of subjects was a practical step taken to counter validity problems arising from the psychological characteristics covered above. The prison psychologist was asked to exclude obviously disturbed prisoners from the selection list. As far as inadequate cognitive skills, IQ measures showed all subjects to have intelligence levels within normal limits, albeit at the low end of normal. In addition, interviews were open-ended, recall of information general rather than specific, (e.g. how a subject experienced parental discipline), and interviewers trained to probe for required detail. This minimized the influence of limited cognitive recall ability on the quality of the life-stories.

6.23 A Psychoanalytic-Narrative Analytic Model

This theoretical model supports the assertion made at the beginning of section 3.6, that the life-story information, in spite of some contained distortions in recall, provided valid information about the variables used to test the applicability of Moffitt's taxonomy in a developing country such as South Africa.

What is truth?

A key aim of the research was to identify what *subjects perceived as important* in their past lives.. It is contested that, as this intention was common for both groups, solid grounds for comparison exist, even if not all the data gathered was "objectively true".

In their exploration of interrogative techniques to detect lying in a respondent, Russell & Coetzee (2000, p.x.) concluded that

Truth is subjective. It is entirely a matter of perception and is the reality held in the mind of the individual. If a person tells you what they subjectively believe to be true, then using these techniques will reflect just exactly that, no matter how far off the track or bizarre their truth will be.

This quote encapsulates the main argument for the validity of the life-story technique. It is supported from an unlikely quarter, in a scientific review of biological and psychological research into problems of memory recall related to the repression of previous experiences. Erdelyi (2006) concluded that the role of repression in recall had not been definitively researched, given the complexities of measuring this process. While research indicated that distortions and omissions did occur, these varied from situation to situation and between

individuals, rather than being determined by a set of unwavering principles of recall. Erdelyi further suggested we, as psychologists, should follow Freud's own understanding of mental processes, including memory, namely that recall is *always* a combination of fact and fiction:

What is accessible to consciousness is never the true, unfettered information, but highly worked over reconstructions. (Erdelyi, 2006, p. 28).

Erdelyi concluded from his review that

The laboratory and the clinic have converged on a simple but fundamental insight: Cognition, from perception to memory, is pervasively constructive. We structure our fragmentary reality by omitting from and elaborating on our meager [sic.] scraps of information. We inhibit and augment our reality by different techniques and for different reasons. We try to *make sense of our reality* [researcher's italics], intellectually as well as emotionally. (Erdelyi, 2006, p. 29)

Thus any form of human recall of *meaningful* information involves some form of reconstruction, including repression and omissions. In terms of this argument, subjects' perceptions of earlier experiences and of current goals and beliefs, was regarded as valid data upon which to assess differences between the two research groups.

Selective recall and psychoanalytic theory.

Another challenge to the validity of the life-story data is the possibility that subjects unconsciously repressed important but traumatising earlier experiences. This "selective recall" is unconscious in so far as it does not relate to deliberate intentions to present oneself in a certain light, or to cover up facts. It is therefore a separate issue to memory processing problems covered in 6.21 above.

While the unconscious repression of memories appeared a potential obstacle to validity in this study, the tenets of psychoanalytic theory outlined below suggest this was not the case. The therapeutic value of spontaneous recall and resistance are discussed in this regard.

The Therapeutic Value of Spontaneous Recall: In classic psychoanalytic theory, individual behaviour is driven by wishes, needs and desires arising from the id function, later by the moral imperatives of the superego, and is shaped into socially acceptable behaviour by the ego function. The needs and desires driven by the id become especially imperative when they remain unmet in early childhood (e.g. the need for acceptance). In classic psychotherapy it is believed that early negative and traumatizing psychological events, resulting in subsequent psychological dysfunction, are healed through the free association recall process (Malcolm, 1982). In a review of psychotherapy practice in the 1980s, Malcolm found that psychotherapeutic interactions between patient and therapist were still regarded as leading to the spontaneous reduction of patient dysfunction, as the patient raised and resolved, in his own time, significant earlier negative events that had led to his presenting problems. The therapist remained the passive and sometimes reflective, listener.

While the life-story interview is a far cry from classic psychotherapy, interviewers were essentially reflective and passive in their interaction with interviewees and interview prompts required subjects to delve into past important life events. It was hypothesised that this form of interviewer/interviewee relationship would result in processes resembling those occurring in psychotherapy, and lead to subjects revealing in their stories early events and impressions that impacted strongly on their psyche at the time. (This was unlikely to have any lasting therapeutic effects, given the limited duration of the research interviews.)

The Problem of Resistance: The psychoanalytic idea of resistance might be a counter argument to the view that subjects were likely to reveal painful early events and emotions in their life-stories. Resistance could prevent the emergence of important but traumatic early memories in the brief life-story interview. However, it was felt that the level at which the life-story information was sought would not evoke such psychological resistance. The interviews did not target emotionally charged events, as the prompts called for general, rather than in-depth comments about subjects' attitude to parents, family, school and life goals. This view is supported by the work of Labov & Fanshal (1977) on "psychotherapy as conversation". They noted that in conversation we usually speak freely in areas where we do not expect contradictions, namely, our personal

emotions and our experiences. The open-ended interview and interviewers, trained to be warm and accepting, ensured that the views of subjects were undisputed, although clarified on occasion.

Narrative analysis.

The present research sought to understand how subjects perceived their worlds. Narrative theory combined with psychoanalytic theory in justifying the validity of the life-stories data.

Narrative analysis received increasing attention as a social research tool from the late 1990s. It considers both the story plot and the how a story is presented, structured and made to cohere (De Waele & Harré, 1979; Silverman, 2000). It is modelled on the view that lives are “storied” in some way and narratives about life-stories depict the teller’s unique view of how he sees his life as a meaningful whole (Josselson & Lieblich, 2000). Narrative analysis sees lives as acts of story telling, noting which life experiences have been included or left out, how events combine, and how the overall course of life is framed in the process. When describing past events, a person reconstructs these in such a way as to make sense of past incidents in his life. This process acts as the organizer of how he presents the significant events he recalls. This organizational process affects the temporal order of what is presented, what is given importance, the links between aspects of the story, and how these interweave with each other. Narrative links are important features in a narrative (e.g. vigilance and independence may emerge as links that give coherence to a story). Narrative shifts are noted, as the teller shifts to other narrative voices (e.g. that of the father, son, sibling). The analysis also looks at how narratives structure perception, organise memory and supply motives (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997).

As is the view of this research, narrative analysis abandons the idea that life-story data is a “true” picture of reality. It looks rather for the individual’s view of his reality (Silverman, 2000)⁵⁶

Content Recall

The interviews diverged from promoting a purely narrative analytic style in some shaping of the interview content. Although the way in which subjects told their stories was significant, important information allowing for group comparisons on Moffitt’s taxonomy, was required from each interview. Acquisition of this data was facilitated by the *semi-structured* interview format, which still gave subjects the option of how and when they chose to present this information. Further probing only took place, if required, when a subject had completed his version of his life-story in response to a minimum number of prompts.

Narrative Analysis and Selective Recall

There is evidence to suggest that recall of negative or traumatic events is reconstructive rather than static. As in the psychoanalytic framework, there is not consensus on the function of selective recall processes. One view in narrative analysis holds that such events are poorly remembered, as this reduces stress, a second, that remembering is adaptive as it helps avoid future trauma (Fivush, Hazzard, Sales, & Brown, 2002). While the jury is still out on the exact nature of repression (Erdelyi, 2006), some direction emerges from Fivush et al.’s research. They investigated if, and how, the narratives of children exposed to inner city violence, acted as a mechanism to cope with emotionally negative events. The stories were analysed for coherence and content. Findings indicated that both positive and negative past events were well remembered by the 12 year old subjects in this group, although recall for each of these occurred in a different manner. *When describing negative events, children’s stories were more coherent and included more information on internal states (thoughts and emotions).* Positive stories used more descriptive information and detail about people and objects. They concluded that the increased shaping or coherence of stories about negative events helped reduce stress. Children who have experienced violence appear to reflect on, and organise, their emotional experiences in ways to make them more meaningful.

⁵⁶ In the current research “reality” is not dismissed entirely, due to the interview probes, triangulation method of data gathering, third party interviews and internal cross checking in the interview format.

In conclusion, the research literature, covered in section 3.623, supports, from two different theoretical frameworks, the assumption that research participants in the present study were unlikely to unconsciously suppress emotionally significant earlier experiences in their stories.

7. Ethics

Increasing attention has been given to ethical issues in applied psychological research (Lerner, Fisher, & Weinberg, 2000). Ethical considerations are especially important when the research is conducted on a vulnerable population. Studies such as the present one, taking place in a developing country, fall into this category (Emanuel, Wendler, Killen, & Grady, 2004). The present research has addressed ethical considerations as carefully as possible. While ethical considerations applied to the research as a whole, they were especially pertinent to the prison phase. The principles adopted in this thesis are covered below, within the framework of Wassenaar's (2006) guidelines for the application of ethical principles to social science research.

7.1 Informed Consent

This is one of the longest standing ethical principles (Wassenaar, 2006) and its application in the present study is covered in some detail. As noted by Wassenaar, agreement alone to take part in a research study is insufficient, unless participants are informed about the implications to themselves of this involvement, and are able to understand fully these outcomes. A formal written consent by participants is recommended.

This issue was especially important for prison subjects, given their vulnerability to coercion. Care was taken not to coerce in any way. Subjects who met the research criteria were sent by their warders to a presentation on the research by the researcher and field team. The prison psychologist acted as an intermediary between the groups to the benefit of both parties. She clarified prisoners' rights regarding participation in the study. On the other hand, she covered prison procedures to be followed to ensure the team's safety when working in the prison.

The initial presentation to prospective prison subjects began the "informed consent" process. It was conducted in isiZulu and English to ensure all present understood what was said. The presentation made the following key points:

- Parole: The interviews would not impact positively or negatively on prisoners' sentences.
- Benefits: Participation in the study would contribute towards helping young people avoid a path of crime, by enabling better understanding of the factors in childhood and adolescence that led people into crime. At a more personal level, interviewees were likely to gain a better understanding of the factors leading to their involvement in crime, which in turn could assist them in efforts to avoid future offences.
- Checks: Prisoners were informed that participants were expected to give permission for checks to be made on their stories, through third party contacts that they would provide.
- Confidentiality: To prevent the violation of any prisoner's privacy (and that of their third parties), no personal details would appear in any publications emanating from the research. Subjects would be allocated research identity numbers instead. At the same time, prisoners were warned about the limits of the confidentiality of the information they provided in their life-stories, as the interviewer was bound by prison regulations to communicate revelations regarding current or future planned transgressions to prison authorities.
- No harm: An implicit ethical belief guiding the research was that the process must not harm subjects in any way. If a subject became unduly distressed in the course of telling his story or completing questionnaires, interviewers would provide support by investigating the matter further. If needs be, subjects would be referred to the prison psychologist or for other appropriate counselling support. Furthermore, subjects would be free to leave the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable.

The prison group were contacted by the prison psychologist a few days later for individual interviews in which

their interest in the research was discussed and further explanations made if required. Those who chose to participate were then asked to sign a written consent form, in which the aims and implications of the research were again covered. Confidentiality and the freedom to leave the study at any time were also re-stated. The English version of the consent form signed by prisoners appears in Appendix 4. (This was available also in isiZulu.)

A similar process regarding informed consent was followed with non-prisoner subjects, with explanations and consent forms being in the mother tongue, and with details specific to the prison community removed. The benefits for this group were also slightly altered as they did not involve insights to avoiding further crimes. The key benefit would be community based for these groups in terms of the feedback it would provide to themselves and more broadly, to leaders with the capacity to assist communities (Boys' Town principle, NICRO senior staff, Nchanga church leaders).

7.2 Other Ethical Considerations

The topics covered in the preliminary presentation of information to all prospective subjects addressed further ethical requirements for social science research (Wassenaar, 2006). Such research should have some *societal value*. In so far as results supported Moffitt's taxonomy in a South African context, this value lay in intervention practices it could generate, given the overwhelming crime statistics in this country. In this regard, the current study is a small cog in a longer term process, which could include a large scale cohort study for more robust support of its findings, as well as obtaining the political and financial backing to implement community intervention programs. Another principle raised by Wassenaar is the *fair selection* of subjects, rather than this process being based on convenience. Subject selection was carefully made to approximate Moffitt's two kinds of delinquents. It was indeed difficult to access suitable Boys' Town and NICRO subjects. The *risk/benefit ratio* needs to favour participants in ethical research. No participant risk was associated with the research. Financial costs to subjects, such as transport, were met, and confidentiality protected. On the other hand, benefits were also not significant for the participants. These were indirect for the non-prison group, as mentioned earlier, in terms of the potential reduction in community criminality in the long term. Prisoners also did not gain directly from the research findings. However, it was hoped they would derive a minor therapeutic benefit from sharing what otherwise might be seen as a failed life of crime, in order to benefit others. In addition, they might obtain some insights (from the feedback process) to avoid future crime.⁵⁷ Wassenaar refers to the value of an *independent ethical review* before the start of the research. The research proposal was passed by the Ethics Committee of the Psychology Department of the then University of Natal (the university later, under its new title of UKZN, established an Ethics Review Committee that oversees research across all departments). The final ethics principle to be considered was *confidentiality*. The identities of all participants were known to the research team. These all signed an agreement wherein they consented to keep subject and third party identities confidential. All "hard" records of interviews, taped and transcribed, were stored in a safe by the researcher. Computer transcripts were password protected. Subjects were designated as ID1, 2 and so on. The prison used in the research remained nameless. The exception to confidentiality, by their own permission, was the naming of the Boys' Town and NICRO institutions. The participants linked to these had long since left the institutions. In addition, both bodies have had good independent acknowledgement of the success of their respective delinquency intervention programmes and were happy to be associated with these.

7.3 Safety of the Research Assistants

This ethical consideration applied to the social work student interviewers in the prison environment, and is linked to the "nonmaleficence", or risk, principle highlighted by Wassenaar (2006). The prison authorities in the target institution issue standard guidelines and practices to maintain the safety of any visitors. Interviewers conducted interviews in offices with one way mirrors in the psychologists' wing of the prison. Potential risks were explained to all the team by the prison psychologist, leaving them free to withdraw from the study. The field workers felt these were minimal and all agreed to proceed with the prison interviews. An additional

⁵⁷ Sadly, in terms of Moffitt's theory, they were unlikely to be able to implement these insights easily, given the entrenched nature of the life-course offender's antisocial behaviour.

check was the exclusion from the sample, of subjects with known violent psychopathic tendencies.

In the non-prison phases of the research, interviewers went in groups of two or more to conduct interviews in the community. Where possible, interviews were carried out at a central venue such as a church hall or NICRO office.

8. The Format for the Next Section

Although the “next section” is a set of six chapters, these are grouped into one conceptual entity, namely, the presentation and discussion of results. The data analysis covers the research variables identified in chapter 2: Research Hypotheses. Chapter 4 deals with antisocial behaviour in the two groups; chapter 5 with early parenting and family interactions; chapter 6 with the peer relationships in each group; chapter 7 looks at impulsivity and goal setting in the groups; chapter 8 at moral development and chapter 9 at group self-esteem.

It is more traditional to divide these processes into separate results and discussion of results chapters. However, the present format, combining the results and discussion of each variable, makes for better understanding of the research findings. This is due to the many variables, with their attendant codes and subcodes that are covered. This complexity also led to additional short “Method” sections in each results chapter to cover techniques peculiar to that data analysis. For the same reason, some of the results chapters include additional short reviews of literature specific to the variable under consideration.

CHAPTER 4. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

OVERVIEW

Research hypothesis (1) in chapter 2 held that the life-stories of the life-course offender group would describe markedly more antisocial behaviour than those of the adolescent-limited group. In particular, it was hypothesised that life-course offenders, as compared with adolescent-limited offenders, perpetrated more serious crimes; more victim oriented crime; committed a similar number of minor indictable and status offences; began with these earlier and continued over a longer period. The present chapter reports on the analysis of status and criminal offences described in the life-stories. The findings support the above hypotheses and Moffitt's tenets regarding the nature of the differences between the antisocial behaviour of life-course and adolescent-limited offenders.

1. Background to the Analysis

Type and onset/duration of antisocial behaviour were the two variables in Moffitt's taxonomy (chapter 1, 2.1) that framed the present analysis of antisocial behaviour. The literature shows that Moffitt's life-course offenders commit more crimes and more violent crimes than their adolescent-limited counterparts, and that this behaviour begins earlier and persists longer than in adolescent-limited delinquents.

The Measurement of Early Antisocial Behaviour

While the prompt questions in the Biographical Questionnaire produced generous information about subjects' status and indictable offences, there was a paucity of data regarding childhood conduct disorders in both the life-stories and third party interviews. This made it difficult to conduct a reliable comparison between the groups on *onset and duration* of antisocial behaviours. The absence of systematic information here was not unexpected, given the life-story method used in the present research. Subjects were unlikely to have insight about the antisocial nature of their childhood behaviours, unless this had been brought to their attention (e.g. by placement in a special school for behavioural disordered children). While third party interviews with close relatives, especially parents, were expected to contribute some of this information, not all third parties could be accessed. A further difficulty related to caregivers' responses to prompts about a subject's early behaviour> Most described this as normal until the subject entered adolescence, even in cases where the subject himself had admitted to possessing and using a dangerous weapon in late childhood! These bland caregiver responses suggest a general lack of awareness in many caregivers about their offspring's childhood exploits. This issue is explored further in chapter 5, in the discussion of the link between parent "watchfulness" and crime. The paucity of information from third parties indicated the need for an improved third party questionnaire, and for gaining better access to primary caregivers, as discussed in chapter 10.

Despite these obstacles, some information about the onset and duration of early antisocial behaviour was accessed indirectly from the stories. This related to Moffitt's (1993) tenet that life-course offenders presented with earlier and more serious antisocial behaviour than their adolescent-limited counterparts. This argument led to the expectation that the aggravated antisocial behaviour of the former group, if manifest in the present "life-course" research sample, would present through information about *early and repeat prison sentences* in their life-stories. The findings of the analysis of the stories for this evidence is presented in the qualitative discussion of results in this chapter.

2. Method

2.1 Measurement Issues

Critics of epidemiological studies on delinquency maintain that the different techniques used across studies to measure offences prevent valid comparisons being made. If this is the case, Moffitt's two types of delinquents might reflect differences in measurement techniques rather than two developmental processes. Self-report and

official records are the main sources of information on delinquency (Farrington, 1987). Victim reports are used to a lesser extent. Critics argue that official arrest or conviction records are open to the problem of undetected crime. Individuals with a record of serious recidivist crime may be caught because they are less intelligent than their equally criminal counterparts, who remain undetected. In South Africa, staffing shortages, inefficiencies and corruption in the police force (Schonteich & Louw, 1999) aggravate this problem. While self-reported delinquency avoids this problem, it presents the problem that the most serious delinquents may be missing from the sample due to their lifestyle, or behaviours may be minimized or misrepresented. In the present research, life-course offender subjects were accessed through their criminal records, while adolescent-limited offenders were obtained essentially through self-report.⁵⁸

Reassuringly, Farrington's review and his subsequent research countered these concerns. He found that both methods generated similar outcomes (Farrington, 1987; Farrington, 1995). Farrington (1987) did find an ethnic impact on self-report versus official rates in the USA, with Black males tending to under-report in some studies. However, he concluded this was more likely due to the severity of criminal records factor, rather than to ethnicity, and that Black males under-reported due to their more extensive official records. In the present research, this latter measurement problem was not an issue. While prison subjects might choose to under-report their offences, prison records were present to confirm the number of serious crimes. In addition, *both* research groups were drawn from the same ethnic population groups.

2.2 Operational Definitions

Type of crime.

1. *Status or Indictable Offence:* A *status* offence was scored in a life-story when a statement showed the subject engaged in activities that were offences in terms of their minor status at the time. These included drinking, under age sex, gambling, school truancy and absconding from home. *Indictable* offences were rated for statements showing the subject engaged in antisocial acts that were prosecutable under South African judicial law.

2. *Major or Minor Offence:* *Major* offences were rated when subjects participated in murder, rape, robbery, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm (GBH) and property offences such as burglary, car theft and arson. Major crimes counts were based on the text analysis and excluded those specified on the official prison record. This step was taken to enhance the validity of the analysis. As it was possible (though unlikely in terms of 2.1 above) that non-prison subjects might have perpetrated indictable, serious offences but not disclosed these in their stories, only life-story evidence of antisocial behaviour was used to compare the groups. At the same time, where the life-story of a prisoner disclosed *no* major crime, his record was used, as it was even more of a validity problem to record no major crime where a person has been convicted as a recidivist, serious criminal.

Minor offences were rated for antisocial acts such as hitting family member or peers, the use or sale of drugs, property damage, petty theft, prostitution, breaking and entering, vandalism and public order offences, driving offences, and carrying an unlicensed firearm.

3. *Involving a Victim and Aggression:* Crimes such as murder, rape and robbery with assault were scored here. Scored offences could fall into either the major or less serious crime categories of (2) above. Possession of a weapon was not scored in this category if no injurious act had occurred.

Onset and duration of antisocial behaviour.

As discussed in section 1 above, it was not possible to measure accurately the age of onset of any kind of marked antisocial behaviour, even when this were past the very early childhood period. It was also difficult to gauge the onset of the first status and/or indictable offence of a subject. Participants spoke of some early offences but the impression gained was that often they did not bother to mention the earliest of these in their

⁵⁸ These subjects were actually obtained through third parties who saw the subjects as having taken part in adolescent delinquent behaviours.

stories, especially if they had perpetrated many, serious later crimes. Desistance from crime was also difficult to assess. At the time of the interviews, non-prison subjects had ceased their delinquent behaviours, according to life-story evidence and the fact that none had prison sentences. However, the groups could not be compared on the age of desistance from crime as the prisoners were currently unable to perpetrate crimes in society.

Accordingly, this subcode of the antisocial code was operationally redefined. As an alternate, if weaker, means of measuring onset and duration of antisocial behaviour, the groups were compared on evidence that crime had *gone on for a long time/ or offences were repeated over a prolonged period*. The Questionnaire prompt to elicit this information was

Can you remember when you first did small things that were wrong, like drinking too much, driving a car without a licence, bunking school, smoking in the toilets, even taking some drugs?

The assumption behind this redefinition of onset of antisocial behaviour was that small offences must proceed bigger ones for life-course offenders, and might be the only crimes for adolescent-limited offenders. Thus, obtaining information on these would give the best “start” date of a subject’s path to committing more serious, indictable offences.

2.3 Process

Chapter 3, section 5, provides general points on the quantitative scoring and analysis of the data. In scoring the antisocial behaviour of subjects, incidents rather than statements or life-stories were counted in the quantitative analysis. For example, a subject might mention a particular crime several times in a story. If it was clearly the same incident, this was counted once only. Sometimes it was impossible to tally the exact number of incidents. For example:

I was involved in many thefts before I was caught.
Or
I am not denying the fact we were thieves.

These kinds of statement were counted as “one incident”. When a subject specified the number of times an incident occurred, this was counted.

The *qualitative analysis* looked at details of the offences perpetrated, and where possible, tracked these across time for each group. Within the limitations of the data, the age of onset of delinquent behaviour was considered. The *quantitative analysis* compared the two groups on

- (a) the total sum of all status and indictable offences
- (b) the individual sums of status, minor and major indictable offences
- (c) the sum of all “aggressive” offences, which were criminal acts involving aggression towards a victim

2.4. Reliability

Reliability was calculated using the total scores for the two antisocial subcategories, *status and indictable offences*⁵⁹, reached by two independent raters across two randomly chosen stories from each research group. Using Cohen’s Kappa (Howell, 1997), a sound inter-rater reliability figure of .73 was achieved.

⁵⁹ Reliability estimates were not conducted on (b) and (c) in 2.3. above. It was decided that matching of the overall number of crimes and whether these were status or indictable, was sufficient test for reliability. It was felt that, as major, minor and aggressive crimes were clearly distinguished in the operational definitions in the chapter, there was little chance of unreliability in scoring these, as long as the overall number of indictable and status crimes were reliably identified.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 *Qualitative Results*

Overall, the qualitative results supported Moffitt's tenets regarding differences in the nature and duration of antisocial behaviour between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders. While a similar number of status crimes were described by both the groups, life-course offenders stories accounted for all major indictable crimes described (including earlier crimes for which they had not been caught). In addition this group engaged in almost all the victim-oriented and aggressive crimes described. While the available information did not permit a systematic comparison between the groups on the onset and duration of antisocial behaviour, anecdotal evidence portrayed the life-course group as both being involved in antisocial behaviour and coming into contact with the law, from an earlier age than the adolescent-limited group.

3.11 *Status Offences*

Both research groups described similar kinds of status offences. Collectively, individuals in both groups drank and smoked cigarettes, truanted from school and absconded from home, when scholars.

Examples

Prisoners

Did you bunk school?

Most of the time. In the last two or three years of school I spent half the time there. (6, P 152)

As I grew I met different friends and we ...began to do different things. The second group of friends ... smoking bells, smoke cigarettes, you know what I'm saying. From there it went to drugs. (1, P 213)

In my early life I had a really good sense of right and wrong, but as I got older I started becoming aware of other things, like in the community drinking happens a lot. That became less "evil" in a way, became more of a norm to me. (10, P 290)

I stayed there at Umlazi, H section, when I started to be naughty, then I moved [from home] and stayed with my friends.

Where did you go to stay with your friends, was it still in Umlazi?

Yes, It was still there at Umlazi

What did they say at home, they you moved out to live with friends?

I was running away [from home]. (5, P 41)

Non-prisoners

In Grade 8 his behaviour problems continued with bunking. He began not coming home at night; also mom thinks he drank as he stole money from them and sold his clothes. (16-3rd, P 7)

...but we used to bunk school, see.....we used to bunk school and go and had drinks, you see, but no one caught us in that act because we used to plan this. (22, P 236)

Well, we were growing and would not see anything wrong, until such time that I started to realize that parents were then not approving some of the things [his bad behaviour]. So, this was the start of doing these things. I then started to sleep out. (23, P 7)

He had very bad friends as he grew older. He started smoking, drinking alcohol and smoking dagga and taking drugs. My mother used to help me in trying to correct him but she failed. (24-3rd, P 14)

So there was a competition to see how many girls?

Ja, to get into bed as such and then of course the drinking started. (31, P 115)

3.12 Indictable Offences

Major Crime: The life-story analysis showed that only prison subjects had engaged in major criminal offences. While there was the possibility that non-prison subjects had not disclosed major crimes, this was unlikely for three reasons:

- * other research findings that self-report and official crime records usually correlate (Farrington, 1987)
- * care was taken by interviewers to assure subjects that their identities would be protected
- * the many status and minor indictable crimes non-prisoners *did* disclose suggested they were being quite open in the interviews

Most of the major crimes described in prison stories involved aggression and violence (32 violent versus 9 non violent incidents).

Examples

Prisoners

What would you say was your very worst crime?
Very worst crime? This murder. (1, P 268)

I would say that I have been involved in robbery when I was outside, we were doing it at gunpoint [armed robbery]. Most of the things that I have, I was making use of gun. (5, P 311)

And I stabbed one of my friends which he is now crippled. (6, P 200)

After that I started being naughty, I stole cars, all by myself. I continued stealing cars. One day I stole a car, which had a gun inside it. I then stopped stealing cars and started with the Indians, intimidating them...and Whites. (9, P 17)

...I was breaking house this time I got R3000, and during that time it had a value, and also got other things, you see. I got R3000 and also got a gun.. (11, P 140)
By then I was no longer smuggling drugs. (11, P 384)

Minor Crime: Both groups described drugging, theft and minor assault in this category. As with major crimes, there was a higher incidence of aggressive, victim oriented minor crimes in the prisoner group (7 versus 4 stories).

Examples

Prisoners

The first time I was arrested.... Ja, busting the games at the Wheel. (1, P 228)

.....The way it happened, there was time when we got together and influenced each other to do one thing, that was to steal a gun from a man who had a gun. I also was there, went with them. For the fact that by that time I was very much interested in guns and wanted to have one of my own, I came along with them. I took a gun and ran away with it. (2, P 114)

He failed [Grade 8] and started to dislike school. He then started to have bad friends. He fought around and was quite bad. Mother heard about his bad behaviour and used to tell him to behave and leave bad friends but he did not listen. He used to carry bad weapons and fight a lot. He started to behave badly even around the home. (3-3rd, P 17)

As I told you before that I stabbed a teacher at the school. So when I passed and the end of the year I was told not to come back. (5, P 224)

When did you first get into serious trouble?

When I was young I should steal a lot- not outside it was in the family.

You used to steal from family members?

Ya, like my mother. (6, P 188)

Yes I liked it, but then when I got to Deyi [school] the guys there taught me weed/ marihuana and cigarettes-- something I didn't know. (7, P 145)

Is your stepfather alive?

He is still alive but he got straightened and ran away.

What is to be straightened?

Sorry my sister, he was beaten.

By whom?

Well, it happened through me. It happened that I looked at one side of the story and just beat him. (9, P 171)

When I was stealing , if I was asked to fix a car , I would fix it well, and I would take the stereo. (10, P 33)

Non-prisoners

I was sent to Boys' Town because my mother was trying to avoid being victimized by people in the community whenever there was a theft in the community. I don't deny the fact that we were thieves. (17, P 148)

They were caught stealing sweets and this resulted in the NICRO placement. (18-3rd, P 9)

No, I think dagga punished me since it destroyed me and I did not succeed in whatever I did. I find myself busy with dagga instead of doing something else, like going to tertiary [study]. (24, P 303)

...When I was 15 years or 16 years?

Yes, do you remember anything that happen in those times?

Well it means we were just together for a drug called Benzene. (27, P 7)

School was cool. I was well-known, I had a little business running ...the works...

Dealing?

Dealing, I had a gambling business... (32, P 159)

3.13 Victim-Oriented Offences

As shown in the discussion of quantitative results (3.2) below, significantly more prisoners than non-prisoners were involved in violent crime according to their life-stories. Violent crime, described by only three non-prisoners, took place as part of a groups, either as gang warfare, or in muggings. On the contrary, of the 14 prison life-stories describing violent crime, 12 contained incidents of solo aggressive attacks on others. This latter finding supports Moffitt's (1993) tenet that life-course offenders are more likely than adolescent-limited delinquents to perpetrate crime on their own. Moffitt's theory is supported also by the greater aggression of the antisocial acts of the former group. Despite the violent nature of many of the victim oriented crimes described by prisoners, these subjects overall showed little emotion about what they did and described unpleasant details of their acts quite easily. The nature of these responses suggested that such crimes were perpetrated impulsively and without concern for (or insight into?) the harm they were inflicting on others. This "lack of empathy" for others is a characteristic of life-course offenders which is covered in the discussion on moral development in chapter 8.

Examples

Prisoners

..they said I must come with a bottle, a beer bottle for a, for the pipe. Ja, so, when we came down so I told them, no we can go smoke in the front of my flat, they said no, we're gonna catch something with three legs first. That means a Black guy. So we went, and when we came to the..to the, uh, Newlands East Drive, I stood on the bank cos I mean I was still... I wasn't "up" yet, [high on dagga]. You know what I'm saying. There they chased this Black guy down, they chased him up, the next minute I see he fell down .. the gun shot and he fell down in the river. My friends were on top of him, stabbing him, then I came down. When I came down, uh, I took the same bottle that I had in my hand and I, broke the pipe and I busted it on his head, and I started to stab him.

On the Black guy?

Yes, yes, I bust him with the bottle and I started to stab him. My friends were already finished stabbing him. They was standing on the bank, so I was coming to have my turn. So after stabbing him, I was cut here on my finger. That made me angry. I went up to my friends, and I took a knife from a, from, from my [unclear] and I went down, and I stabbed him further. And left him there.

So you know that you were the one that killed him? He was still alive when you stabbed, the last time.

Ja, he was still alive.

What had he done?

Nothing. (1, P 273)

So up until this sentence which was for the murder of that, that guy, um... was it mainly... your other arrests... what were the things you were getting into trouble for? Was it assault? Was it drugs?

Assault GBH. Assault GBH [grievous bodily harm].

As you got older, did the way you fought with other boys change?

No at the age of 12 I started using the knife. (4-2, P 38)

In fact at the end I was expelled from my school because of stabbing the teacher-just because of corporal punishment. (5, P 198)

Of all the times you got into serious trouble this was the worst?

Yes, definitely. This is actually murder which I never ever thought I would kill a person but it so happened that by mistake I killed a person.

Would you be comfortable telling me about it?

Uhh what we say wont....?

No no its completely confidential

I like to talk about it sometimes because it makes me feel at ease with myself.

Get it off your chest?

Actually, I killed a female. I cut her body into pieces. This person died in my arms. (6, P 266)

....then I had a quarrel with the person who is the reason I am here. I just felt that I must kill him, you see. (7, P 31)

Yes, there was a time when I got into trouble with my parents. It was in 1991, [about 14 yrs of age] okay; it was about a girl whom I had been in love with. There was a misunderstanding between us. I ended up beating her. (8, P 175)

...the first time to you went go to jail?

I started in 1988 [at 13 yrs]-Where I grew up in Ndwedwe, so, someone got hurt who was known as a chief. He died. (9, P 511)

Is there any other reason you got arrested besides escaping?

No, it just that the way I tried to escape wasn't nice

How really did you escape?

I also fired some shots, I shot a cop. (12, P 424)

So, you were a cleaner?

Well. I once joined [joined gang as a hired killer] and later realized that it is not good or nice. The problem with it is that once you join it there is no way out. These people that I am talking about they have believe that if they have been looking in vain for you, for about a year. For them to expose you wherever you are hiding, they kill a member of your family or your relative. In that way, they know that you will come and attend the funeral then they get you.

So, you were killing people?

Yes, I did kill people. (15, P 404)

Non-prisoners

Okay, do you remember the time when you had a problem with the law, when you were growing, maybe with the parents, the school or the state of police?

It was assault, heh heh, [laughing].....Uh, the first one was when the group that stayed down the road and others from up the road stabbed me. That was the first time. They were from Esidakeni. We had an argument. I beat them, but I was not alone. We were a group. But they only mentioned three of us. It was other two boys and myself. (23, P 212)

I have never had a problem at school, but with the community, we once find ourselves in front of the community committee. We were three, we realized that we had a problem with some boys from the other zone, you see. There were problems that arise. There were times when we were not getting along well with boys from the other section of the area. We beat a boy from that area. (24, P 280)

Okay, where did you find money since you were students?

In the afternoon we said we were going to find money from those that had money at night, we told the others we were leaving at night, we beat up others, and others are mugged. (26, P 265)

3.14 Onset and Trajectory of Status and Indictable Offences

It was hoped that systematic evidence of the trajectory of status and criminal offences would emerge from the analysis. As discussed in section 1 above, this was not case. The Biographical Interview tool was unable to generate comparable timelines along which offences between the groups could be compared. While prompt questions such as

When did you first begin to do crime?

were asked, participants were frequently vague as to dates. Prison subjects generally could date their first jail sentence, but the stories indicated many had been involved in minor crimes prior to this. With the exception of a few subjects who had attended Boys' Town or NICRO, non-prisoners had even more difficulty dating the sequence of their offending. Thus the current research remains silent on reliable and valid comparisons between the groups regarding early conduct disorders and the onset and duration of formal offences. More precise tracking, as occurs in a longitudinal study, is needed to access this kind of information.

Despite its failure to provide comparable information between the groups, the analysis of antisocial behaviour *generated anecdotal information to suggest a more prolonged exposure to crime, and earlier contact with the law, by the life-course compared with the adolescent-limited offenders*, in line with Moffitt's taxonomy. Only one non-prisoner story gave the same sense of prolonged exposure, albeit for minor offences.

Examples

Prisoners

How many times have you been arrested?

[laughs] Ha, ha, ha... Oh many times, I was in prison... I was in prison - no not prison, jail, police station, something like every weekend. (1, P 266)

Yes when I was with that gang- we got into trouble most of the time that made the community angry.

What did your mother have to say?

My mother should cry a lot. She should give up hope. Sometimes she should even call the police for me. (4, P 259)

It was when I started to be naughty and committing crimes. [earlier he says this was when he was at school] The police would come looking. (5, P 67)

What were the crimes that you were arrested for?

It is shoplifting, breaking the windows and murder.

It was just those three times?

Yes [earlier, subject notes shoplifting was in early adolescence]. (6, P 240)

I...realized that I don't get everything that I wanted, you see, then I decided to resort in doing crime so that I could be able to take care of myself. By then I continued with being naughty and still at school. In 1998, then I was jailed, I was then forced to stay away from school because I was sentenced for 6 months. I then could not continue with school. When I came out from jail, I tried to go back to school and unfortunately I was not allowed to continue with schooling. I then continued with doing crime up until now. (8, P 12)

One would go and commit crime to a certain area, maybe I won't have a gun, and I would go to them and borrow a gun or go with them. (9, P 367)

So even with other things that we do, we sometimes think that we are more clever than others. I am here in jail because I committed 13 crimes before, and then committed another 14 crimes. (15, P 318)

Non-prisoners

There was a time when I had behavioural problem. So, my parents kept on warning me about bad influence from friends that it would one day land me into a serious trouble, or else this would lead to this and that, so that thing ended up hurting them in a very big way.

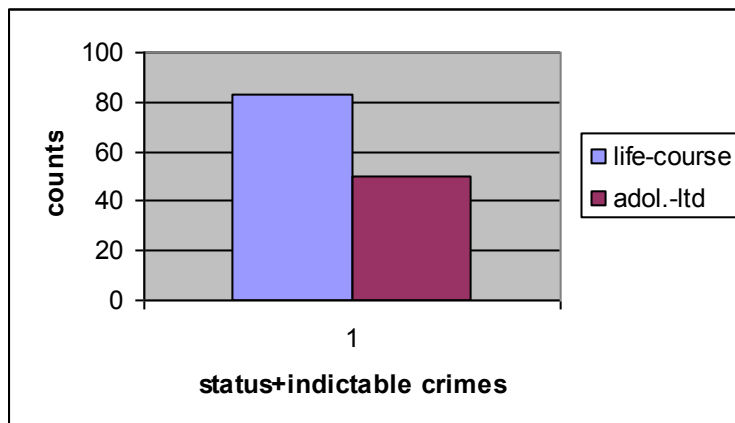
.....Okay, were you punished for that behaviour? Were you taken to jail?

No,... but I did get involved in serious trouble, that made me to go to court, but I was not jailed. I was included or mentioned by my friends in what they did. (29, P 414)

2. Quantitative Results

3.21 Graphs

Figure 1. Group Differences in Total Offences



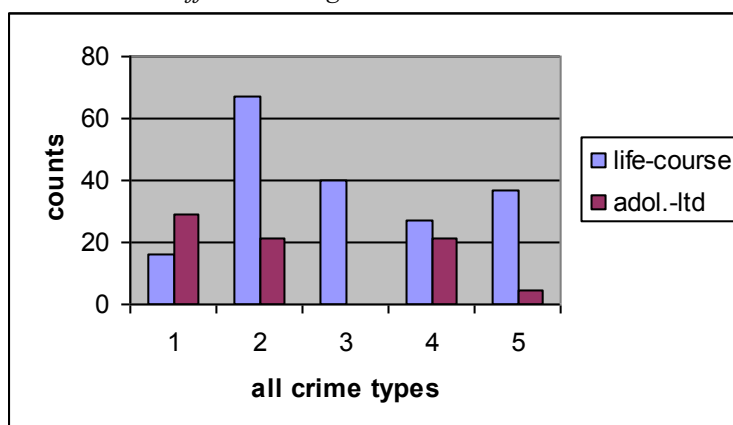
n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

Key	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
Total offences	83(100%)	50.3(94.12%)

*= No. of incidents adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Figure 1 shows that life-course offender subjects described committing many more total offences than the adolescent-limited offender group, although a similar number of subjects in each group had been involved in some kind of antisocial behaviour.

Figure 2. Group Differences across Offences Categories



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

Key	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
1. Status	16(73.3%)	29.1(82.4%)
2. Indictable	67(100%)	21.2(70.5%)
3. Major	40(100%)	0(0%)
4. Minor	27(93.3%)	21.2(70.5%)
5. Victim Oriented	37(86.7%)	4.4(11.8%)

*= No. of incidents adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Figure 2 shows that, with the exception of status offences, the life-course offender group perpetrated more crimes than the adolescent-limited group across all crime categories measured.

3.22 Statistical Analysis

Table 7. T-test Differences across Crime Types

Kind of Offence	t	df.	confidence levels		sig
			Upper	Lower	
All Offences	2.72	30	.54	3.82	.01
Status	-1.87	30	-1.69	.08	.07
Indictable (total count)	5.70	30	1.92	4.01	.00
Indictable (major)	5.78	30	1.80	3.93	.00 #
Indictable (minor)	.97	30	-4.78	1.39	.32
Victim-oriented	3.83	30	.97	3.37	.001 #

#-significant when equal variance is *not* assumed. The remaining results assume equal variance.

As the data was additive, the statistical analysis of group differences used the t-test for independent means to measure group differences on the different crime types. The statistical analysis confirmed the trends indicated by the percentage graphs in Figures 1 and 2 by making the following points.

- * Life-course offenders committed a significantly greater number of offences over time compared to adolescent-limited offenders.
- * While it was self-evident that life-coursers would commit all or most of the “major” crimes (for which they were in prison), they were responsible for significantly more of *all* indictable crimes.
- * The life-course group committed a significant majority of victim oriented crimes. This supported the assertion in Moffitt’s taxonomy that aggression towards others is a major distinguishing feature between the two kinds of delinquents.

- * Group differences between the groups on status crimes approached significance in the direction that non-prisoners committed more of these offences. When the qualitative analysis of the life-stories is considered, it seems that this difference is due to the preoccupation of prison subjects with describing their serious crimes rather than that they did not perpetrate status offences. This group described many indictable minor crimes early on in their crime lives.
- * In line with Moffitt's assertion that the two kinds of delinquents are indistinguishable during adolescence (Moffitt, 1993), both groups perpetrated a similar number of minor, indictable offences during this period.

SUMMARY

Overall the results of the text analysis confirm the hypotheses relating to antisocial behaviour in chapter 2, 2.2. The analysis of antisocial behaviour indicated that, according to both the qualitative and quantitative results, the life-course offender subject group perpetrated more serious and more victim oriented (violent) crimes. This confirmed hypotheses 1.1 and 1.2 of the antisocial code in chapter 2. The group difference between minor and status offences was not significant, in line with hypothesis 1.3. The data did not allow for reliable and valid comparison to be made between the groups on hypothesis 1.4, regarding the onset and duration of offences. However, anecdotal evidence showed a trend towards supporting this hypothesis.

CHAPTER 5. PARENTING AND FAMILY INFLUENCES

OVERVIEW

A major environmental risk factor in the antisocial developmental trajectory is early inadequate parenting and a family where interactions are characterised by poor communication and aggression. The analysis of the parenting and family variable in this chapter investigated the hypothesis in chapter 2 that the life-course offender group experienced markedly poorer quality early parenting and family relationships than did the adolescent-limited offender group. It did this by interrogating the data as regards several third level hypotheses, namely that life-course offenders as compared with adolescent-limited offenders experienced harsher, more inconsistent discipline; had colder, more rejecting early caregivers; experienced more limited parental vigilance; had families where communication between members was poorer; experienced higher levels of family conflict and “unstable” family demographics. The findings supported Moffitt’s taxonomy on most of the parent and family variables investigated. The few discrepancies that emerged between the findings and Moffitt’s tenets appeared due to the developing country status of the research groups.

Background to the Analysis

Unlike other chapters in the “Results and Discussion” section of this paper, this chapter contains an extended literature review. Comments about the impact of parenting and family on a life-course developmental trajectory are scattered throughout the literature review in chapter 1 (e.g. section 2.3). It is the very pervasiveness of this influence, especially that of early parenting, across so many variables associated with chronic offending (e.g. moral development, impulsivity, self-control, self-esteem), that made it difficult, in a general review of Moffitt’s taxonomy, to isolate in the required detail the child/parent/family influences on an antisocial trajectory. For this reason a specific literature review of these influences is provided here as a prelude to the results discussion in this chapter.

1. Review of the Literature

1.1 The Interactive Child/Environment Model

The relationship between persistent antisocial behaviour and poor parenting, as well as with the “at risk” child, was established before the appearance of Moffitt’s taxonomy (Moffitt, 1993, 2003; Patterson et al., 1989; Snyder & Patterson, 1987). Early studies investigated a main effects model where either of these parental (socialisation) or biological predisposition (temperament) factors directly predicted the child’s adjustment. More recently, the *interactive* effect of negative child and parent factors has emerged as a better model to explain the mechanisms underlying child maladjustment (Gallagher, 2002; Nigg & Huang-Pollock, 2003). For example, Gallagher integrated Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) with a corollary “differential susceptibility in the child” hypothesis. Bronfenbrenner’s theory embeds children within multiple systems, each of which exert direct and indirect effects on their behaviour. The family system is the most important of these, with family transactions playing a significant role in the development and maintenance of child behaviour problems.

Moffitt’s (1993) theory was arguably the most comprehensive explanation at the time of the relationship between the interaction of child/parent factors and persistent antisocial behaviour. She hypothesized that parenting effects on child adjustment are moderated by temperamental factors in the child. The difficult temperament of the vulnerable child places stress on parents with pre-existing poor parenting skills. This lack of parenting ability is due to the fact that many of the parental factors that lead to the at risk child’s difficult temperament are also implicated in poor parenting practices in the child’s early years. These include heritable cognitive difficulties and temperamental problems, maternal addiction to drugs and alcohol, and chronic poverty (Huesmann, Eron, Lefkowitz, & Walder, 1984; Moffitt, 1993). Conversely, the negative effects of the at risk child’s antisocial personality are ameliorated when he is reared by adaptive parenting techniques, as these discourage antisocial acts and promote social behaviour. Research has found this to be the case even

when the child's genetic makeup programs him to be aggressive.⁶⁰ Despite the advantages such parents have over those who use maladaptive parenting techniques, the child at risk for persistent, aggressive behaviour is still difficult to rear, due to his "evocative" behaviour, that produces a negative response from even caring and temperamentally calm parents (Caspi et al., 1987; Moffitt, 1993).

The focus in this chapter is on parental influences, but a recap of the child risk variables covered in chapter 1, 2.31 on the development of life-course offending, facilitates an understanding of the parent variable in this interactive process. Child risk factors such as subtle inherited or developmental neurological deficits give rise to a difficult child with high irritability and low frustration tolerance, whose language and motor skills are also slightly impaired (Hertzog, 1983; Moffitt, 1993). Rothbart and Bates define temperament as: "constitutionally based individual differences in emotional, motor and attentional [sic] reactivity and self-regulation" (Rothbart and Bates, 1998, cited in Gallagher, 2002, p. 645). Using this terminology, Gallagher, in a review of child development studies in the 1980s, found that moderate to high positive emotion, moderate activity levels, high adaptability and high emotional regulation characterised the temperament of the adjusted child. Children with a "difficult temperament" displayed high negative emotion, low adaptability, high activity levels and low emotional regulation. She noted that subsequent research in the 1990s reframed these characteristics into three global traits: surgency (activity levels and tendency to withdraw from/ approach situations); negative emotion (sadness, distress when limited, soothability) and regulation (systems of attention and behaviour inhibition).

Several family risk factors, associated with a life-course developmental trajectory, emerged from Moffitt's Dunedin, New Zealand study. These included parental features such as teenage single parents, poor maternal mental health, low parental intelligence and low socio-economic status. These features in turn were associated with excessive family conflict, a poor parenting style and parent and sibling deviance. Conversely, adolescent-limited offenders had home lives that were as good as or even better than the average Dunedin child (Moffitt, 1993, 2002a). The present research design facilitated the detailed investigation of two of the above family factors, namely parenting style and family dynamics, and a qualified investigation of the impact of single parent families.

The Biographical Questionnaire format encouraged detailed descriptions of the *parenting style* experienced by subjects, especially as regards discipline. It also provided insight into *family communication and conflict dynamics*, through a subject's eyes. The latter measure presented some validity problems due to the range of behaviours involved in family relationships, making it difficult to find suitable prompt questions that evoked systematic data across the same areas of family relationships from all subjects (in order to make valid group comparisons). Third party data gave additional information on the topic but these were not conducted across all the subjects.

The relationship between family demographics, as in *single/dual parent families*, and Moffitt's taxonomy, was less easy to assess. While the Socio-economic Questionnaire (see Appendix 3) as well as family information from subject and third party interviews, tapped family demographic data well, the influence of the "*single parent*" variable, associated with a life-course trajectory (separated parents, frequent changes in early caregiver, and young single mothers: Brennan et al., 2003; Moffitt, 2003), was confounded by the extended family structure of the Zulu subjects, who made up the majority of the sample.

Maternal mental health and parental intellectual abilities could not be measured as the subjects were not trained to assess "normative" behaviour in their caregivers. *Socio-economic status of caregivers* was tapped by the socio-economic Questionnaire (see Appendix 3), but this data was excluded from the study as many subjects did not know the educational levels of their parents.

The following section examines the literature on the three parenting and family variables examined in the present study.

⁶⁰ Suomi found that while children with the "short" version of the gene, MAOA, were more likely to be aggressive and become antisocial adults, these children only developed serious antisocial behaviour if they had had an abusive upbringing (Suomi, 2003, p. 5).

1.2 Parenting Factors

Features of parenting style.

Poor parenting style has been related to criminal recidivism in many studies (Farrington, 1995; 2002; Hawkins, 2000; Kumpfer & Alverado, 2003; Lykken, 2000; Moffitt, 1993; Patterson, 1989). These studies explained this relationship primarily in terms of social learning principles. The child was seen as acquiring habits, values and goals from his primary caregivers that allowed him to function adequately as an adult member of society.⁶¹ Some studies included cognitive principles to explain this relationship, especially those examining the association between parenting style, moral reasoning and persistent antisocial behaviour (Arbuthnot et al., 1987).

Two key features of parenting style emerge in the literature as central to the adaptive social development in the child. These are parental warmth (affect) and parental control. In his review, Henggeler (1989) found that high parent acceptance (warmth) combined with high parent demands and control were associated with social responsibility, high self-esteem and low aggression in the child. Low parental acceptance combined with high demands and control were the most damaging combination, and were associated with both cognitive and social deficits in the child. These variables are considered below, in addition to a third, associated, variable, parental watchfulness.

Parental Affect (Warmth)

This parenting dimension describes the primary caregiver's acceptance of the child, sensitivity to his needs, and responsiveness. In early developmental years, high maternal warmth, and in later childhood and adolescence, general parental warmth and responsiveness, are important for good child adjustment (Gallagher, 2002).

Parental Control (Discipline)

"Appropriate" control refers to sufficient and developmentally appropriate involvement with the child, discipline and monitoring (Baumrind, 1971). This takes the form of enforcing rules and demands, high expectations, and appropriate limits on the child's behaviour. "Inappropriate" control includes intrusive, harsh and inconsistent discipline and poor monitoring (Patterson et al., 1989). Snyder & Patterson, (1987) found that effective discipline that did not lead to unacceptable levels of aggression and promoted adaptive behaviour in the child, contained three elements. These were

- * the accurate definition and labelling of behaviours as excessive or antisocial
- * consistent tracking of these behaviours over time and across settings
- * consistent and contingent use of effective, but not harsh, discipline to inhibit these behaviours

Conversely, these authors found that poor, erratic discipline contributed to the development of antisocial behaviour by not providing a negative outcome clearly linked to unacceptable behaviour, and by modelling and reinforcing aggressive modes of problem solving and of relating to others. In terms of both opportunities and consequences, the family became the training ground for the child to gain skills in coercive ways of dealing with others.

Parental monitoring.

Parental monitoring or watchfulness describes parental tracking of unacceptable behaviour by their children across space and across time. Hawkins et al. (2000), in his literature review of factors predicting persistent antisocial behaviour, found that parent watchfulness acted as a protective factor against future violence.

The presence of the parenting style features of warmth and adequate control in the parent/child relationship also implies parental monitoring of, or involvement in, the child's activities. Such involvement works against the onset of delinquent behaviour in children raised in disadvantaged, delinquent prone settings (Moffitt's "criminogenic" environment). In general, it has been found that monitoring, or good supervision, helps

⁶¹ Psychological theories underpinning the parent-child relationship are explored in chapter 1, section 3.

parents react appropriately to antisocial behaviours and indirectly reduces the child's exposure to delinquency promoting circumstances, activities or peers (Snyder & Patterson, 1987). Parent watchfulness reduces the frequency and variety of the antisocial behaviour of young children in the home and at school, and becomes even more important as the child enters adolescence (Wilson & Harbert, 1978). Conversely, a lack of parental interaction and involvement with the child puts him at future risk for violence (Hawkins et al., 2000). Low parental monitoring is also linked to self-reported delinquent acts and police contact in youth, across both home and school settings (Henggeler, 1989). Dishion et al. (1995) found a relationship between antisocial boys' affiliation with other antisocial boys in early adolescence and the absence of caretaker supervision of activities.

Adaptive parenting styles.

An adaptive parenting style is one that combines appropriately the key parenting influences on child development outlined above. Four disciplinary styles have been identified in the literature. These are coercive, lenient, erratic and "firm but fair" styles (Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1987). According to Patterson et al. (1989), the coercive style, that combines punitive and erratic discipline with low parent affect (cold and rejecting) is most frequently associated with a life-course offending profile. An overly lenient or lax style is associated with covert antisocial behaviour such as lying and theft, and linked to an adolescent-limited type of antisocial behaviour. Firm but fair discipline leads to the most adaptive development. Colvin concentrated on the type of coercion involved in each of his four parenting types (Colvin, 2000), which are similar to those identified by Patterson. The most adaptive is consistent and non-coercive discipline and the least adaptive, erratic and coercive discipline, with erratic and non-coercive discipline (lax) and consistent and coercive discipline (authoritarian) falling in between. Baumrind's (1971) description of a consistent, non-coercive style, which she coined "authoritative" parenting, resembled both Patterson and Colvin's adaptive parenting styles.

Common features of the four parenting styles discussed are summarised below:

1. *Authoritative*: Firm, fair and consistent - warm affect
2. *Authoritarian*: Firm, often overly firm, occasionally harsh, but consistent –somewhat cold/rejecting affect
3. *Lax*: Little discipline generally metered in consequence to antisocial behaviour –warm affect
4. *Maladaptive*: Overly firm, often harsh, discipline inconsistently administered – cold/rejecting affect

Coercion Theory

Coercion is a strong feature of the most maladaptive parenting styles described above. Several theorists such as Akers (Differential Association theory) and Agnew (General Strain theory) deal with coercion in the context of early development (Colvin, 2000), but Colvin's research on the negative link between parenting style and antisocial behaviour is particularly relevant to the present research. In his "Differential Coercion theory of Criminality" Colvin defined coercion as occurring when the individual is compelled to act in a certain way through direct force or intimidation, or through pressure of impersonal and economic forces (in the working classes). Aside from the difficulty the theory has in explaining the presence of life-course offenders in the non working classes, Colvin's views are compatible with those of Moffitt (1993) and Patterson et al. (1989) and provide a useful explanation of the process by which coercion negatively affects the child's socialisation.

Colvin (2000) found that inconsistent and harsh parenting resulted in the *child's fearful uncertainty about the link between consequence and behaviour*. This creates weak bonds with parents, low self-efficacy, anger, and low self-control. Events are seen as beyond the individual's control. In addition, the child learns a coercive, controlling style of relating to others, modelled by repeated demonstrations of coercion by his caregivers, and later, by other family members. In terms of Moffitt's conditional model of development described in 1.1 above, coercive parental discipline accelerates aggressive behaviour in the child temperamentally inclined towards this, teaching him to sustain and escalate his aversive behaviour towards parents and others in the family. In turn the child's aggressive reaction to this kind of parenting escalates parental aggression towards him, continuing the cycle. Support for coercion theories of antisocial behaviour has come from parenting intervention programmes that teach parents to change the relationship dynamics with their children away from

a coercive orientation, towards a more prosocial style. These generally draw on Patterson's early intervention programmes (Woolgar & Scott, 2005).

1.3 Family Conflict and Poor Family Relationships

Family conflict and high levels of family aggression are associated with a life-course offending trajectory for the at risk child in the family (Brennan et al., 2003; Moffitt, 2003). The harsh aggressive parenting style modelled by primary caregivers is imitated to some degree by all family members. However, only the child at risk for persistent aggression fixates on this mode of relating to others.

1.4 Single Parent Families

Lykken (2000) found that two out of three imprisoned juvenile murderers were reared without a biological father, or any other regular father figure. Other reviews have frequently (but not invariably) associated life-course offending with divorce, young single parent mothers and frequent changes in primary caretaker (Brennan et al., 2003; Moffitt, 2003). Despite these associations, Lykken concluded that a direct causal relationship had not been confirmed and that rather, these features acted as moderators for the kinds of poor parenting styles outlined above.

Cultural influences.

Most subjects in the present research were reared in traditional Zulu environments. A review of historical factors influencing the development of the Black South Africa child around the time when the subjects were young children themselves, noted that many Black families consisted of female-headed households (Liddell, Kvalsvig, Shababala, & Masilela, 1990). Given the nuclear family organisation of Western families, the absence of the father figure is generally destructive, as a male role model and family stability are lost. However, the authors concluded that such single parent families in a traditional African context did not have the same social significance or deleterious effects as their Western counterparts. They found three reasons for this. Firstly, structures and support systems had been formed to maintain female-headed households, given that these had been a predominant feature of Black families for some time – about 35 years. Secondly, traditionally the father in a Black family had even less to do with the young child's everyday life than did his Western counterpart. So he was less likely to be missed. While fathers might be marginally associated with the young child there was no absence of male role models, examples being unmarried uncles, older siblings and grandfathers. Finally, some female-headed households, especially in urban areas, even chose to be minus a dominant male, probably related to alternate patterns of support that had evolved around female-headed households in the past.

Thus the extended family structure in which the majority of research subjects were reared gave a different interpretation to the negative concept of "single parent" family associated with a life-course offending developmental trajectory. While father, mother or both might be temporarily or permanently absent in the child's formative years, grandparents, aunts and uncles usually took over this responsibility (N.Ntshangase, personal communication, January 28, 2006).

Despite the preceding argument, it was expected that some family demographic features might still serve as discriminators between the two research groups. Taking Lykken's (2000) view that "single parent" status is an intermediary variable linked to poor parenting style, "single parent" was redefined in the present study to refer to a *lack of continuity in the primary caregivers*, when this role was passed *frequently* between different extended family members, each with their own parenting style, rather than the same set of individuals consistently sharing this duty. Supporting this supposition are the different parenting styles (to that of the biological parents) associated with other members of the traditional extended family. For example, grandfathers and uncles are usually less harsh on male children than is the children's own father (Vilakazi, 1962). In terms of this redefinition, the expectation remained in the present study that differences would be found between life-course and adolescent-limited offender subjects reared in a traditional context, in terms of the *consistency of early caregivers*, even if these were not his biological parents.

The remainder of this chapter examines the data in the present study to assess how well it supports the findings in the literature regarding the influence of parent and family variables on a life-course offending pathway.

2. Method

2.1 Operational Definitions

Given the complexity of the subcodes in the parent and family variable, the operational definitions were particularly important for the reliable and valid analysis of this information.

2.11 Discipline

Parental discipline is a level three hypothesis associated with the parent and family hypothesis in chapter 2. Specific questions in the Biographical Questionnaire investigated the subjects' perceptions about how they had been disciplined:

If you or your siblings did naughty things at home or out the home, what happened? Who usually punished? When? Did one of you kids get more punishments than the others? Why? Do you think your parents/caregivers were fair in their punishments?

The analysis investigated responses to these prompts for evidence of the consistency and the appropriateness of caregiver discipline. This information was broken down further into six *categories*, namely, harsh, arbitrary, appropriate, lax, consistent and inconsistent discipline. The formation of these categories occurred in two ways. Some shaped the analysis and reflected specific aspects of discipline associated with the four key parenting types emerging in the literature (harsh, lax, consistent and inconsistent). The remaining categories emerged from the rich data generated in the life-stories on the parenting topic (arbitrary, appropriate). Each of these six categories had its own operational definition.

Harsh discipline

Discipline was rated as "harsh" when it took a severe physical form, such as a beating (but not "a smack"). Verbal abuse, to the degree that a subject noted this as marked, was also scored. In general, sanctions that seemed *excessive or unreasonable* to either the subject, rater or third party were scored as harsh. However, harshness was not scored but noted, if this was the view of the rater or third party but counter to that of the subject.

Examples

There was nothing good [about early childhood with dad and stepmother].

What was bad about it then?

Just growing up and the rules and the punishments.

Was he quite strict?

Yes

What kind of punishment-belt?

Sjambok, belt, stick. (4, P 32)

The problem was that my parents did not want me to be with my friends after school since they expected me to do house-chores. I would do my chores very fast and want to play the ball with my friends. My parents refused me permission to play with my friends. I would even take a decision to sneak away from home [to play with friends] and come back in the evening. When I came back, they would give me a hiding. (3, P 16)

In the second extract the sanctions were judged inappropriate by the subject and rater, as the subject had completed the chores.

My mother was too strict, still is....(1, P 413)

However, it was the mother who was very strict and watched over the children..... Once she found out ID1 was in trouble she was very disappointed in him.....When he chose to come down to ...[major centre],to the other side of the family, she “washed her hands of him”... She will not speak to/about him now. (I-3rd, P 13-paternal aunt)

These two extracts exemplify the “add on” element to scoring, as the second statement would not score for “harsh” without the first. The subject’s own rejection of the level of “strictness” of his mother, confirmed by his aunt, scores this as “harsh” discipline.

Arbitrary Discipline

Discipline was rated as “arbitrary” where the subject indicated he felt singled out from other siblings who were also naughty; when he indicated resentment of the sanction; or saw this as unnecessarily harsh. A difference in the scoring of “harsh” and “arbitrary” is the degree to which the subject indicated *resentment* of the discipline metered out.

Examples

My mother was too strict, still is.
Is that why you didn’t get on with her, because she was strict?
Ja, she was strict! (1, P 413)

Sis, really as I have told you, eyh, as I have told you that there no one else at home that was punished except me. You see, I have been unlucky, we are many at home, but I was the only one that would get hiding now and then. I used to get out and sit down then cry for a long time. I would feel better after having cried for sometime. But that does not happen any longer. I used to ask myself if that was happening because they were favouring some of the people since I was not a biological child to the stepmother. (25, P 174)

Appropriate or Fair Discipline

Discipline was rated as “appropriate” when there was evidence that a subject felt the punishment was deserved in terms of the misdemeanour; that it was a necessary sanction; or simply that it was an acceptable consequence for bad behaviour.

Examples

Do you think that the punishment that your father was giving to those who were naughty was right or acceptable? Well, I can put this way, my father would first warn you, may be twice before he punishes you. In that I would think that it was right for him to first warn you, you see then the second time he gives you a hiding. (2, P 58)

Did you and your brothers and sister ever do naughty things at home what happened ?
My mother would hit us [laughs]
So it was your mother actually do the punishing , and your dad? Did any of the children get punished or get smacked more than the others?
Lets say it was me [both laughing]. (16, P 134)

In the second text the subject’s positive tone, bald statement and use of the term “hit” rather than “beat” (which de-emphasises the harshness of the sanction) indicates his mother’s discipline was seen as appropriate.

Occasionally the rater allocated an “appropriate” rating without the subject directly commenting on the appropriateness of the sanction. This never was done in the same text where the subject *specifically stated a view that the sanction was unfair*. For example

What happened if you didn’t do it?[chores]
We’d get punished.
You did? And did your dad do the punishing?
Yes. (4, P 187)

The above simple statements *imply* that the subject accepted the consequences of his failure to comply (i.e. that these were appropriate).

Lax Discipline

Two kinds of statements were scored here, those indicating parents *seldom sanctioned* the subject's antisocial behaviour, and those indicating sanctions to be *clearly ineffective* (e.g. such as the subject ignoring a parent crying or shouting about bad behaviour).

Example (of the second definition)

What happened if you didn't do it?[chores]
 We'd get punished.
 You did? And did your dad do the punishing?
 Yes
 And what about in your mother's house-was it different?
 Yes she would do it for me. (4, P 187)

Consistent and Inconsistent Discipline

Scored here were statements reflecting a subject's perception that consequences for transgressions were regularly or irregular, thus two sets of scores (positive and negative) were obtained. Both direct comments that sanctions were consistent/inconsistent or inferences made from subjects' descriptions of the discipline they received, were scored. Inconsistent discipline was scored in a number of ways. The first type of inconsistent discipline was a subject simply not knowing when he would be disciplined for the same transgression – harshness was not a necessary feature of this perception. The second type arose from the combination of laxity and harshness experienced by the child. Either, the same parent's response fluctuated from beatings (harsh) to arguing with the subject or ignoring the transgression (lax), or, one parent in a couple acted in a lax manner, while the other meted out harsh punishment.

Examples

Inconsistent discipline

Did you get any punishment for being naughty, like getting a hiding?
 Yes, we were warned and warned and then got punished by being given a hiding. I would be punished in such a way that I would ask myself if my mother was my real mother, the way she punished me. (11, P 247)

Here the subject never knew at which point he would actually be punished for a transgression.

Consistent discipline:

Okay, if one of you has been naughty and your parents became aware of it, what would they do?
 They would give us a hiding. (23, P 90)

Well, if they have get a report about me that my friend and I have been naughty, my mother would beat us, both my friend and myself. (24, P 116)

In both the above situations the subject perceived a clear consequence for misbehaviour.

2.12 Affect

Subjects' perceptions of primary caregivers as warm/cold or accepting/ rejecting complemented the investigation of caregiver disciplinary style. According to the literature, consistent and appropriate discipline, accompanied by parental warmth and acceptance, is most likely to foster the development of prosocial and responsible development in the child.

This item also produced both positive and negative scores. A comprehensive operational definition was difficult to achieve, given the range of ways positive and negative affect of caregivers could be represented in the life-stories. While affect in the stories was described mainly in the direction of caregiver to subject, also scored were instances of a subject's feelings towards his primary caregivers. As with the discipline subcode, the categories scored for the affect subcode were generated both by the literature and by the richness of the text

data. These categories were: caregiver praise, a subject's perception of caregiver affect; caregiver expectations of the subject; and third party input.

Praise

Most reliable was information specifically sourced by the Biographical Interview prompts on caregivers' responses to good behaviour. In Colvin (2000) and Moffitt's (1993) models of poor parenting, the rejecting, critical parent seldom notices what the child does right, but only when he does wrong. The Biographical Questionnaire items aimed at tapping this point were

What kind of things did you kids do that your caregivers rewarded? How? Did one of you kids get more rewards than the others? Did they notice enough when one of you did well?

Example

Would your parents make you happy after you did those things? If so, what were those things, and how would they make you happy?

Okay, about things that we used to do, I will speak them out especially at school. If you had passed, since I was very clever in my lower primary education, they would buy you a chicken. I used to get number one and my sisters would get number three [in class]. You would get a whole chicken and eat it all alone. That is how they used to make us happy. Whenever it was our birthdays; they would also arrange parties for us, things like that. (2, P 63)

Ok did your mother or father ever notice when you did a good thing?

I never ever did anything good.

You never did!!

Well even if I did I wouldn't notice 'cause the family would not tell me it was good. (4, P 204)

Subject's Perception of Caregiver Affect

This consisted of a positive score for story statements describing the caregiver as *supportive*, *helpful* or simply, *as important to the subject*. There was no specific Biographical Questionnaire prompt to access this information. It also contained a negative score for statements showing a perception of the caregiver as rejecting, cold or unsupportive.

Examples

Did she show any affection, ever?

Never!

Did either of your parents, ever?

My father tried to, huh.

Did he?

Ja, he tried to. (1, P 416)

Above, the father showed affection though was brutal to the subject's mother.

Who was the most important person in your life during that time when you were growing?

It was my granny and also my mother. (5, P 26)

Who is the person whom you did not want at that time?

It was my father?

Why?

He stopped me from many things and the fact that he was hard hearted and would beat my mother. (3, P 68)

The second text is an example of negative affect from the son to the father, but generated by the father's actions.

Mom feels cut off by ID30 as he keeps to himself. She is proud of him re his achievements, sees him as clever, but there seems to be little communication. She hopes he will be more open with her in the future. (30-3rd, P 22-with mother)

This is also an example of the subject's negative affect towards his caregiver. It is mirrored elsewhere in the text by caregiver coldness towards the subject.

Subject's View of Caregiver's Expectations

This was scored when a subject saw his caregivers as accepting or rejecting (via setting unattainably high standards). His perception that he had failed utterly to meet caregiver expectations, suggests he did not see them as warm and supportive.

Example

All right. Do you think your parents expected you to behave in a different way?
 Umm, yes.
 What would they have wanted you to achieve? What did they hope for you?
 I don't know because they, they never said but I know that they,[short laugh] that my mother's totally disappointed in me.
 Did you ever... do you feel that you met any expectation of theirs?
 No. (1, P 243)

Third Party Statements

These were scored if the third party was a primary caregiver, and *demonstrated a warm/cold relationship towards the subject in the interview*. However, these utterances were treated with caution. A single statement by the caregiver of "I love him" and similar, without further supporting comments was not scored, as this statement might have been to impress the interviewer and did not reveal clearly if affect was warm, cold or indifferent. Third party interviews where the caregiver described the subject as an easy or difficulty child and how he/she coped with this were also scored as indicators of the caregiver's positive or negative affect towards the subject.

Examples

I could sense a deep love from the mother [for subject]. (2-3rd, P 23 - with mother)

We greatly love him and we still wonder what went wrong. His father died after his imprisonment. I am hurting because I depend on him. (2-3rd, P 21 - with mother)

He was very active and easily frustrated but I coped fine. (31-3rd, P 8 - with mother)

All these third party comments were scored for positive affect.

2.13 Watchfulness

How vigilant were primary caregivers over the youthful subjects? Did they check on their activities when they were away from home? Did they curtail inappropriate activities?. There was no specific prompt in the Biographical Questionnaire to source this information. It was inferred from comments by subjects about their caregivers. These included statements about parents' involvement with the subjects' schools, evidence that parents did not notice when subjects behaved in antisocial ways (e.g. bringing home stolen goods), and evidence that watchfulness reduced a subject's antisocial behaviour.

One Biographical Questionnaire item indirectly accessed information on watchfulness:

Do your parents communicate with your school?

The difficulty in accessing information from life-stories regarding parent watchfulness led to *tentative rather than firm conclusions being drawn* about the discriminating power of this factor between the research groups. Due to the absence of direct prompts on this topic in interviews, the absence of information on watchfulness in a story did not necessarily mean caregivers were *not* watchful, but that a respondent just did not comment on this. Further research to assess this aspect of parenting, using more focused tools (such as directed interviews, situations and observation), is indicated.

Statements about both positive and negative watchfulness were scored. A positive score was given when caregiver watchfulness led to antisocial behaviour being noticed and/or curtailed. A negative score was given when caregivers did not keep a tab on the subject's antisocial activities. Where caregivers worked away from home and thus *could not be* watchful, this was scored negatively, regardless of caregivers' control over the situation. Not all caregiver vigilance was scored as a dimension of watchfulness. Watchfulness that prevented subjects from engaging in age appropriate behaviour, was seen as an aspect of harsh parenting and not scored under this subcode.

Examples

Positive Watchfulness

Oh, okay, was there communication between teachers and your parents,

Yes, there was.

Okay, did your parents go to school and discuss your progress with the teachers?

Ya, especially mom, she made sure that she went to school, to check how things were. The school would phone and write to them letting them know how I was doing. (22, P 221)

Well, what can I say, the thing was most of the teachers at Chesterville were borne and bred from there. So then they knew my mother, since they went to same school with her.

So there was communication between your parents and teachers?

Yes, communication was there, since they knew each other's homes. (11, P 315)

No, I am now in my best behaviour, I told my friends that they must not come home with stolen cars.

What made you to say that to them?

It was for the fact that I had a fight with my father about that. He told me that it was wrong to bring stolen cars in the house. (20, P 441)

We caught a hiding a lot and my father was the one to hit us, but he would only hit us for a good reason. My father didn't like the idea of us going out, he didn't like it when he would come back from work and not find anybody at home. Eh, and he would hit you for that. (21, P 156)

Negative Watchfulness

Did your parents know that you didn't like school?

No, they didn't know.

They didn't know, how come. Wasn't there a good relationship between you and them?

No, they just didn't know.

They didn't ask you?

Okay, what did the teachers do if you didn't go to school?

They would tell other kids that stay near my house to tell my parents.

They would ask you why you didn't go to school?

Yes. (13, P 138)

Did you play truancy when you were still at school? Did your parents know about it?

Yes, it happened, it was an influence from my friends. We would do that without our parents knowing about it.

We could come home and keep quiet about it. When I come home my mother would prepare food for me and buy "vetcookies" for me, and would say to me: "Eat my child". I would eat and never mention anything to her about truancy. (2, P 83)

We were shoplifting. We were stealing toys. Okay, one would take this home and unfortunately parents were careless with things like that, that I can steal, maybe they trusted us, you see. Then we would be jailed for stealing sweets. (11, P 16)

Mrs van Wyk lived next door to the father of the subject when they were divorced and kids with him. She said they ran wild and seemed very poor. (4-3rd, P 3) (interview with parent of another subject, who was a neighbour to ID 4's mother)

Not scored

...Ok Now you said you got in a bit of a bad group.

Yes.

Before that, what kind of friends did you have?

Before, when I was growing up I never had any friends. Our duty was coming from school, do your chores, stay at home, do your homework whatever, don't go outside.

So then when did you start mixing, was it when you got involved with those guys at high school?

What I used to do was to run away from home and go and sit with my friends and go home at a certain time.

So you disobeyed the family to mix with your friends?

Ya so I should run and be with them and come back and get punished. Before, when I was growing up I never had any friends. Our duty was coming from school, do your chores, stay at home [emphasis-like it was very rigorous], do your homework whatever, don't go outside. (4, P 241)

The watchfulness described above could be seen as protecting the child from a criminogenic environment. However, as it occurred when the subject was in primary school, it was more likely to have been an obstacle to his social development.

2.14 Family Relations and Family Conflict

The subcodes "family general relationships" and "family conflict" were grouped together in the same analysis as there was an overlap in their operational definitions. Poor family relationships, including role modelling of aggression, as well as limited communication, are linked to an aggressive, antisocial developmental trajectory in the child (Colvin, 2000). Equal coverage of the topic did not occur across all subjects as the Biographical Questionnaire was not designed to explore family interactions in any depth. Two sets of Biographical Questionnaire prompts sourced family relationship information. Third party interviews sometimes added to this perspective. The first prompt looked at relations in the family, the second at conflict. Further information on family interactions was obtained from random comments in the life-stories.

Did your family ever do things together?

In general did people in your family get on? Was there much fighting? Between which members? Did people get loud or violent when they were angry with each other? Or were they still quite polite? Who started the fights?

Early in the analysis it became apparent that the first prompt did not discriminate well. The majority (Zulu participants) in both groups carried out joint activities with their families and this reflected a common cultural practice rather than indicating family unity as opposed to disunity. Families of most young subjects shared a meal and attended church together. It was therefore decided to score for unity when *more than two* of these "common" responses to the prompt occurred. (Typically a story would contain at the most only these two common responses). Also scored were non typical responses to the prompt. The scoring criteria for family relations and conflict in the present study appear below.

Family Relationships: This subcode contained positive and negative scoring. *Positive relationships* were scored from statements indicating members participated in joint activities, communicated well with each other, were mutually supportive, or were generally caring about each other. *Negative relationships* were scored from indications of *unresolved* disunity, disinterest or conflict between members. *Caregiver/subject relationships were not measured under this subcode but under the parenting subcode above.*

Family Conflict: Family conflict was scored as present where there was evidence in a life-story of marked *physical or verbal abusive* interactions in the family. This need not be interactive. General inter-sibling conflict, although noted, was excluded from the formal scoring as it was difficult to gauge from the life-stories whether these interactions were normative or not.

Examples

Family Relationships

Positive Relationships

He had good relationship with the family. (12-3rd, P 19 – with father)

The above third party excerpt is a good example of how the analysis used perceptions pertinent to a subcode rather than only measurable facts.

My mother's family loved me very much. (8, P 43)

The above is an example of an indirect reference scored for family unity, rather than one generated by a Questionnaire prompt.

His aunt sounded very caring. She had visited him before I phoned her for an interview and when I talked to her for the second time she even asked me to give him her new cell number. His aunt feels that he regrets all what he did and his aunt is happy that he knows that he did wrong things. She feels that this will make him change for a better life. She believes that a person who sees his mistakes will end up improving his wrongs. His whole family loves him judging by his aunt's remarks. (8 3rd, P 27)

Did your family do things together, maybe like eating together?
Yes, aaw, like I said I live with mom -just us, we did all things together. (10, P 131)

Negative Relationships

Uh, in-fact I was jealous because I did not want her to live the life that she had that time. I wanted her to lead a normal and good life. [his sister]

What do you mean by that, uh, is that because she was behaving in a manner that was not acceptable to you?

Yes, there was a manner that she behaving in and I did not like it.

Like which manner was that?

It was things like getting involved with boys [being in love] while she was not ready for it, she was still very young, and then got pregnant. (27-2, P 4)

Is your stepfather alive?

He is still alive but he got straightened and ran away.

What is to be straightened?

Sorry my sister, he was beaten [stepfather]

By whom?

Well, it happened through me, It happened that I looked at one side of the story and just beat him. (9, P 169)

The second extract above is an example of a text scored for family relationships and also for family conflict.

Do you think that your family was close?

No, I would say that they were not close

So, they were not close?

Yes.

Would they fight when they did not see eye to eye?

Yes, sometimes they would fight-It is the old lady [granny]; she would also use power struggle, maybe when she had an argument with mom and all those things. When you try to come in between them, then there would be too much noise. (5, P 1532)

There was much fighting between mother and the father of the child. She married him before Noel was born. After the birth mum continued to fight with father [suggestion she was physical and violent] and he left and married someone else. (6-3rd, P6 - with maternal grandmother)

Family Conflict

When you were with the family I know there was a lot of fighting. I know your dad used to get cross, but between the brothers and sisters?

We were quiet but my stepmother and father used to do the quarrelling-there was a lot of that. (4, P 216)

Although the above extract does not specify physical violence, the text contributes to this idea when considered with other text extracts from ID 4's story.

Mother wasn't able to care for them-financially and perhaps emotionally. Dad drank and then they separated. Father's new home offered violence and over-discipline, combined with neglect. ID4's granny with whom he stayed in adolescence [mother had no room for her children] seems the best of the bunch. (4-3rd, P 19 - maternal grandmother)

2.15 Single Parent Families or "Family Stability"

The psychological literature seldom defines in detail what is meant by the demographic measure "single parent" family, a factor linked to persistent antisocial behaviour (Piquero & Brezina, 2001). In the present study a "single parent" family was defined as one lacking in more than one stable caregiver (see 1.4 above). Piquero adopted a similar approach in his investigation of Moffitt's taxonomy, using three measures of family stability or structure, namely, the number of changes in the mother's marital status, with whom the child lived (e.g. mother/father/both parents/stepparent/no parent), and whether the husband/father of the child was present in the household.

The terms "single" or "dual" parent families were replaced by "divided" or "whole" families in the present study to reflect the application of these concepts to the traditional Zulu family. *Divided* families were those where the subject's developmental years were characterised by the presence of only one parent; where both parents were absent; or where there were frequent changes of primary caregiver. This included subjects being reared in an extended family, if any of these conditions were met. *Whole* families were those where both parents were present for most of the subject's early developmental years (until at least grade 5); or where a constant set of extended family members participated in caregiving.

The text analysis for family stability was corroborated by information from the Socio-economic Questionnaire, where subjects were asked to indicate whether they were raised by one or both parents before 12 years of age. (See Appendix 3)

2.2 Process

Procedures for the *qualitative analysis* are covered in the operational definitions above. Chapter 3, section 5 provides general information on the *quantitative scoring* and statistical analysis of the research data. In the quantitative analysis, the *overall life-story* was used as the scoring unit in the analysis of parenting and family subcode categories. The switch from statements to the entire life-story as a counting unit was justified in the present analysis, as the *presence or absence* of a parenting style and type of family relationship in a subject's life were measured, rather *the degree to which* this occurred. Statements were sometimes scored in conjunction with other references in the same life-story. For example, at a point in his story, a subject described in detail his negative attitude to his mother's overly strict discipline. When he later in the text referred to her as merely "very strict", this second statement was used to further support his perception of a harsh parenting style, although the statement on its own would not necessarily refer to excessive sanctions.

The subject numbers counted in the analysis of this code were small, and the data, categorical. The *statistical analysis* consequently included a log-linear model for two-by-two contingency tables, in addition to the more traditional Fisher chi-square statistic.

2.3 Measurement Issues

Overlap

There was an overlap in the scoring of the family relationship and conflict subcodes in the parent and family code, as shown below:

- * The focus was on *reciprocity* when scoring for *family relationships*, due to the reciprocal nature of maladaptive relationships in a life-course developmental trajectory (Granic & Patterson, 2006; Moffitt, 1993). Negative family relationships that excluded overt aggression were scored as negative family relationships and not as family conflict.
- * On the other hand, *conflict* was scored even if this was a *one-sided interaction*. Family relations involving one sided aggression (e.g. "father came home and always beat us when he was drunk") were

scored in the conflict subcode but not under family relationships. Items scored for conflict also were scored again as negative family relations, if these were interactive.

The Counting Unit

The analysis of the parent and family code used the entire life-story as a counting unit. This complicated scoring for the statistical analyses. In some cases, the process was simple because a story produced unequivocal support for one or other category (e.g. harsh or lax disciplinary style), or orientation within a category (e.g. only positive rather than a mix of positive and negative parental affect). However, in the analysis of some subcode categories (e.g. affect, conflict) both positive and negative orientations of the category were present in a story and each generated a score. While both these orientations were discussed in the qualitative analysis (and were reflected in the percentage graphs), only counts of stories with unequivocal orientations (either positive or negative) were used in the statistical analysis in order to make stronger comparisons between groups.

2.4 Reliability

Reliability was calculated using the scores of two raters on two randomly chosen prisoner and non-prisoner stories, across all subcodes measured. Cohen's Kappa gave a moderate inter-rater reliability figure of .56 for the parenting and family code (Howell, 1997).

Analysis of the inter-rater reliability scoring for this code showed reliability was pulled down by disagreement on two parenting subcodes, affect and watchfulness. Each of these was clearly defined, as no incorrect scoring occurred. However, the second rater missed some incidences of affect and watchfulness in the texts. This might have been due to the fact that textual evidence on these subcodes was not evoked by specific prompts but generated randomly throughout the stories by the subjects, making it harder to isolate.

3. Results and Discussion

The format of this results presentation differs from that of the antisocial code in chapter 4. This was due to the large number of subcodes and categories generated in the analysis of the parent and family variable. Therefore, instead of completing all the qualitative analyses, followed by all the quantitative analyses, both qualitative and quantitative results are attached to the discussion of each individual subcode below.

3.1 Discipline

3.11 Qualitative Results

Harsh discipline.

A similar number in both groups experienced harsh parenting when young. In the stories, the main kind of punishment described was a severe beating, administered for a range of minor and more significant transgressions, such as non-ompletion of chores, truanting and petty crime. Punishments were generally severe, regardless of the degree of the transgression.

Contrary to research findings in developed (Western) countries, there was little difference in the harshness of parental discipline between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders. Both were equally harsh. This finding correlates with traditional Zulu, and more broadly, African, parenting methods where power assertive discipline is regarded as appropriate (Vilakazi, 1962; Q. Zungu, personal communication, May 4, 2005).

In addition to a cultural influence, these results also reflect a social class effect. "Harshness" characterised the parenting styles of five of the six families of Coloured subjects in both groups. Shaffer (2000) found that a harsh parenting style is class related, associated with lower socio-economic groups, and is not necessarily linked to maladaptive behaviour in children. Together, the literature and the present findings suggest that a

harsh disciplinary style in certain non-Western communities, as well as in lower socio-economic classes, is not necessarily predictive of a life-course offending trajectory.

Despite the foregoing comments, there was a small difference between the groups regarding harshness of parenting methods, in the direction predicted by the general body of research on chronic delinquency (e.g. Patterson et al., 1989). More life-course offenders (86.7% of the group-13 prisoners) perceived parental discipline to be harsh than did adolescent-limited offenders (70.1% of the group-12 non-prisoners).

Examples

Prisoners

Um, if you or your sister ever did anything wrong at home, were you punished, and if so how?
 We used to get a hiding, man.-Ja, they...uh...we.. were, ja, we were always getting hidings.
 Why? What sort of things did your parents give you hidings for?
 Like if..uh.. I ...we were told to....like if my drawer was, uh, untidy...
 You get smacked?
 Not smacked, jus, they used to beat us, a hiding, not smacked!-No, I used to get a belt hiding.
 And your sister as well?
 Ja.- sometimes three, four times a week. (1, P 132)

Who was the naughtiest of them all?
 Myself
 Did they know at home that you were the naughtiest?
 They knew since I used to sneak and go to play the ball. There were many unacceptable things that we were doing.
 Were you disciplined to stop you from being naughty?
 Yes they used to beat me. (3, P 96)

Oh, if you or your siblings did something wrong maybe you have been naughty and your parents became aware of that, what would they do?
 We were beaten
 Okay, how were you beaten?
 When we were still young, we would be locked inside the room and be beaten with a belt.
 The whole body?
 Yes, the whole body- As the time goes, they then used a stick, a thin one. Then we were beaten with those thin sticks.....I saw it as abuse. (9, P 195)

Yes, I even played truancy.
 Hmmm, did your parents know about it?
 Well, it happened that one day, I played truant. The teacher gave me a letter to take home. What I did I read the letter and realised that my mother was going to catch me soon then I decided to tear the letter. What happened was that the teacher gave a child who was my neighbour another letter to take to my home. That child gave the letter to my mother. The letter was ordering my mother to come to the school. It was then that my mother discovered that there were letters which were sent to her through me, which she was suppose to get and did not. Hey, boy, my mother killed me with a stick. (11, P 306)

Non-prisoners

Dad used to deliver the boy to the grounds of his new school in an effort to avoid truanting- but he still went off. Dad seems less tolerant. Dad also laid a charge against him (for stealing money from the mother). (16-3rd, P 15 - with mother)

Ya, I had then started to be naughty, after my father's death, since he was the only person who controlled us. I had then started stealing from other people's houses. Since I knew that the person who has been able to control me and had authority over was no longer there.
 Hmmm, was your mother not that important as your father was?
 I knew that my mother would not beat as like my father, you see. (17, P 116)

I only left this school because my mother was going to teach standard 4 and I was scared of the hiding I would get if she taught me. Everybody knew that she dished out hidings. (21, P 232)

When one of you has misbehaved or has been naughty, how were you punished?

In fact that person was given a hiding.
He/she would be beaten?
Yes-Strongly. (29, P 146)

Arbitrary and appropriate discipline.

Despite both groups perceiving parental discipline as harsh, the reaction to this perception was quite different between the groups. Twice the number of prisoners (53.3% of the group-8 subjects) compared with non-prisoners (23.5% of the group-4 subjects) believed parental discipline was meted out in an *arbitrary* fashion. This result suggests that *resentment of early sanctions, because these are seen to be unfair*, is more closely linked to an antisocial developmental trajectory than is the harshness of the sanction itself.

The results also show that resentment of sanctions is a likely but not *necessary* factor in an antisocial developmental trajectory. More than half of the prisoners (66.7% of the group-10 subjects) felt that punishments received were *appropriate*. The greater number of adolescent-limited subjects (88.2% of the group-15 subjects) who saw sanctions as appropriate, supports an argument for the adaptive value of inculcating a perception of “fairness” of sanctions in the developing child.

There was an overlap of a few subjects in each group who had mixed feelings about the arbitrary/appropriate nature of sanctions (3 prisoners; 2 non-prisoners).

Examples

Arbitrary Discipline

Prisoners

When you were being naughty, and when your parents discovered that what did they do?
Hey, we would be punished... You see, the way I used to be punished was by using a stick, and they later decided to use a belt.
...What about being naughty did the stick help to stop you from being naughty, or did you become worse?
I think being punished by the stick made me brave.
Do you think that being punished by stick made you to break the laws because you were then brave and it made you hard hearted?
Yes, it made me not to be patient with other people or to be hard on them since my heart was then hard.
Do you feel that if you were not punished in the way they did, you would not be here?
Yes, I would not be here.
....Okay, what do you think was the best way to treat you?
I feel that it would be better if they sat down with us and negotiated with us then using a stick, a stick does not motivate a person but kills a person. (15, P 126)

This extract shows the subject's resentment of the discipline metered out.

Non-prisoners

Is there any one of you that got punished more than anybody else?
Yes, it was the eldest of them all. That person would get more punishment with the reasoning that she/he is the one influencing others to be naughty.
In other words your sister was the one that get most of the punishment?
Yes.
Okay, do you think that the punishment that she got was fair?
I would say it was not and again say it was, since she is the one that has the best behaviour at home and is the one with greater performance. She is something. I think it contributes to some other people in giving out good results. But if you look deeply in it, there are investigations that are done about it that proves that sometimes it is uncalled for. -They do it in the way that is unacceptable as if there is a hidden agenda. (29, P 153)

There were relatively few examples in non-prisoner stories of the perception of arbitrary punishment. This text demonstrates arbitrariness in family discipline, although not towards the subject himself.

Appropriate Discipline

Prisoners

Okay, I see, when you, your sisters or brothers has been naughty and your parents became aware of it, what would they do to that person?

Uh, in my home, my parents were not the kind of people who liked using a stick, they were not the type of parents who believed in fighting or beating, they were people who believed in negotiations you see. You should be a person who listens. Then that will be it. (14, P 135)

This subject's parents discussed the misdemeanour and an appropriate punishment was given.

Non-prisoners

Did you and your brothers and sister ever did naughty things at home what happened ?

My mother would hit us [laughs].

Did any of the children get punished or get smacked more than the others?

Let's say it was me [both laughing]. (16, P 134)

Did you get on with your parents as a child ?

Yes at times I did , mostly with my mother. She never like held grudges against me.

Now you say your mother was the main punisher and she would hit you, but then she wouldn't hold a grudge?

Yes. (16, P 140)

In the first extract, the subject's tone indicated he did not resent the punishment and did not see it as excessive. The use of the term "hit" has less harsh implications than "beat". This view was confirmed by the second extract from this subject's story.

Lax and consistent/inconsistent discipline.

The perceived consistency of discipline was a key differentiating feature between the groups. The scoring of consistent/inconsistent discipline can be confusing. Refer back to 2.11 for clarity.

Nearly double the prisoners compared with non-prisoners experienced *lax* parenting (66.7%-10 prisoners : 35.3%-6 non-prisoners). Seen in conjunction with the analysis for harsh discipline, this result indicates that, while most subjects in both groups experienced harsh responses to misdemeanours, this was interspersed with a lax disciplinary style by many prisoners' parents.

Life-stories contained few statements that could be scored directly for *inconsistency*, namely, where a subject stated never knowing if the same transgression would be punished each time (26.7% - 4 prisoners : 5.9% - 1 non-prisoner). However, when inconsistent discipline was seen as combined references in a story to both harsh and lax parenting discipline styles, many more prisoners than non-prisoners experienced this. While more than 70% of both groups experienced harsh discipline, only 35% of non-prisoners *also* experienced lax discipline, while this was the case for almost 70% of the prisoner group.

There were notable group differences as regards the *consistency* of sanctions. While 76.5% of the non-prisoner group (14 subjects) made statements referring to the consistency of discipline, this was the case for only 13.3% of the prisoner group (2 subjects).

The high count, in the expected direction, for consistency in the non-prisoner versus prisoner life-stories, and similarly for an indirect measure of inconsistency (harsh and lax discipline both experienced by a subject), is in line with the literature, where erratic discipline is a feature of the parenting style experienced by life-course offenders. The results did not support the finding (Patterson et al., 1989) that overly lax parenting was associated with adolescent-limited antisocial behaviour, possibly due to an overriding cultural or socio-economic practice of harsh sanctions in both subject groups.

Given the considerable *indirect* evidence that prisoners experienced inconsistent parental discipline, the fact that only a few prisoners referred *directly* to inconsistent parental discipline is more likely to reflect a shortcoming of the interview method than an actual low count of this variable in prisoner stories. The prompt for information on parental discipline below clearly did not probe sufficiently to reveal direct evidence of erratic sanctioning:

Did you get any punishment for being naughty, like getting a hiding?

Examples

Lax Discipline

Prisoners

Would you like to behave to your parents in a manner that is different from this one? [he was always in trouble with them]

My parents are not educated, so they did not care about most of the things in so much that they could not say whether this type of behaviour was better than the other. (3, P 193)

The above text is a good example of lax discipline as defined in this research. While the subject saw his parents as taking note of his bad behaviour, their intervention made no difference to the way in which he acted.

Okay, who was the important person in life during that time?

Ey, my family.

Why?

That time, okay, though I was doing wrong things, they did not sit back and watched me doing those things, they would tell me that what I was doing was wrong. Okay, that made me realised that what I was doing was committing crime, you see. But well, since there was nobody to provide for what I needed, I then continued. (11, P 122)

Non-prisoners

Well, we were growing and would not see anything wrong, until such time that I started to realize that parents were then not approving some of the things [his delinquent behaviour]. So, this was the start of doing these things. I then started to sleep out. After that I mixed with friends and started not staying at home. So, the life that we led during that time was getting out of parents' control, out of hand. [Ineffective parental discipline] (23, P 7)

Consistent Discipline*Prisoners*

Oh, if you or your siblings did something wrong, maybe you have been naughty and your parents became aware of that, what would they do?

We would be punished for that. (9, P 195)

Non-prisoners

What would your parents do if one of you has done something wrong?

Heh heh [laughing] that one won't get money to carry at school.-That was the punishment since we were given R5 each for the weekend.

Okay, who used to give punishment, was it your father or mother? I mean in case one of you has done wrong and who would take the benefit away from you, who was giving punishment?

Both gave out punishment.

Okay, uh, since we are talking about punishment, was there anyone who used to be punished more than others were or not?

No, we used to get same punishment. (17, P 84)

Inconsistent Discipline*Prisoners*

Now you say when you were naughty your dad punished you. If you guys did naughty things at home how did the punishment work-straight away or the next day? And what sort of naughty things did you do?

Well I would go from home to go to the shop and didn't tell anybody.

And how did the punishment happen?

Well sometimes it was straight away or my step mother tells him about it and sometimes it is the next day-it depends on him.

So you never really knew when you would get punished?

Yes.

Did you get away with it sometimes?

Yes but then when he was punishing you for another thing it would remind him when you got it wrong before and so you would get punished twice! (4, P 195)

Non-prisoners

When one of you has misbehaved or has been naughty, how were you punished?

In fact that person was given a hiding. All of them gave out punishment but my dad would wait for you to misbehave for few times then he punishes you for all of it, he would even use a big stick, in a cruel way, [umshiza] whereas mom was using a thin stick, would just do it slightly, you see, in a caring way. (29, P 146)

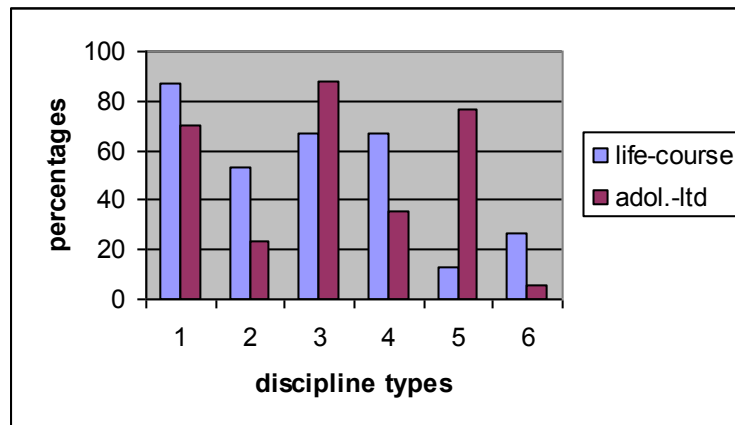
In this text the sanction occurred after an uncertain number of misdemeanours.

3.12 Quantitative Results

Percentage graphs.

Figure 3 summarises graphically the key points of the preceding discussion of the parenting disciplinary style subcode results.

Figure 3. Group Differences across 6 Parent Discipline Styles



Key	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
1. Harsh	86.7% (13)	70.1% (12)
2. Arbitrary	53.3% (8)	23.5% (4)
3. Appropriate	66.7% (10)	88.2% (15)
4. Lax	66.7% (10)	35.3% (6)
5. Consistent	13.3% (2)	76.5% (14)
6. Inconsistent	26.7% (4)	5.9% (1)

*= % subjects in each group;(number of subjects)

Statistical analyses.

The chi-square test found a significant group difference on discipline style 5, “consistent discipline” only.

Consistent parenting

Fisher’s exact test

X^2 exact probability:

Sig. = .00 (2-sided); df= 1

The more sensitive log linear calculation found significant interactions in the expected direction between the research groups and parental discipline styles 2, 4 and 5, namely, “arbitrary, lax” and “consistent” discipline. These results appear in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Log Linear Group Differences on 6 Parent Discipline Styles

Discipline style	Lambda	df	p value
arbitrary	-0.33	1	0.044 ¹
Lax	-0.335	1	0.041 ²
consistent	0.85	1	0.000 ³

1 = Indicates a disproportionately greater number of prisoners experienced arbitrary discipline.

2. = Indicates a disproportionately greater number of prisoners experienced lax discipline.

3. = Indicates a disproportionately greater number of non-prisoners experienced consistent discipline.

3.13 Conclusions.

The key finding in the analysis of the parental discipline subcode was the significant difference between the groups on consistency of parental discipline, with the adolescent-limited group experiencing much more consistent parenting than the life-course group. This outcome was supported by direct and indirect evidence of perceived greater inconsistency of sanctions by the latter group.

The qualitative analysis of disciplinary style partially confirmed the findings of other research conducted in developed, Western countries, where *harsh and inconsistent* discipline are associated with a life-course offending pattern (Colvin, 2000; Moffitt, 1993; Patterson et al., 1989), although this difference did not attain statistical significance. Not reported in these other studies is the significantly greater degree of *lax parenting also experienced* by the life-course group. The adolescent-limited group did not experience inconsistent parenting of this nature (i.e. harsh and lax). In addition, as stated above, their perception of a consistent parenting style was significantly greater than was the case for life-course offender participants.

The “partial” nature of the above confirmation of Western research was due to the absence of an association between harshness of sanctions and a chronic antisocial lifestyle. This appears primarily due to the additional influence of a traditional non-Western parenting culture. A secondary influence was the low socio economic status of most participants in both groups. Despite this finding, the qualitative result trend on the arbitrary discipline category, showing that sanctions were *perceived by the prisoners* as being more harsh, is of interest.

Consideration of the results of the present study regarding perceived harshness, arbitrariness and appropriateness of sanctions, in the light of other research in developed countries, suggests that harshness in itself may not be a significant differentiating variable in adaptive and maladaptive parenting. Instead, harshness may be a moderating influence in the association between the recipient’s *perception* that discipline is *just (fair/appropriate) or unfair*. In Western communities, harsh parenting is generally unacceptable, resulting in the complementary perception by recipients of this style that it is unfair. This is patently not the case in a traditional non-Western culture such as that of the Zulu, where a firmer disciplinary style is promoted. Furthermore, while such sanctions are generally not acceptable in the disciplinary styles of middle and upper class parents, they are more the norm in low socio-economic groups. These views are supported by research by evolutionary biologists suggesting that an innate sense of “fairness” is present in higher order mammals (e.g. the Capuchin monkey) and humans (Vogal, 2004). Fairness would include features such as consistency in punishment, and the subject’s perception that the justice administered for differing levels of offences is appropriate.

With the exception of harshness of discipline, the direction of all the findings regarding the adolescent-limited group supports evidence in the literature that this group had adaptive parenting experiences (Moffitt, 2003). These subjects saw caregivers’ discipline as less arbitrary and lax, and more appropriate and consistent, than did life-course offending subjects.

3.2 Affect

3.21 Qualitative Results

The results in the present study on the relationship between parental affect and chronic offending differed somewhat from findings in the literature. Research conducted in developed countries (e.g. Moffitt, 1993), indicates that primary caregivers of life-course offenders relate with coldness or hostility to these children. In the current study, all subjects in both groups (with one exception) reported positive caregiver affect.

The life-stories of 66.7% of the prison group (8 subjects) described positive affect from primary caregivers. For 40% of the group (6 subjects), the experience was qualified by the negative affect of the second caregiver, or by the ambivalent affect of the same caregiver. Only one subject described wholly negative affect from caregivers. In the non-prisoner group, all subjects (100%) described one or both primary caregivers as offering positive affect. Of these, 82.4% (14 subjects) experienced unequivocal⁶² positive affect. 17.64% of the group (3 subjects) experienced ambivalent (qualified) caregiver affect.

In a breakdown of the results, mother was the key source of *positive affect* in both groups. This reflected the fatherless status of many subjects in both groups (see Figure 7 in this chapter), as well as the closer relationship that mothers have with their children in traditional Zulu communities (Liddell et al., 1990; Vilakazi, 1962). In the *prisoner* group, 53.3% (8 subjects) referred to mother alone, 26.6% (4 subjects) to both parents, and 13.3% (2 subjects) to the father only. All subjects who reported positive caregiver affect also experienced a positive response from caregivers (praise) for tasks well done. In the *non-prisoner* group, more subjects described positive affect from both parents than did prisoners (47.1% of the group-8 subjects). This correlated with the increased presence of fathers in this group compared with the life-course group (see Figure 7). 35.3% of the group (6 subjects) referred to mother alone, and only one subject identified his father. Two non-prisoner subjects described positive affect from caregivers other than parents in the latter's absence, but did not refer negatively to parents. In the non-prisoner group, all subjects reporting unequivocal positive caregiver affect, were also praised for tasks well done. For many subjects in both groups who experienced positive parent affect, grandparents were an additional source of positive affect.

46.7% of *prisoners* (7 subjects) experienced *negative affect*, although this was tempered with some parental warmth for all except one of these. Most of this group (5 subjects) also received no caregiver praise. Of interest is the high proportion of Coloured subjects in the group describing negative experiences (all 3 of the 3 Coloured prison subjects). Fewer *non-prisoners* experienced negative affect from a caregiver (23.5% of the group-4 subjects). All of these also received some positive affect from caregivers and all were praised for tasks well done. Here too, the relatively high proportion of Coloured subjects describing negative parenting is noteworthy (2 of the 3 Coloured non-prisoners).

Cultural Influences: The high proportion of Zulu subjects in *both* groups who experienced *some* positive caregiver affect ties in with the generally benevolent attitude towards children in Zulu traditional society at the time of the subjects' youth (Liddell et al., 1990; Personal communication, N. Ntshangase, personal communication, January, 2006; Vilakazi, 1962). This cultural effect was absent in the Coloured subjects in both groups, as five of the six subjects across both groups described negative parental affect, albeit combined with some positive experiences.

Examples

Positive Affect

Prisoners

Mother

Ah you were a tiny chap! Can you remember anything good about that time? [subject very young]
The only thing that was good about that time was having my mother's love and her like growing us up. (4, P 17)

⁶² As explained in 2.3 above, this refers to stories containing only positive affect statements about caregivers.

So your mum was a good mum?
Yes she was a good mum. (4, P 25)

Who was the most important person in your life during that time when you were growing?
It was my granny and also my mother. (5, P 26)

Before your mom married to her first husband, do you remember anything about that time?
She was single; she tried her best to groom me up. She was unemployed.
When you were 5, were you happy, was it a happy time or you can not remember?
Ja well it was a little bit of ok- she put me in preschool and she really tried her best. (6, P 15)

Father

And then you got on... but you got on well with him?
Ja, I got on well with my dad, hey. (1, P 166)

Okay, I see, who was very important to you during that time in your life? [in high school]
During that time, it was my father, my parent, the only person I was left with, was my life, you see, he was also working.
Hmmm, okay, why was he important to you?
Because he was taking care of my school fees. (14, P 59)

Both parents

Were you happy when you were young, were you in good care or not?
I was in good care, there were no problems. I got everything thing that I needed like being cared for. Even when I wanted a toy that I saw from neighbours and asked for it at home. They [parents] gave it to me. (2, P 9)

Yes, my parents were important.. (7, P 42)

Non-prisoners

Mother

Okay, who was an important person to you during that time in your life?
It was my mother.
Was it your mother, okay, what makes you say that it was your mother?
Because she was the only person who was able to help me out with every thing-when ever I need help. (17, P 29)

He was an affectionate boy who liked to show physical affection. He is a considerate boy who thought of his mother. Even as an adult he phones or sends messages. (22-3rd, P 16 - with mother)

Father

Okay, what made you to regard your father as an important person in your life that time?
It was because my father was then everything to me-even now. He is the only person that is my hope, I trust him, and the person that understands my situation. He knows what ever goes on in my life. He is the only person that I could trust with my life, no one else. The other woman in his life does not care about me [stepmother]. (25, P 40)

Both Parents

Okay, who was an important person in your life during that time?
It was my father and my mother.
Okay, what makes you say that they were important?
It was because they were the only people that were doing everything for me during that time.
Okay, could you remember anything that they did?
Uh, like buying me shoes whenever I needed it, whatever that I needed during that time. (28, P 27)

Praise

Prisoners

Were they able to praise you when you have done something good?
Yes, they did praise us. (5, P 118)

Okay, I see, were there things that you did as children , which made your parents praise you?
Good things , that made them proud.
Yes , and then they made you happy ?
Like I said I stayed with mom as the one kid , I think there are things.
Hmmm, like what ?
Like when she came from work, and garden would be shining. So I just worked on the garden. She was just happy and asked if I've also planted flowers as well, so that pleased her. (10, P 123)

Non-prisoners

How were you praised?

That what I still remember?

Hmmm, did they buy you something nice or they only praise you?

Well, we had problem as there are so many children at home, to do something in a hurry, it normally takes time they have to make something for three to four people at time. To prevent any arguments. (21, P 177)

If you did anything good, if anyone of the three of you really did something great, were you rewarded? Was it noticed?

It was noticed, it was noticed. (32, P 100)

Negative Affect*Prisoners*

Are they [friends] your support network?

Ja, I mean, you don't get love from your parents. So if you... you find it in friends. (1, P 220)

Did she show any affection, ever?

Never!

Did either of your parents, ever?

My father tried to, huh.

Did he?

Ja, he tried to. (1, P 416)

Who is the person whom you did not want at that time?

It was my father?

Why?

He stopped me from many things and the fact that he was hard hearted and would beat my mother. (3, P 68)

During this period was there anyone you would say was important to you?

There was no one who was really important. The only person I can say maybe was my granny . Because I blame my mother partly for what happened to us and my father too. (4, P 69)

What sort of time was it? [mother remarried and left him]

Frightening, sad.

Who did you turn to during this time?

My granny-she was always there for me. (6, P 53)

So that's how you got to be here for the 1st time? [high school]

It was that time when I was growing and my father has divorced with my mother, my mother was married to another man by the surname of It means that I grew up with my mother's family. My education fees were paid for by my mother's family. I did not get enough of both my mother's and my father's love. (8, P 10)

Non-prisoners

When your dad would speak to you, did you feel that he helped things. What I'm trying to find out is you were close to your mom but she was the one that did the punishing and your dad didn't. So can you explain that ?

I would say my dad like he, he had a very hard heart. I still think even now he still remembers the [wrong] things that I did. (16-2, P 144)

What is not clear to me is you said your father chased you out of the house and secondly you went to hospital after having been chased out?

Yes, brother that was really a problem to me. That is where the problem lay. Well, I could not understand myself why my own father would not want me anywhere near him and yet his is my biological father. (25, P 8)

Was it a personality thing, or a drinking thing or a...that he become so disabled?

He become disabled, and he did start to drink, and his personality did start to change, I did notice this, but...And also what my mother said...if she could say that about my father, and I'm his son, then that says something about me.

So it was in many ways quite a confusing time for a young child, who'd known his father as such and such, and suddenly he becomes a bit different, and also the mother is saying things. ...[till Grade 2-8yrs]

Yes. (30, P 47)

From time to time your mum perhaps bugged you, I'm guessing?

Ya, she became a bit hard, and difficult..... (30, P 57)

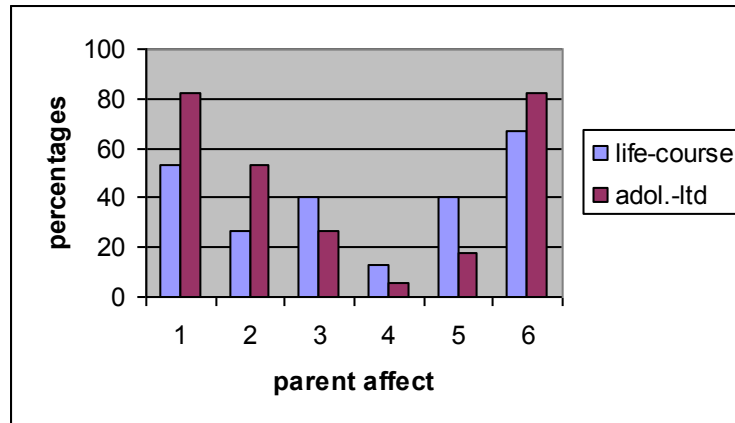
Well I think I started getting to know my dad. Initially when he started seeing my mom I didn't like him.[second dad]
 Why?
 Well, he wouldn't spend much time giving love and such. (31, P 66)

3.22 Quantitative Results

Graphs.

Figure 4 below provides a descriptive summary of parental affect group differences.

Figure 4. Group Differences in Positive Caregiver Affect



Key

1. Unqualified + affect#
2. + Affect, both parents
3. + Affect, mother only
4. + Affect, father only
5. Ambivalent affect
6. Praise

Life-course *

53.3% (8)
 26.6% (4)
 40.7% (6)
 13.3 (1)
 40% (6)
 66.7% (10)

Adol.-limited*

82.4% (14)
 52.9% (9)
 26.4% (5)
 5.8% (2)
 17.6% (3)
 82.4% (14)

*= % subjects in each group (number of subjects)

#=this is the count of prisoner and non-prisoner stories that contain only statements about positive parent affect and is the count used in the statistical calculations. The remaining counts reflect positive affect statements that are in qualified affect stories (i.e. there are also some negative affect statements about parents in the same story).

Statistical Analyses.

Neither the chi-square or log linear statistical calculations showed significant group differences on the affect variable, "unqualified positive parental affect" (1. in Figure 4). However, the log linear interaction between the research groups and this variable approached significance, in the expected direction, as shown below.

Parent Affect

Log linear: Lambda for the interaction in the table = .28; $df = 1$; $p = 0.07$

3.23 Conclusions

Overall, literature findings that positive parental affect is associated with adolescent-limited but not life-course offenders (Baumrind, 1971; Moffitt, 1993; Patterson et al., 1989), are supported in the qualitative findings of the present study, although this difference does not reach significance. The non-significance in the group difference is most likely due to a cultural attenuating factor affecting the Zulu subjects in both groups. Parental warmth towards children has strong cultural roots in traditional Zulu families.

In both groups, the maternal caregiver, often supported by grandparents, was the most frequent source of primary affect. The closeness of mothers to sons shown in this study mirrors cultural attitudes to parenting in African communal society (Vilakazi, 1962; Q. Zungu, personal communication, April, 3, 2005). Zulu mothers

usually relate warmly and indulgently to their sons, and grandfathers relax the stern discipline they exercised on their own sons when dealing with grandsons. Vilakazi notes the authoritarian and fairly distant relationship Zulu fathers had with their sons in traditional homes.

The decision to use caregiver praise as an additional discriminating indicator in the association between parental warmth and chronic offending, was partially validated in the analysis. Caregiver praise was a feature of all life-stories describing unequivocal positive caregiver affect in both groups, and absent where unequivocal negative caregiver affect was described in a story. However, a third of prison subjects and two thirds of non-prisoners, who experienced *ambivalent* caregiver affect, also were praised for tasks done well, suggesting that positive caregiver affect is usually accompanied by caregiver praise, but that the latter is not always a correlate of wholly positive caregiver affect.

Both parents were more frequently sources of positive affect in non-prisoner families than in the prisoner group. This was a function of the higher percentage of father figures present in the former, as well as the more benevolent attitude of fathers in this group compared with those in the prisoner group. In the prisoner group, mothers were the key source of positive affect. When fathers were present, they were associated with negative affect.

Key Findings regarding Affect: The key points that emerged from the analysis of caregiver affect as a distinguishing variable between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders were

1. More subjects experienced positive rather than negative affect from primary caregivers in both groups. This result differed from the findings of other studies on persistent antisocial behaviour conducted in developed Western countries. This feature most probably relates to African communal child rearing practices.
2. The results trend was in the expected direction regarding parental affect, in line with the literature. *Life-course offenders had fewer experiences of unqualified positive parental affect than did adolescent-limited offenders.* At the same time, this difference did not reach statistical significance.
3. Although group differences were not significant, some inferences can be drawn from these
 - * *Unequivocally positive caregiver affect* is more closely related to adaptive (i.e. not life-course) development than ambivalent parent affect.
 - * *Having both parents as providers of positive affect* is more closely related to adaptive development than having only one parent offer this. This was a function of the greater presence of father figures in the non-prisoner group, as well as the more acceptable discipline style of these fathers in the latter group versus the life-course offender group.
 - * *Caregiver praise* complements other measures of positive caregiver affect. This suggests that parent training in this form of positive caregiver affect could be included in intervention programs for aggressive at risk children, if this is not already the case.

3.3 Watchfulness

As defined in section 2.1 above, two indicators of watchfulness were used. The first measured caregivers' involvement in, or communication with, subjects' schools. This measure *excluded* awareness of specific antisocial school based behaviours. The second indicator measured parent awareness or ignorance of antisocial behaviour.

3.31 Qualitative Results

Caregiver involvement in subjects' school life.

This measure of parental watchfulness was a poor discriminator between the two groups. 33.3% of the prisoner group (5 subjects) and 35.3% of non-prisoners (6 subjects) referred to positive parental involvement with the school. The analysis indicated that poor communication between caregivers and subjects' schools did not necessarily reflect a lack of concern by caregivers. Most subjects lived in semi-rural areas and

communication with the school was reduced due to parents working in the cities over the week, homes being a long distance from the school, and no transport (many children attending rural schools even today walk long distances to reach school). Given the outcome of the analysis this measure was pursued no further.

Caregiver monitoring of antisocial behaviour.

Group differences were more marked on this measure. 6.7% of the prisoners (1 subject) described positive parental monitoring, compared with 35.3% (6 subjects) of the non-prisoner group. A similar percentage in each group referred specifically to poor monitoring of antisocial behaviour by caregivers (33.3% of prisoners - 5 subjects; 29.4% of non-prisoners – 5 subjects). One prison subject experienced both positive and negative monitoring.

Examples

School Involvement-Positive

Prisoners

.. while growing up, my friends, all of us, we were under our parents hands you see. Our parents always pressured us, in a way that even teachers were pressuring us till the time for meetings, parents and teachers you see. The discussion was about us, you see, in such a way that in my class, there was a year that I remember where only one child failed, you see. (14, P 279)

Non-prisoners

My mom is a teacher and had teacher friends, so they did discuss how I was doing at school. (18, P 65)

When he mentioned the name of the person that spread the news, then that person is in trouble [drinking and bunking at school]. So, he would call in our parents. Then our parents would want to know if he saw us doing that. Then they would want know where he got that from. The place was more or less the same with jail. (22, P 237)

School Involvement - Negative

Prisoners

All examples of poor caregiver involvement in prison subjects' school activities also involved antisocial behaviour. Hence, these were scored under the second watchfulness indicator.

Non-prisoners

Okay, was there a contact between teachers and the parents?

Yes, it was there, but not that much, since my mother was not staying at home. (19, P 287)

Monitoring of Antisocial Behaviour - Positive

Prisoners

If there was anyone of the kids who's been naughty at home, did the parents end up finding out about it?

If there was anyone who's been naughty?

Yes .

Aaw, they ended up hearing about it. (10, P 111)

Non-prisoners

Then they will still blame you even when you were innocent? [Subject's thieving when young and the community response]

Yes, even when they we were innocent they would say that we did. So my mother is not a type of person who likes fighting and arguments. Then she decided to find a place to save us from being involved in false accusations and be safe. (17, P 147)

This mother's efforts to place her sons in a secure environment away from peer pressure is an implicit indication of watchfulness.

Monitoring of Antisocial Behaviour - Negative

Prisoners

Did you play truancy when you were still at school? Did your parents know about it?

Yes, it happened, it was an influence from my friends. We would do that without our parents knowing about it.

We could come home and keep quiet about it. When I come home my mother would prepare food for me and buy

"vet" cookies for me, and would say to me: "Eat my child". I would eat and never mention anything to her about truancy. (2, P 83)

Did your parents know that you didn't like school?

No, they didn't know.

They didn't know, how come?. Wasn't there a good relationship between you and them?

No, they just didn't know. (13, P 138)

Non-prisoners

Did your parents know that there was time when you did not go to school?

They did not know that.

Okay, if they had to know about it how do you think they would have reacted?

They would beat me; they would beat me to kill me. (19, P 19)

Ok, did you bunk?(school)

Yes, a lot.

Did you?

Ja. Especially in the high school years.

Did your parents know?

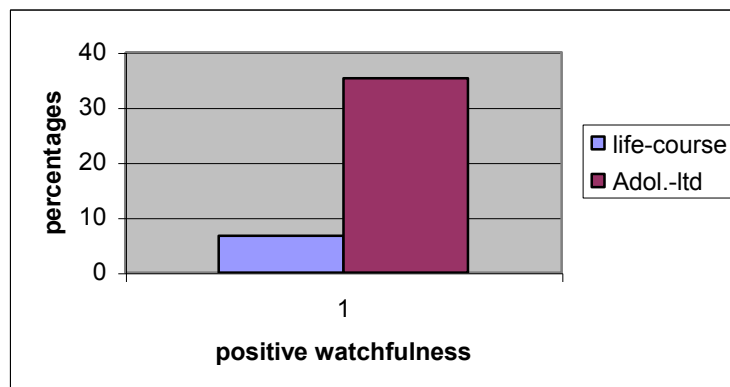
No. (31, P 255)

3.32 Quantitative Results

Graphs.

Figure 5 depicts the experience of positive parent watchfulness across the life-course and adolescent-limited research groups.

Figure 5. Group Differences in Positive Caregiver Watchfulness



Key

Positive caregiver watchfulness

Life-course *

6.7% (1)

Adol.-limited

35.3% (6)

*=. % subjects in each group (number of subjects)

Statistical Analysis.

Although the chi-square calculation of group differences was not significant, it approached significance. The log linear model of group differences was significant, in the expected direction.

Positive parental watchfulness

Fisher's exact test:

X^2 exact probability:

$df=1$; $p=.09$ (2-sided) (ns)

Log linear: Lambda for the interaction in the table = 0.51; $df=1$; $p=0.04$

3.33 Conclusions

Evidence provided by both the textual and statistical analyses of parental monitoring of subjects' antisocial behaviour showed greater caregiver vigilance in the adolescent-limited compared with the life-course offender group. This is in line with other literature findings (e.g. Hawkins et al., 2000).

3.4 Family Relations and Family Conflict

Given the difficulty in measuring family relationships and conflict in the life-stories (see 2.14 above) conclusions drawn from the analyses are tentative and require confirmation using more appropriate tools in future research.

3.41 Qualitative Results

Family relationships.

60% of *prisoners* (9 subjects) described poor family relations in their life-stories. For 33.3% (5 subjects) of this group, relationships between family members were extremely poor, mainly due to caregiver violence. The remainder of this group described friction between close relatives, or poor communication between family members. Of the group reporting poor relationships, three subjects found nothing positive to say about family relationships, while the remaining six experienced a mix of positive and negative relationships. Only 20% of the prisoners (3 subjects) described wholly positive interactions in their family. Two prison life-stories provided no information about family relationships.

Stories of *non-prisoners* painted a more convivial picture. 64.7% of the group (11 subjects) described relations in the family as unified and non aggressive. The relationships in the families of the remaining 6 subjects were characterised by both positive and negative features. Only one subject described solely poor family relationships.

Examples

Poor Relationships

Prisoners

The family obviously wasn't close, and you said your father hit your mother. For what...what reasons?
He used to drink a lot. (1, P 400)

How was your father?
The way he did things, when he comes home drunk, he would beat us and do all such things. (5, P 32)

Because my sister was younger, my mother usually took her as more important than I am. I didn't like to get in the way so it caused like a small friction between us. (6, P 112)

...much fighting with father of child. She married him before Noel was born. After the birth mum continued to fight with father and he left and married someone else. (6 3rd, P 6 - with maternal grandmother)

Is your stepfather alive?

He is still alive but he got straightened and ran away.

What is to be "straightened"?

Sorry my sister, he was beaten [stepfather]

By whom?

Well, it happened through me, It happened that I looked at one side of the story and just beat him. (9, P 169)

Uh, as I've explained before, a person that I didn't have that strong relationship with was only my brother. Even with the whole family we didn't have that strong relationship, even my brother had a problem with the family, you see.

Yes, so there was no unity in your family?

Yes, there wasn't fighting, it just that there were some small arguments, which caused the family to stop communicating. This went on to a point where if one member of the family were sick others would not pitch up to check on him. (14, P 179)

Non-prisoners

...if you were to give it a label, as the "bad thing" of that time, the divorce?

Ya.

What did you find hardest about it?

Um, the conflict between my mother and father, and I was caught in the middle 'cos there was my mother who didn't see eye to eye with my father, but, you know, I still did. (30, P 33)

My parents also.....

Have they remained together, or?

Yes, through all this. I think the biggest problem was he's got his own kids, and they're much older than us, and we also spent time with them, so there was a sharing of his, uh, bonding time.

And the violence? Has that stopped?

Ja, the violence has stopped. It was only the one time when I think he wasn't too happy, he had continuous strain, as I said the one time when we had to stay with my uncle, that he wasn't happy with and our mother made us go because she.... Cos she didn't like it, his tone of voice as such. (31, P 162)

Mixed Relationships

Prisoners

And how did the family get on with each other as a unit?

Me and my sister are very close...Ja, we've always been close. Right now she's the closest person to my heart.

.....What was it like between your mum and dad when you were all together still?

I cannot really say. Ja, I cannot .. Because he used to beat her, and so I cannot really say, ja. (1, P 160)

When you were with the family I know there was a lot of fighting. I know your dad used to get cross, but between the brothers and sisters?

We were quiet but my stepmother and father used to do the quarrelling.

There was a lot of that?

Yes.

And amongst yourselves?

No, we were always close to each other. (4, P 216)

Non-prisoners

So before school came into the picture when you were much much younger, were you fine then , you didn't fight with him?

No we did fight, back then it was me and my sister against him he would like chase us with a knife crying.

[laughing] So he also got into trouble then , it wasn't just you who into trouble

Ya he also like got into trouble , but like me and my sister have been like really close since then, we would like actually go to him and start on him.

You would tease him?

We would tease him ya, like we would like take cold water like when he was in the bathroom , and like splash him with the water and he would be cold.

So it was you and your sister against your brother.

Yes.

But now the three of you get on very well?

Yes. (16, P 120)

Family seemed close and mother has clear idea of her parenting role- she is open to her inadequacies in dealing with him in the past. Dad used to deliver the boy to the grounds of his new school in an effort to avoid truanting- but he still went off. Dad seems less tolerant. [See boy's comments in the interview that he thinks his father is still angry with him- dad also laid a charge against him]. (16-3rd, P 15)

Good Relationships (some of these fell in the "mixed" category, as subjects also described negative aspects of family relationships)

Prisoners

Since my mother's family loved me very much. (8, P 43)

At home you would sometimes have your own [church] services , discuss each other's troubles , know about your problems, you see that's how we lived , a good life, asked what problem I had at that moment, our home situation as well, I would say mine , and she would say hers , and it would be nice ,and we would pray [with mother]. (10, P 14)

I see , when you look at your family, how is your relationship?

Aaw very well, very well, because you see with my sister, we didn't share a father but the way we were so close, you would swear we had the same father, because of our mother. We really fond of her. (10, P 149)

Okay, do your family members get along?

Yes, they get along.

When they fight do they get physical, fight?

No.

They don't fight?

Hey, what I can say is that there are few people left. It's my grand mother, my grand father and the kids that I was talking about that are left. Okay, my older brother doesn't stay a long time at home. He travels.

Hmmm. Okay, if maybe they fight and are irritated with each other, do they make a lot of noise at home, or are they quiet or calm, they sit down and talk?

They talk. (13, P 58)

Non-prisoners

Family seemed close and mother has clear idea of her parenting role- she is open to her inadequacies in dealing with him in the past. [interviewer's comments] (16-3rd, P 15)

His sisters love him and always encouraged him to learn. (20-3rd, P 19 – with mother)

Okay, uh, did your family did things together?

Yes they did things together.

Like what?

Things like for instance my mother's birthday on the fifth we were together at home celebrating. With only the cake that cost R25, we were together.

Basically we are always together during the days like these. And the reason why we are always together is we always pray together at night. We do that together. (22, P 87)

Yes, my father had that tendency of calling us together and would let us know about what would happen at home.

Yes, he did that. (25, P 193)

Okay, uh, if you have an issue with your mother or your father, how do you get over it or pass over it amongst yourself?

Yes, you see about that, my father would call us all in and find out what a problem is and would try to get to the bottom of the problem. He would then, at the end after he has found the source of the problem or the cause of it and solves it with us all and we would go or move on with our lives.

Okay, do you mean to say that you sit down and discuss it until you come to a solution?

Yes, with the whole family taking part in the discussion. (25-2, P 75)

My mother and my father?

Did they have a good relationship?

Very good.

Still?

Still, ya. (32, P 47)

Does your family get on with each other in general?

Ya. (32, P 110)

Family conflict.

The Biographical Questionnaire probe for family conflict failed to generate enough data in some life-stories to adequately assess this variable. This is exemplified in the excerpt from a prisoner life-story below. The text suggested there was a fairly high conflict level in family communications, but this could also have been normative. As was the case with many codes, the breadth of the interview and its already lengthy duration did not allow for more detailed probing on the topic. In addition, that kind of focus would have moved away from the general methodology, which aimed at allowing subjects to generate their own emphases in their life-stories.

Okay, your family, did they like each other, did you all get along at home?

Yes we got along

If there was an argument was there any fighting?

No, that happened sometimes because we were boys and there only one girl and she was the youngest one.

Who fought a lot?

I fought a lot

Who did you fight with?

With the oldest boy when we were just talking, really it seems it was me.

What did you really fight about?

No we fought over petty things, it's like fighting over clothes- we fought over clothes. He might take your things without asking.
 Okay, did elders make noise?[quarrel]
 No they didn't.
 Did you ever see them argue?
 We never saw them, but it happened sometimes that some elders argued-but that was just their business.
 Eh, out of the family members were there any of those who showed to be humbled when others showed to be angry?
 Yes there were.
 Who usually started the fight?
 It was the older boy.
 Okay, was there any between the parents?
 Dad you can say started the fight, because he did things and then mom would tell him off and they would fight. (12, P 186)

In spite of the limitations of the conflict data, when all stories in one subject group were considered as a body, some trends did emerge. Just under half the *prisoners* (40%- 6 subjects) described varying levels of conflict between caregivers, during childhood. This was either between parents, mother and grandmother, or grandparents. Conflict in the families of these subjects were characterized by physical violence, arguments or shouting. Four subjects (26.7 % of the group) described no conflict or referred to discussion used to resolve family conflict. Three subjects (20% of the group) referred to sibling conflict, which seemed to be normative rather than extreme (some stories described more than one type of conflict). No data was given in four stories. A noticeable distinction between conflict data in the life-course and adolescent-limited groups was the absence of perceived family conflict, and the use of discussion to resolve conflict, in the *non-prisoner* group. 70.6% of the group (12 subjects) referred to this, compared with only 26.7% of prisoners (4 subjects). Only one case of serious family conflict was described, and overall, only two life-stories made reference to significant family conflict. A similar number of subjects as in the prisoner group experienced conflict with siblings (23.5% of the group-4 subjects).

Examples

Conflict between caregivers

Prisoners

When you were with the family I know there was a lot of fighting. I know your dad used to get cross, but between the brothers and sisters?

We were quiet but my stepmother and father used to do the quarrelling.

There was a lot of that?

Yes. (4, P 216)

Would they fight when they did not see eye to eye?

Yes, sometimes they would fight-It is the old lady [my granny]; she would also use power struggle, maybe when she had an argument with mom and all those things. When you try to come in between them, then there would be too much noise.

Hmmm, and children were watching by then?

Yes, they were watching. The young ones were watching by then.

Hmmm, were they also making a lot of noise?

Yes-, they were making noise, angry for one another, and nobody wanted to calm down. (5, P 156)

Okay, where there times in your family when the family members would fight or quarrel with each other?

Eh.... Yes it happened but not with my mother. You see, where I stayed, at my grandmother's house, my grandmother used to quarrel with my grandfather. They would fight [power struggle]. But they did not take liquor, it was because my grandfather was short tempered, you see. When they involved in power struggle, we did not know how to resolve it since we were still young and we did not know how to stop them. But we had to stop them. Yes, when they first started, they would keep it loud and go outside so that the neighbours would know about it, but later they then keep it amongst themselves. Even now if it is happening, they talk about it and keep it low. (8, P 98)

Did your mother and father quarrel?

Yes, they did.
 Did they quarrel before you?
 Yes, they did.
 Did they fight; they did not use power?
 No, my father beat my mother.
 How did you feel about that?
 I would feel very bad when my father beat my mother. (15, P 170)

Non-prisoners

In general how would you say people in your family got on with each other? - well, or was there bickering and fighting? . Would you say that generally it was a peaceful home?
 I don't think so.
 So there was fighting, what sort of fighting, did you ever get physical with each other or was it only with just words?
 Oh well , I'd get very physical with my brother.
 And when your mom hit you , was it just a hand a smack or..
 It was like a belt, and like one day I remember she took her shoes she hit her shoes in my face and it bounced. (16, P 176)

If you were to give it a label, would you call it the "bad thing" of that time, the divorce?
 Ya.
 What did you find hardest about it?
 Um, the conflict between my mother and father, and I was caught in the middle 'cos there was my mother who didn't see eye to eye with my father, but, you know, I still did...(30, P 33)

Sibling Conflict

Prisoners

Did you get along or did you have some kind of problems and fights?
 There was some form of not getting along. When my older brother and I were young, we would argue about petty stuff and we would end up fighting physically. When we grew up we became aware of this and we realised that people would end up hating us for always fighting with each other, and we stopped. We realised that we were foolish but then we were young. (7, P 131)
 What did you do when you were not seeing eye to eye? Did you fight?
 There is that thing of being siblings, and would fight for minor things....yes, we would fight, but when we were growing I liked coming in between them to negotiate about what made them to fight. I would like to come to where the trouble started and was wrong and right. I would let them discuss the issue and resolve it. (15, P 164)

Non-prisoners

In your family when you argue do you fight?
 Yes, there was arguing and people even grabbed each other with their clothes.
 Fought, who was usually involved in fights, hitting?
 uh, It's my older brother.

Okay, what do you argue about usually?
 You'll find that you are saying something and he will take it the other way. He'll says something and then you also won't agree with what he is saying. Maybe there is something that is taking over you. (26, P 115)

We were a very close-knit family, although there was a lot of fighting, you know, about the clothing, about sharing clothing, you know? And if I wanted to wear something, you know, like for tomorrow, I plan in my head, I will wear this tomorrow, then I said [something about it being on the line and someone else taking it]. Like that sort of fighting. And the dishes too. (31, P 236)

No fighting or discussion to solve conflict

Prisoners

When you had differences, what would happen, did you fight?
 No, we would sit down and talk about it. (9, P 243)
 Okay, I see, when you look back at your family, what kind of a family was it, were they close to each other, did they get along well?
 Well, they got along very well, we were close, fighting was not our style.
 We were the only people [children] who got shouted at, because we were naughty. But the elders did not fight. (11, P 277)

Okay, if maybe they fight and are irritated with each other, do they make a lot of noise at home, or are they quiet or calm, they sit down and talk?

They talk. (13, P 167)

Non-prisoners

Do they fight whenever they are having disagreement, and involved in power struggle?[parents]

No that does not happen mostly.

What do they do if they have disagreement, do they shout to each other in front of you?

No they do not do that, maybe they talk about it in the room, and solve their problem.

So there is no fighting each other?

Nothing. (20, P 200)

We all claim to be clever. I think you understand, but we all make mistakes. If no one is prepare to accept defeat then there is always an argument.

Okay, then how do you solve the problem?

Probably not because it is a big issue, you see. It is just a family misunderstanding, and we just forget about it, sometimes. But if it is a serious problem, then we call for a family meeting. Then we discuss it together as a family and see how we solve it. (22, P 164)

Does your family get on with each other in general?

Ya.

Was there ever any fighting?

At the moment there seems to be a lot of bickering and squabbles, ever since my gran passed away, and my dad's mum and everything on that side of the family now's just...nobody's getting along with her....

Within your own little nuclear family...

No, that is stable.

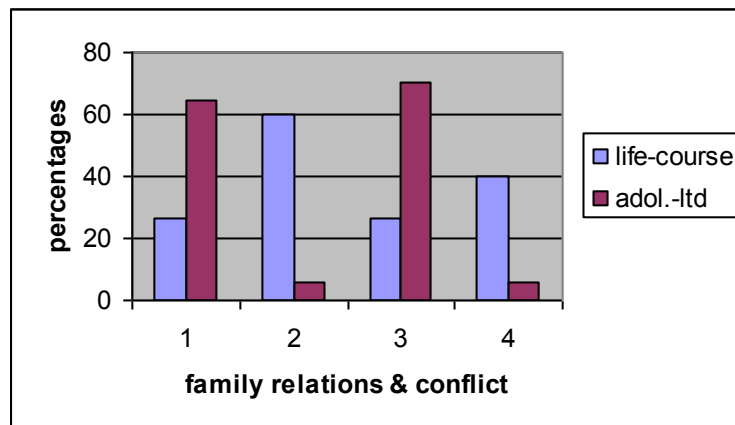
Always been good?

It's been good, ya. (32, 110)

3.42. Quantitative Analysis

Figure 6 shows the trends in support of the literature around Moffitt's taxonomy, which maintains that life-course offenders are raised in families characterised by poor relationships and conflict.

Figure 6. Group Differences in Family Relations and Conflict



Key	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
1. Positive relations	26.7% (4)	64.7% (11)
2. Negative relations	60% (9)	5.9% (1)
3. Conflict absent	26.7% (4)	70.59 (12)
4. Conflict present	40% (6)	5.9% (1)

*=. % subjects in each group; (number of subjects)

Statistical analyses.

Three of the group differences in Figure 6 were significant according to the chi-square calculation. These were: (1) positive family relations; (3) conflict absent; and (4) conflict present. Log linear calculations supported these findings and also found (2), negative family relations, to be significant. These results appear in the tables below.

Table 9. Chi-square Group Differences on Family Relations and Conflict

Variable	df	p-value (2-sided)*
Positive relations	1	0.001
Conflict - Yes	1	0.03
Conflict - No#	1	0.001

* Fisher's exact test

Family conflict resolved by discussion or the absence of family conflict - both scored as "no conflict".

Table 10. Log Linear Group Differences on Family Relations and Conflict

Variable	Lambda	df	p value
Positive relation	0.40	1	0.02 ¹
Negative relation	-0.80	1	0.003 ²
Conflict-Yes	-0.59	1	0.02 ³
Conflict-No#	0.47	1	0.01 ⁴

1. indicates that a disproportionate number of non-prisoners experiences positive family relations.

2. Indicates that disproportionate numbers of prisoners experienced poor family relations.

3. Indicates that disproportionate numbers of prisoners experienced family conflict.

4. Indicates that disproportionate numbers of non-prisoners experienced no, or resolved, family conflict

Family conflict resolved by discussion or the absence of family conflict - both scored as "no conflict".

3.43 Conclusions

Despite shortcomings in the data gathering method, the overall picture created by the results indicates strongly that family relations in the life-course group were more negative and aggressive than those of the adolescent-limited group. Many more in the former group also perceived their family life as being conflicted. Families of adolescent-limited offenders made greater use of adaptive problem solving techniques, such as discussion, to

resolve conflict. The results support the evidence in the literature of a higher prevalence of conflict and aggression in the families of life-course offenders relative to those of adolescent-limited offenders (Moffitt, 2003). While the findings of the present study emphasised high conflict between primary caregivers, they did not show clearly that conflict between *all* family members was higher in the life-course offender group. This latter aspect merits further research with a similar set of subjects and the use of more specific interview and observational tools.

3.5 Family Stability (Single/Dual Parents)

The review of the literature in section 1 above found that single parent families, and more generally, broken homes, were a feature of the life-course offender's early development, but that a direct causal relationship had not been confirmed and these features might act as moderators for the poor parenting styles discussed earlier in this chapter. In addition, this variable was confounded by the extended family structure of the Zulu subjects, who made up the majority of the research groups. Even Coloured participants with only one biological caregiver were seldom raised by this parent alone as a (relatively) extended family structure was also present in the form of grandparents. Another confounding feature when describing Zulu families as being single/dual parent was that even when parents were married, one or both might work for extended periods in the city, leaving the child in the rural home, usually cared for by the grandmother.

In view of the above points, "single parent" families were redefined in the present study as those where parenting was not carried out by a *consistent* pair of mother/father figures, but where this role shifted between grandparents, uncles, aunts, father or mother alone, over relatively short periods in the subject's developing years. In this scenario, the subject was less likely to receive the "adaptive" parenting important for good development, due to one or more of the following parenting states: separated parents; frequent changes in early caregiver; and young single mothers.

Socio-economic Questionnaire versus Text Analysis Results: A discrepancy emerged between information on family stability arising from the Socio-economic Questionnaire and from the life-story text analysis. This was due to the relative coarseness of the Socio-economic Questionnaire measure of this variable, in addition to the inadequate preparation of respondents before completing this information. The textual analysis revealed that in several instances where subjects had indicated dual parent rearing on the Questionnaire, one of the primary caregivers had been replaced by a step parent, who was not accepted by the subject. Similarly, a "dual parent" rating on the Questionnaire occurred even when one or both the primary caregivers had been absent for prolonged periods during the early developmental years, working elsewhere, living with a second wife (traditional Zulu practice) and so on. In these instances, other members of the extended family would step in. Subjects reared in these conditions were consequently re-rated as coming from "divided" rather than "whole" families in the scoring.

3.51 Qualitative Results

Overall, the results of the analysis of the single/dual parent variable showed that even when an extended family network existed, the absence of a primary caregiver or frequent changes in primary caregiver were still associated with a life-course rather than adolescent-limited developmental trajectory.

86.7% (13 subjects) of *prisoners* experienced divisions between primary caretakers, absence of primary caretaker, or frequent changes in primary caretaker, in early childhood and primary school years, while 52.9% (9 subjects) in the *non-prisoner* group experienced these conditions.

In that this coding involved extracting simple descriptive information, only a few textual examples are given below. These demonstrate the intricacies of the extended family caregiver network in a traditional Zulu community.

Okay, well my father has not been staying with me at home. My father has got a home at J section, at Umlazi. My mother stay in A section, with my granny who is my mother's mother. About my siblings, I have one brother and

then a girl (my sister). We are two boys. I am the old one and then a girl comes after my younger brother. (5, P 79)

At home I am the only child to my mother as well as to my biological father. Eee...my mother does have children from her next marriage. There are four children; it is boy, who comes first, then a girl and another two boys. They are four then, and myself. I am the first born from both of my parents. My dad, also has children from his present marriage. I think there are about nine or ten. (8, P 57)

My mother passed away, I was then unable to go back to school since I had to pay school fees. (Grade 6)

Okay, where was your father?

Ey, my father died when I was very young.

So, who took care of you?

My mother was a person who took care of me before she died, then my grandmother and my grandfather cared for me.

Were those your mother's parents?

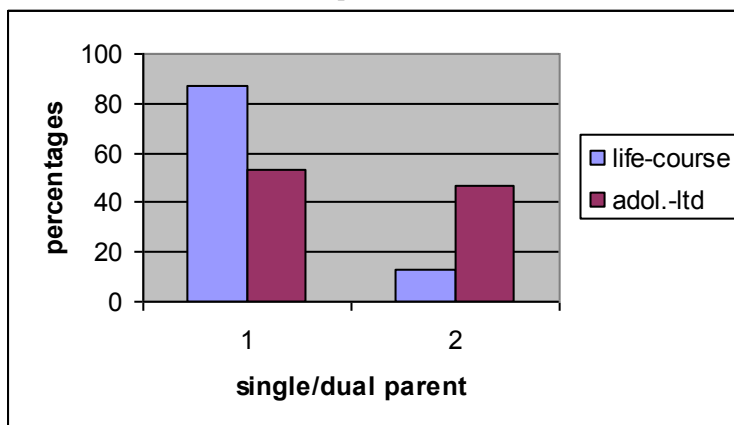
Yes, they were my mother's parents, because I used to call my grandmother, mother and my grandfather, father. (13, P 39)

3.52 Quantitative Analysis

Graphs.

The marked group difference in family stability, in the expected direction, revealed by the qualitative analysis, is depicted in Figure 8, which shows the distribution of "single" parent families across the two research groups.

Figure 7. Single/Both* Parent Families in the Groups



*= "stable/unstable" family structure

Statistical analysis.

The chi square test indicated these differences were not significant but that they approached significance on family stability. The more sensitive log linear statistic posted a significant difference between the life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups.

Family Stability

Fisher's exact test: X^2 exact probability: $Sig. = .08$ (2-sided); $df = 1$

Lambda for the interaction in the table = 0.44; $df = 1$; $p = 0.03^1$

1 = Indicates that sound family stability is disproportionately experienced by non-prisoners.

4. General Conclusions

The literature, in particular the work of Moffitt and her colleagues, provides persuasive evidence that poor parenting is a central influence in the interactive model used to explain a life-course offending developmental trajectory. These studies were conducted on primarily Western subjects, many of whom came from middle class socio-economic backgrounds (Moffitt, 2003). The majority of subjects in the present research were isiZulu speaking and experienced traditional non-Western child rearing. The remainder of each research group were English speaking, from a Coloured South African community. With the exception of one subject (ID16), all subjects in both groups were from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The research hypotheses on parent and family influences on life-course offending generated in chapter 2 held that the life-course offender group, relative to adolescent-limited offender group

- * experienced harsher, more inconsistent discipline
- * had colder, more rejecting early caregivers
- * experienced more limited parental vigilance
- * had families where communication between members was poorer
- * experienced higher levels of family conflict

The findings on these hypotheses appear in Table 11 and the summary points below.

*Table 11: Summary Table of Significant Group Differences on all Parent Variables**

Parent Variable		Df	Fisher's exact chi-square	Log linear	
			p-value	Lambda	p-value
Discipline style	Arbitrary	1		0.33	0.05
	Lax	1		0.33	0.04
	Consistent	1	.00	0.85	0.00
Watchfulness	Positive	1		0.51	0.04
Family Relations	Positive	1	.001	.40	0.02
	Negative	1		0.80	0.00
Family Conflict	Positive (present)	1	.03	0.59	0.02
	Negative	1	.001	0.47	0.01
Family Stability	Present	1		0.44	0.03

* Significant on either Fisher's exact test, the log linear model, or both

Table 11 shows that the results on parenting influences on a life-course offending trajectory support those in the literature, with the exception of the parental harsh discipline and cold affect categories. A summary of the key differences between the research groups on the parent and family variable is given below.

Discipline: There was a significant difference in the predicted direction between the groups regarding the parental discipline variables, "arbitrariness, laxity" and "consistency". This difference approached significance for "fairness" and "inconsistency". The perception of parental discipline as being more arbitrary and inconsistent by the life-course subjects was due to the lack of regularly consequences for antisocial behaviour, as well an erratic mix of lax and harsh sanctions for similar misdemeanours. A sense that sanctions were unjust also distinguished the life-course from the adolescent-limited offender groups. Most adolescent-limited subjects perceived discipline to be consistent, firm and fair. According to the literature and a personal communication, cultural and class factors explained the "harshness" of parental discipline experienced by both

groups. Such discipline is seen as appropriate in traditional Zulu families and is also a feature of the disciplinary style found in lower socio-economic groups.

Affect: Parental affect was not a significant differentiator between the groups, although the difference approached significance, in the expected direction. A higher level of parental warmth emerged in the life-course offender group than predicted by other literature findings. This feature appears also to be a function of the traditional upbringing of most subjects. Supporting this conclusion was evidence that the highest levels of parental coldness were experienced in the Coloured subgroup of the life-course offender group.

Watchfulness, Family Relations and Conflict: Parental monitoring of antisocial behaviour, family relationships and family conflict were discriminating variables, in the predicted direction. Parents of the adolescent-limited group were seen as keeping a better check on subjects' early antisocial behaviour. Members in these families also were portrayed in the life-stories as communicating better with one another, and having a lower level of aggression and conflict, than those in the life-course offender families. Where conflict was present in the former group, it was resolved more frequently by discussion than occurred in the families of life-course offender subjects.

Family Stability: The adolescent-limited group experienced more stability in their primary caregivers than the life-course offender subjects. The flip side of this variable, namely "family instability" had the same negative developmental implications as that carried by "single parent status" in a Western context.

Parenting Type: With the exception of parental harshness and affect, the overall parenting style of caregivers of prison subjects correlated with the parenting type associated with a life-course offending trajectory in the literature (Baumrind, 1971; Colvin, 2000; Loeber, 1982; Moffitt, 1993; Patterson et al., 1989). These parents exercised harsh, inconsistent discipline and modelled aggressive behaviour. The parenting style of caregivers of the non-prison subjects, with the exception of overly firm (harsh) discipline, mirrored that of adolescent-limited offender caregivers described in the literature. This is characterised by lax discipline and warm parent-child relations (Patterson et al., 1989). The analyses of all the parent discipline categories in the present study further suggest that subjects' *perceptions of the justice of the sanction* discriminated between the groups, rather than the harshness itself in the disciplinary style.

SUMMARY

The findings generally supported Moffitt's taxonomy regarding the impact of the environmental factors, parents and family, on the developmental trajectory of life-course offenders. Differences that emerged between the findings and the literature were attributed to the developing country status of the research groups.

The results showed that the life-course offender subject group in the study, relative to the adolescent-limited subject group, experienced more inconsistent parental discipline, made up of a mix of harshness and laxity, as well as irregular negative consequences for antisocial behaviour. The caregivers of this former group also exercised poorer vigilance of the young subjects' behaviour, family members related more poorly with one another, and families experienced higher levels of aggressive conflict in their relationships. Finally, family demographics mirrored the relationship between "single parent" families and chronic offending found in Western populations, albeit this pertained to the underlying negative dynamics moderated by "single parenting" rather than the physical presence of only one caregiver.

CHAPTER 6. PEER RELATIONSHIPS

OVERVIEW

This chapter examines the peer relationships of the two research groups and tests Moffitt's tenet that life-course offenders fail to develop healthy peer relations, while adolescent-limited offenders do achieve this. Group comparisons were not made on information about in-depth, one-to-one peer relationships, as the life-story technique did not permit the accumulation of this kind of data. Peer relations between the groups were evaluated in three different ways, based on the life-story data. Differences in the antisocial/prosocial focus of the peer groups with which subjects regularly interacted were measured. Levels of friendship, using Selman's stages of friendship, were compared between the groups. Finally, comparisons were made regarding the quality of friendships, using duration and conflict resolution as criteria. The function of friendship for subjects across the groups was also informally considered. The results supported Moffitt's tenet that life-course offenders have poor peer relationships while this is not the case for adolescent-limited offenders. The chapter also discusses limitations in the methodology used in the present study to assess peer relationships.

1. Background to the Analysis

The hypotheses from chapter 2 that are tested in this analysis are based on the association in the literature between peer relationships and a life-course offending pathway (see chapter 1, 3.2)

These hypotheses maintained that the life-course offender group

1. were involved with peer groups whose main activities were antisocial, while the adolescent-limited offender group participated in both antisocial and prosocial⁶³ groups
2. interacted with peers at a lower level of Selman's friendship stages than did the adolescent-limited offender group
3. experienced fewer positive aspects in their peer relationships than did adolescent-limited offenders⁶⁴

Hypothesis 1 tested Moffitt's thesis that life-course offenders have poor peer relationships, which progressively degenerate, so that by adolescence, life-course offenders associate mainly with antisocial peers. The hypothesis is also compatible with Ahrne's (1994) social organisation understanding of human relationships (see chapter 1, 3.23). Moffitt (1993) drew attention to the difficulty established life-course offenders have in responding to intervention by changing to an adaptive life style. A major reason for this is that, with a behavioural repertoire restricted to antisocial behaviours, they do not know how to relate to "normal" peers and revert to an aggressive, impulsive mode as soon as they feel pressure. This tenet is supported empirically by the work of Granic and Patterson (2006) and Dishion et al. (1995) discussed in Chapter 1, 3.2.

Hypothesis 2 tested Moffitt's view that life-course offenders fail to develop the initial socialisation skills upon which to build reciprocal healthy peer relationships. Given Moffitt's tenet that life-course offenders are unable to form healthy peer relationships, in particular, those that are reciprocal, it was expected that the peer relationships identified in the life-stories of prison subjects would not extend beyond Selman's second stage, while those of the non-prisoner group would reach higher stages. According to Selman's social-cognitive model, the child at risk for persistent antisocial behaviour does not attain the higher levels of perspective taking required for genuinely mutual relationships, due to his early distorted experience of interpersonal

⁶³ "Prosocial" refers to group activities that are not necessarily altruistic but have a generally positive social function.

⁶⁴ A fourth hypothesis arose from the literature review in chapter 1, 3.22, as to whether subjects interacted predominantly with peers using Youniss' first (one way) or second (reciprocal) form of socialisation. As the evaluation of this hypothesis required detailed information about one-to-one peer interactions of subjects, it was not feasible in this research.

relations. Maladaptive interactions with caregivers teach him primarily *to take and demand* in relationships.⁶⁵ His personal social–cognitive structures remain immature so that he is unable to accommodate later input (e.g. from peers with normal social skills) of relations that call for true reciprocal interactions.

Hypothesis 3 tests Moffitt’s tenet about the poor quality of peer relationships of life-course offenders. While detailed behavioural observations showed these to be conflicted and of short duration (Dishion et al, 1995), this information was sought from life-story data.

2. Method

2.1 Operational Definitions

2.11 Peer Group Relationships

Text references to an interviewee’s “friends”, and to his association with “gangs” were scored in measuring this subcode of the peer relationship code. Participants were placed in one of three categories, based on references in their stories to their peer group activities. These categories, defined in terms of whether a subject engaged primarily in antisocial, prosocial or a mix of anti-and prosocial activities with peers, were

- * prosocial (e.g. sporting, church, community help; general socialising groups)
- * antisocial (shared thieving, excessive drinking and other antisocial activities)
- * a balance of prosocial and antisocial activities

While these groups were separated in the qualitative analysis, the mixed and prosocial group functions were collapsed together to form a prosocial group, in the quantitative scoring.

Examples

Antisocial function

Okay, I had friends that I was involved in sport with.

Friends you were playing soccer with?

Yes, I was playing soccer with them, but when I was with my friends, we also had other ulterior motives, which were bad influences, they would want us to go out and misbehave.We would take certain girls out, you see, things like that.

So, the things that you did involved misbehaving?

Yes, it involved being naughty. (5, P 254)

Were your friends important in the different stages of your life?

Yes, they were important.....we used to smoke together. (7, P 203)

Prosocial function

Did you have friends at school?

Lots of friends.....

Which were the things that you did together?

Heh heh, [laughing], we would plan for the weekend. (19, P 323)

So, you missed those people that you are close to, when you are missing fun with them, thinking what you would be doing if you were together, you see, heh heh, [laughing], then you wished that you were at school. (22, P 221)

⁶⁵ Persistent delinquent types find a home with gangs of other antisocial adolescents. Here they do “give” in the sense of taking orders when holding a servile position in the gang. In this regard they conform to Youniss’ premise that peer relations are based on agreement rather than authority (Youniss, 1980). The life-courser *chooses* to accept this subservient role, as he needs the benefits of gang affiliation, such as power over unaffiliated members. This kind of “give” is not evidence of true reciprocity in peer relations however, and probably reflects Selman’s second stage of friendship, where the mutuality of the friendship serves the self’s immediate interests (Selman, 1980).

A mixed group function was recorded if a subject described associations with both types of groups in his life-story.

2.12 Selman's Friendship Stages

Each subject was rated at the *highest* Selman stage of friendship he achieved according to data from his life-story. These stages were not specified in the literature review on peer relationships (chapter 1, section 3.2) and appear below, accompanied by scoring examples. The normative age for each socio-cognitive stage is in brackets. A stage value (0-4) was allocated to each subject.

Stage 0: Close Friendship as Momentary Physical Interaction (roughly ages 3-7)

The primary function of friendship: Friendship serves to provide an immediate game or activity for the child. This stage is characterised by a failure to distinguish between the psychological and physical attributes of people, and by the failure to define friendship beyond the actual event when two people join to play. The child wants to have things done for him. Intimacy and closeness rely on demographic credentials (lives next door). *Conflict Resolution:* Conflict is resolved by physical force or movement (to reclaim a toy or a space).

Stage 1: Close Friendship as One-Way Assistance (roughly ages 4-9).

The primary function of friendship is to provide what the individual wants. He now is aware that the other person in the friendship has feelings and thoughts that influence his or her behaviour. He is also aware of the separation of the psychological phenomena of his "friend" and himself. He still does not understand the reciprocal relationship between these viewpoints. Intimacy is understood in terms of how closely the friend matches the self's interests.

Conflict Resolution: Conflict is undone by simply negating the action, by forcing a retraction, whether the other means it or not.

Stage 2: Close Friendship as Fair-Weather Cooperation (roughly ages 6-12). The primary function of friendship is to benefit the individual rather than the service of mutual concerns. A reciprocal coordination with the other is for the self's *immediate interests*. At this stage the individual has the ability to see the reciprocal relation between interpersonal perspectives and appreciates the influence of the needs and feelings of the other person in the friendship. He can stand outside the self but not outside the relationship. Good friendships are seen as developing over time, during which the friends share experiences and get to know each other at a deeper level. The individual goes beyond wanting things done for him in the friendship to recognising the other's need for companionship and to be liked. Making friends requires the coordination of context specific likes and dislikes, and the sharing of true feelings. Intimacy and sharing are also reciprocal. Friendship is still very context specific, and when friends disagree they are "no longer friends" until they make up.

Conflict Resolution: Conflict is understood as between parties rather than generated by one party only, hence resolution involves solutions satisfactory to each person.

Stage 3: Close Friendship as Intimate and Mutual Sharing

(roughly ages 9-15) The primary function of friendship serves to provide general mutual support to be upheld over a period of time. The individual is able to stand outside the relationship and the focus is on the relationship itself rather than on each individual in it. Intimacy or closeness is the degree to which friends share intimate personal concerns and the effort they make at the relationship.

Conflict Resolution: Friends recognise that working through a conflict can strengthen the relationship and talking things out is a key strategy to resolve conflict.

Stage 4: Close Friendship as Autonomous Interdependence

(roughly age 12-adulthood). The primary function of friendship is to provide the self with a sense of personal identity. There is the awareness that one defines oneself by one's friends. *Conflict Resolution:* Conflicts are resolved through mutual attempts at insight and self reflection.

Examples

So you had one set of friends when you were younger?

Yes...I would play open games, do a whole lot of children's stuff, play tops and marbles, and uh, as we were growing, uh, as I grew I met different friends and we...began to do different things. The second group of friends ... smoking bells, smoke cigarettes, you know what I'm saying. From there it went to drugs... But those friends, the second group of friends, have been my friends, right.
 You're still friends with them now?
 Ja, ja. Some of them, they've died, some of them are here with me.
 Some of them are here with you?-Ja, so ..ja, I... I stuck with those...those...with those people.
 And you still feel a bond with them?
 [Long silence, then soft laugh] Well I'm born again now. I'm a...I'm a born again Christian now. So I.. I live my life differently now. So, I...I still love my friends and as you see I still have a bond with them, but I got to...
 I...Uh...[laughs].keep a.. like a... how can I say... uh... I've gotta watch myself. You know what I'm saying because I don't want to get myself into the same things again. (1, P 210)

The above is a stage 1, where friendships depend on the circumstances at the time. Prior to prison, crime served this subject's needs, but in prison becoming a Christian replaced this function, so he dropped his allegiance to pre-prison friends.

About involvement, did you involve yourself with groups most of the time in doing things like going to church as a group or sit together at school as a group?
 I only involved myself with friends at school only when we were being naughty, when we were doing bad things.
 So, you were naughty?
 Yes we were naughty before. (15, P 276)

The above is a stage 2. where the focus is on sharing activities.

.....Okay, think about friends. What do you think good friends do when they are hanging around together, what are the things that they do together?
 I believe that a good friend is a person that would come to you and show you your mistake if you have done a mistake and a friend that if it gets to his ears that you have misbehaved, ask if you have really done it. If it is true than a good friend would tell you that this is not a way to go because of A, B, and C. If you have done it please try and not do it again, move away from things like that because they are not for you. (23-2, P 42)

The above is a stage 4 friendship, which is seen as a means of personal growth.

2.13 The Quality of Friendship

Positive peer relationship aspects considered here were

- * longer duration friendships
- * higher Selman stages of conflict resolution.

While less bullying and negative reciprocal behaviour was also expected in the adolescent-limited, relative to the life-course, offender group; this could not be measured by the life-story tool. Subjects were unlikely to have insight into whether they had been youthful "bullies" and whether they typically responded in a negative, aggressive way to social stress situations. Access to this data required different assessment tools, such as direct observation and role-play.

Duration.

The duration of individual friendships over time was measured according to information given in a story. Duration was measured by specific time spans stated (e.g. two years) or an implied duration ("I was friends with him since I was young"). A rule of thumb was that friendships lasting at least 18 months were regarded as being of longer term duration. This called for a relationship to continue beyond the convenience of the academic school year. While this time span might seem quite short, an initial analysis of the stories showed that many subjects gave no time span at all, suggesting these relationships were sufficiently unimportant to them as to not be of noteworthy duration.

Examples

How important were your friends during all your growing stages?

I am realizing this now since I am here that the friends that I had were not acceptable because we were not able to stop each other from unacceptable behaviours that we were doing. We were a bad influence for each other. Did you like to be together?
Yes, we liked to be together. (3, P 173)

...Are you still friendly with any of them?
Well none of them come and see me. I haven't phoned any of them from the time I was here [his friends].
Why?
Well actually I am a little bit ashamed of what I did and I know for a fact they would want to know why I did it and I have not answer for them- I am a little bit embarrassed but, they know where I am so if you really were a friend I think you will come and see me. But I know there is still time, there is still time left.....you will come and see me. (6, P 398)

Oh, the time that I remember is when I had friends. As the time went on, I was jailed and then I realized that a friend is not helpful or somebody to rely on since I was sitting in jail and my friend never visited me. It was only my family who took trouble to come and visit me. It was when I realized that a friendship thing does not exist. It was about deceiving each other, I would say that. (13, P 10)

The above extracts were scored for "no duration". Although it is not directly stated in the extracts, the implication is earlier friendships are easily forgone to meet present needs.

...I had friends in school and out of school
And are you still friendly with any of those people?
Yes. (16, P 196)

This text is scored for long duration. Although a time span is not specified there is the implication the subject maintained some friendships, as he is now finished school.

Conflict.

Selman's stages of conflict described in 2.12 above were used to rate subjects.

Examples

Did you like to do things with people or on your own most of the time?
No, I liked doing things with people though most of the time, people come with bad ideas and there were times where we would fight, and then I would do things on my own, in any case, I liked doing things with others. (5, P 269)

The above text is at stage 0 where conflict resolved physically.

.....Yes. If you have an issue with your friend how do you go about solving it?
No, we sit down and discuss it, talk it over, and when there is any one that needs to ask for an apology then would do and talk it over. (25-2, P 61)

This text is at stage 2 where conflict is resolved to each person's mutual satisfaction.

3 Process

The scoring procedures covered in chapter 3, 5.3, apply to the analysis of the peer relationship code. While the primary intention in the analysis was to obtain subjects' perceptions of their peer relations, outsider comments on this added to the data. Thus third party data also provided relevant information for this analysis. Information was prompted about peer relationships from the life-stories and third party interviews. Two prompt questions in the Biographical Questionnaire generated basic information on subjects' peer relationships:

How did you get on with the other kids at school?

Tell me about your friends when you were young.

As shown by the text extracts in the results discussion below, interviewers used further prompts to unpack terse responses to the above, although this did not always produce the desired information.

It became apparent in the course of the initial analysis of the peer code that some of the information needed to confirm or disprove the research hypotheses around this variable was not tapped by the stories, due to the open-ended interview process. This led to a decision to conduct short follow-up interviews to obtain this information. The prompt questions in these targeted the shortfall of information about duration of friendships and conflict resolution, and sought richer information on participants' understanding of friendship, to assist in placing them into one of Selman's friendship stages. The follow-up prompts were

Do you still have friends that were your friends when you were 10 years old?
 Are they still your friends even now?
 If you have an issue with your friend how do you go about solving it?
 What do you think good friends do when they are hanging around together?

The inclusion of follow-up data for some, but not all, subjects in the data analysis was a validity concern, as differences between the research groups might arise from this additional information. However, the results suggested this was not the case (see chapter 3, section 4).

2.3 The Measurement of Peer Relations

It became apparent in the course of the analysis of peer relationships that the Biographical Interview tool created some obstacles for the meaningful comparison of group differences on this variable. Three particular limitations emerged:

1. *Limited Data*: The inability of the interview technique to access in-depth information on peer interactions, due to the overall aim of gaining a broad picture of a subject's life story, led to insufficient information on some details about relationships. In particular, the duration of friendships and how subjects resolved conflict with a friend were poorly covered. While some of this information was obtained spontaneously in initial interviews and some from follow-up interviews, the short fall of data led to conclusions on group differences in these categories to be tentative rather than firm.

2. *Biased Perceptions* – Despite peer relationship hypotheses to the contrary, the accounts of subjects in both groups about their personal relationships generally failed to reveal major interpersonal difficulties. Upon reflection, this finding is unsurprising when it is considered that for even a well adapted individual, in a similar interview context, admission of unsatisfactory peer relationships amounts to acknowledging personal failure to a virtual stranger. This kind of disclosure is likely to be an even greater problem for the life-course offender, due to their fragile self image (Baumeister et al., 1996).

Different research methodology to that used in the present study is required to counter this problem. A combination of interviews, teacher and parent ratings and behavioural observations are likely to offer better insights into the nature of research participants' interpersonal relationships (Dishion et al., 1995). This is a task for future research using similar sample groups to those in the present study.

3. *Poor Quality Third Party Input* - Third party interviews were expected to provide relevant information on subjects' early peer relationships, as the majority of third party interviews took place with close family members. The information obtained was disappointing as most third parties in both groups made bland, uncritical comments about the adequacy of subjects' youthful peer relations. The analyses of the antisocial and parenting codes (see chapters 4 and 5 respectively) suggest some of these uncritical responses were due to poor parental vigilance. A second obstacle to third party input on subjects' peer relations was one common to other codes, namely that third party interviews were not conducted across all subjects.

The tapestry approach (see chapter 2) in the methodology of this study provided a foil to the above validity concerns. This technique removed the necessity of proving *conclusively* hypotheses about group differences on *any one variable alone*, as the results of each variable analysis made up a only a small portion of the bigger picture or “tapestry” of results. It was this overall gestalt that ultimately supported or disproved the key research hypotheses.

Despite the above methodological limitations, each life-story created rich images of peer relationships, due to the spontaneous remarks about these appearing at many points of a story.⁶⁶

2.4 Reliability

Reliability was calculated using the scores of two raters on two randomly chosen prisoner and non-prisoner stories. Reliability was calculated as a composite score across the peer subcategories discussed in 2.1 above, namely peer group affiliation; Selman’s friendship and conflict resolution stages; and duration of friendships. Cohen’s Kappa (Howell, 1997) gave a sound inter-rater reliability figure of 0.84.

3. Results

3.1 Qualitative Results

3.11 Group Affiliation

This analysis investigated the prosocial/antisocial nature of the peer affiliations of the two research groups.

Antisocial peer relationships.

86.7% of prisoners (13 subjects) and no non-prisoners described their peer groups as having solely an antisocial function. The life-course participants engaged in both status and indictable offences with peers for “excitement”, but primarily as a means of “belonging” to a group. Antisocial behaviour was a condition for membership in these groups and peer relationships were based exclusively on shared antisocial behaviour. These results support Moffitt’s tenet that life-course offenders have entrenched, poor socialising skills. The results are also compatible with Ahrne’s (1994) social organisational understanding of family and peer groups.

Examples

Prisoners

You know what I’m saying, it was...I wake up in the morning and the only reason I’m going to school is to meet my friends. (1, P 182)

I had a video, we had a video machine at home, and uh, I told my friends to stay at our place I’m going to fetch one of our video cassettes, it was across at one of the friend’s homes. So I left them and they raided my cupboards, and I didn’t know, and when my mother came back she was looking for something, she couldn’t find it, she opened the cupboard, and all the nice things are missing, that’s how they knew [that I truanted]. (1, P 188)

How important were your friends during all your growing stages?
I am realizing this now since I am here that the friends that I had were not acceptable because we were not able to stop each other from unacceptable behaviours that we were doing. We were a bad influence for each other.
Did you like to be together?
Yes, we liked to be together. (3, P 173)

The above extracts highlight the link between adolescent peer relationships and antisocial behaviour. The extract below supports Ahrne’s (1994) organisational construction of groups. It shows group acceptance as

⁶⁶ This doubled the work of the principle and independent raters as each entire text, rather than the section pertaining to the “peer” prompt, had to be studied assiduously!

dependent on the subject's participation in criminal behaviour, a contribution he was keen to make in order to belong.

How did you feel after each actual incident? [of serious assault]
 I felt very proud. I think, I mean I was doing what my friends were doing.
 So it felt like the right thing? Or did it..?
 Ja, felt like the... felt like the right thing at the time
 So you were doing things in order to be accepted by a particular group of people?
 Ja, ja. (1, P 435)

Mixed peer relations.

Most non-prisoner stories (64.7% - 11 subjects) and no prisoners described relationships with both antisocial and prosocial peer groups, a trend supporting the contention that this subject group represented Moffitt's adolescent-limited offenders (Moffitt, 1993). Moffitt held that while this kind of delinquent engaged in many antisocial activities with peers in adolescence, they were also capable of holding normative social interactions. Prosocial activities described in these stories and those in stories falling in the "only prosocial" group that follows, related to sport, drama, socialising and the sharing of ideas.

Examples

Non-prisoners

From home up until I came here, we were doing all the wrong things with friends, since we could not correct each other, no one notices that what we were doing was wrong. But since I am now old I can tell between wrong and right. (17, P 254)

What are the things that you did with people who were your friends?
 We would collect money or save money, that when we decide to go to the beach, or to the sea, then take our money to spend it on Kentucky, sit together and enjoy it.
 Okay, so it means that your friends were important to you?
 Yes. (17, P 228)

We did gospel music, in so much that we had a group that we started. (29, P 376)

His parents were unsure of his peer relationships in primary school but he did have friends at high school. These were generally fine, although a few engaged in dodgy behaviour. (29- 3rd, P 19 - with mother)

Prosocial peer relations.

13.3% of prisoner (2 subjects) and 35.3% of non-prisoner (6 subjects) life-stories described only prosocial peer group affiliation. Although this group is discussed separately here, the mixed and prosocial groups were collapsed into a larger group of subjects who did not relate *only* to antisocial peers in their adolescence, for the quantitative analysis (See Figure 8). This step was taken because it was apparent, from other sections of the life-stories of some "prosocial" subjects, that even these had been involved in status or indictable crime with [by implication, antisocial] peers in the past, even though they did not specify any antisocial group affiliations in their stories. Even non-prisoners in this group who described no significant antisocial behaviours in other parts of their stories, had participated in minor antisocial activities such as some truanting and heavy drinking.

The process described above of categorising the affiliation peer subcode differently in the qualitative and quantitative analyses reflected the importance placed in the research model on a *subject's perception of life*, while at the same time attempting to provide some "objectivity" to the findings where appropriate.

Examples

Prisoners

What memories can you recall clearly while you were young?
 What I can remember clearly is playing with my friends. Eh, I can not recall the kind of life I used to have. I remember playing basket ball with my friends. (12, P 15)

I've played soccer and I used to sing -my brother had choir, so I managed the choir. (12, P 271)

The groups you were involved in your life , what were they as you have said that you did karate , what are the other ones?

Other groups were groups like class groups . (10, P 250)

I see, how important were your friends in different aspects of your life ?

Eyh, some weren't important , some just were. Yes, because if I was absent they could be the first ones to come and see me, when school time was over my real friends true friends --out of the lot that I've mentioned, they would come. They would ask: "What was wrong? We didn't see you at school". I would explain and tell them I see them the following day. (10, P 262)

Non-prisoners

Okay, I would like you to tell me in order all the groups that you have been involved with, in your life. It could be friends, music, etc.

It was a club...From 1992, after having been involved in a confirmation class. So we then became a class, from the class to church choir. I also had a group of friends, whatever we were doing, we would meet and plan.

Sometimes we would plan to watch soccer match, or going away. We would accompany each other to go and do some work things like that.

How important were those people in your life?

Uh, what could I say, the club, I liked it. It was one of those important things to me since it kept me focused.

So did you like to do things alone or with others?

No, I liked to do things with others. (23, P 148)

ID 30 mixed with peers but avoided gangs. [Mother implies "delinquent" gangs here.] (30-3rd, P 11 – with mother)

3.12 Selman's Stages of Friendship

This analysis investigated group differences in the level of friendship enjoyed by the research participants, using Selman's stages of friendship (see 2.12 above).

The majority of *prisoners* (66.7% - 10 subjects) fell into Selman's stage 2 in their peer relationships, where the primary function of friendship is the mutual sharing of activities, interests and feelings, although the friendship is for the benefit of self rather than others. The remaining five prisoners (33.3%) related at a stage 1 level, where the primary function of friendship is to meet the individual's wants, without concern for mutual benefits in the relationship. *Non-prisoners* as a group functioned at an overall higher friendship stage. Four subjects (23.5%) were at stage 4, where friendship serves to provide the self with a sense of personal identity. Seven (41.2%) were at stage 3, where the main purpose of friendship is the provision of mutual support over a prolonged time period. The remaining six non-prisoners (35.3%) were at Selman's stage 2. Overall, the results indicated that the prisoner group saw friendships as meeting their own needs rather than as a reciprocal relationship. Less than half the non-prisoner group saw friendship as merely serving their own needs, albeit to the mutual satisfaction of the other. The remainder were able to engage in peer relationships at a deeper level, gaining longer term mutual support and personal growth through their relationships.

The results of the qualitative analysis generally support the second peer hypothesis. However, while Selman's stages 1, 3 and 4 discriminated between the groups, the stage 2 friendship level did not. According to the results, the desire to serve one's own interests, while still engaging in some kind of reciprocal relationship (stage 2), is a common feature of many peer relationships of both life-course and adolescent-limited delinquents.

Examples

Prisoners

Friends?...They were important for the fact that we were involved in money issues....

Okay, did you always do things with friends or sometimes alone?

Eh, I was involved with friends because of money. One would go and commit crime in a certain area, maybe I won't have a gun, and I would go to them and borrow a gun or go with them. (9, P 351)

This is a stage 1 where the relationships serves only to meet the subject's needs.

I enjoyed being at school because that was where we were naughty. (15, P 265)

This is a stage 2, as “naughtiness” is a shared activity.

Non-prisoners

Were you used to stealing?

No, I did not mix with those stealing but I did steal and sometimes the guys that stole cars used to visit me at home. They would come with a stolen car and we would ride it the whole night-then it would go for sale. (20, P 436)

How important were your friends to you when you were growing?

They were important to me, I also loved them since I would share my problems with them and would solve some of my problems with them. When I was still very young, I used to share my problems with them and they would solve them for me. (20, P 297)

The above are stage 2 friendships. Although the subjects speak of more than just “doing things” with friends, the problem solving they “share” is essentially one sided.

.....Why do you have many friends?

Uh, my opinion is we have so many things to talk about as we grow, things that you know that you could only talk about it with your friend.

Do you mean things that you could not talk to parents about them?

Yes, things that you can not discuss with parents.

Okay, okay, what are those things that you discuss with friends so much?

Ya, well, we talk about school issues, about subjects, how much I have learnt and what we did together-I have come across with such and such problems. We discuss things like that, and how naughty we can be. We also talk about girlfriends, heh heh, [laughing]. (29, P 342)

The above is a stage 3, with the mutual sharing of activities and ideas.

So, in general what do you think good friend would sit down and do or discuss when they are hanging around together?

Okay, it is helping each other to grow mentally.

Okay, helping each other to grow mentally?

Yes,

To help each other develops in life and mentally. And give each other advises not to rush into things that is still ahead of us. That is that brother. (21-2, P 73)

This is a stage 4 as the friendship serves to grow each participant’s self identity.

3.13 Quality of Friendships: Duration and Conflict Resolution

These results test the third hypothesis that life-course offender subjects described fewer positive aspects in their peer relationships than did adolescent-limited offenders. “Quality” was assessed by durability and low conflict in subjects’ friendships.

Duration.

The results indicated that *non-prisoners* (70.6% of subjects) as a group enjoyed longer term peer relationships than their prison counterparts. Only one *prison* subject referred to keeping a friend over a period of time, while 12 non-prisoner stories pointed to longer term friendships. This was directly confirmed by 10 subjects and implied in a further two stories.

A concern about the validity of the conclusions drawn from these results relates to the number of stories where the presence or absence of long term friendships could not be ascertained, due to a lack of information. This was the case in six prisoner and five non-prisoner stories.

Examples

Prisoners

...The friendship went on for a long time?

Until I was 21 [and came to prison].

Was that the longest time you kept a friend?

I have known him all my life, all my life. (4-2, P 47)

Non-prisoners

Previously [before Boys' Town] did you get on along with other pupils?

Not everyone.

Were your friends from your school -at that stage -did you have friends out of school?

I had friends in school and out of school.

And are you still friendly with any of those people ?

Yes. (16, P 196)

Do you have a friend that has been around for a long time here in Inchanga?

Yes, I do,.....I could say that it is X.

How do you think you have had him as a friend?

I think I have had him for 6 years as a friend.....Yes, we are still friends. (27-2, P 134)

I believe in loyalty. If anything happens I'm there for them, but at the end of the day my family came first. (32, P 164)

In the last text above, it is implied that the subject is loyal to friends over time

Conflict resolution.

The stories of the adolescent-limited group indicated they dealt with conflict more effectively in their friendships than the life-course offender group. This outcome complements evidence that the adolescent-limited group also engaged in longer standing peer relationships, as the ability to resolve conflict amicably with friends makes for longer term friendships. In the *prisoner* group, 26.9% (4 subjects) resolved peer conflict by physical means (Selman's conflict stage 0) and 6.7% (1 subject), through mutual agreement (stage 2). In the non-prisoner group, 52.9% (9 subjects) were able to resolve peer conflict amicably (stage 2) while 11.8% (2 subjects) did this through physical fighting (stage 0).

Limited life-story data on peer conflict was also a validity concern in this analysis. Nine prisoners and six non-prisoners made no comment on the topic. Half the total number of participants in either group providing conflict information only did so in response to specific prompts in the follow-up interview. Despite this latter situation, peer conflict data was included in the analysis results, on the back of evidence that impressions created by the initial interview did not change materially with additional information from the follow-up interview (see chapter 3, section 4).

3.14 Primary Needs met by Peer Relationships

In addition to information about the positive or negative socialising influence of participants' peer groups (the first hypothesis above), detailed information about the primary needs met for a subject met through his peer relationships emerged in the stories. This data was not associated with any of the peer code hypotheses and is covered only in the qualitative analysis.

Most prison subjects saw their friends as meeting their need to socialize and belong, in the context of antisocial activities. They enjoyed the support of, and sharing with, friends in this. Excitement and power were associated with friends by a few in this group. For most non-prisoners, friendships met a similar need to belong, socialize and share. However, they saw this occurring in the context of both shared prosocial and antisocial activities. Personal growth was facilitated by some friendships in this group, which was not the case in prisoner stories. A key difference emerging between the research groups related to *the prerequisite of engaging in antisocial behaviour in order to belong to a group in the life-course offender group*, while this was not the case for group membership in the adolescent-limited group, despite the fact they participated in as many status offences as their life-course counterparts (see chapter 4).

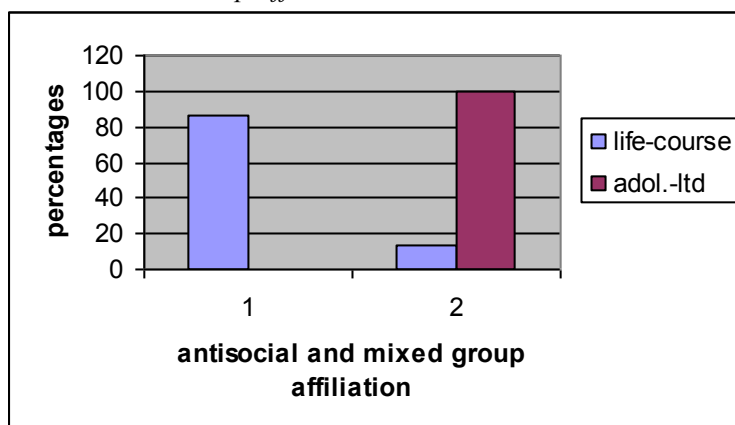
3.2 Quantitative Results

This was conducted on data about subjects' group affiliations, stage of friendship, duration of friendship and stage of conflict resolution.

Graphs

Figure 8 depicts differences in antisocial/prosocial peer group affiliation between the groups. Results graphs of the other peer hypotheses in section 1 above were inappropriate due to the small subject numbers in each category of these subcodes.

Figure 8. Group Differences in Peer Group Affiliations



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

Key

1. antisocial group

2. prosocial + antisocial groups

Life-course *
86.7% (13)

Adol.-limited *
0%

100%(17)

*= % subjects in each group (number of subjects))

Statistical Analysis

Antisocial or Mixed/Prosocial Peer Group

The chi square statistic indicated a highly significant association between prisoner status and antisocial group affiliation. Given that the non-prisoner/antisocial affiliation cell was empty, the log linear could not be calculated.

Antisocial versus Mixed Group Affiliation

Fisher's exact test:

X^2 exact probability:

$df= 1; p = 0.00$ (2-sided)

Selman's Stages of Friendship

The logistic regression conducted on the two-way prisoner/non-prisoner*Selman's friendship stages did not show a significant relationship between prisoner/non-prisoner status and stages.

Duration of Friendships

The chi-square test found a highly significant association between non-prisoner status and long duration friendships. The "short duration" variable represented both definite statements of short duration, or, no comment on duration, in a story. It was assumed that in the latter case, subject's friendships were sufficiently unimportant not to be of long duration.⁶⁷

Fisher's exact test:

X^2 exact probability:

$df= 1; p = 0.00$ (2-sided)

Log linear: Lambda for the interaction in the table = 1.006; $df = 1; p = 0.00$

⁶⁷ This number of "no responses" for both this subcode and the "conflict stages" subcode reflects a shortcoming of the research design, referred to in chapter 10.

Conflict Stage

A logistic regression conducted on the two-way prisoner/non-prisoner*Selman's conflict stages showed a significant overall model ($n = 16$, $G = 5.74$, $p = 0.02$). The b-weight for "conflict stage" = -1.45, and was not accountable by chance (Wald statistic = -2.12, $df = 1$, $p = 0.03$). Higher conflict stages were strongly associated with non-prisoners.

SUMMARY

Despite methodological concerns about the limited data on a few of the peer subcodes, the investigation of peer relationships in the life-stories confirmed Moffitt's tenet that life-course offenders fail to develop adequate peer relationships while this is not the case with adolescent-limited offenders. In the study, life-story information was evaluated for group differences in peer affiliations, friendship levels, and the quality of peer relationships as measured by duration and conflict resolution techniques. Both the qualitative and quantitative findings showed that life-course offender subjects associated primarily with antisocial groups while adolescent-limited offenders participated in prosocial *and* antisocial groups. The adolescent-limited offender group related to friends at a higher Selman friendship stage than did life-course offenders. The latter engaged with peers in a self serving way. While this was also the case for some adolescent-limited subjects, many in this group engaged in mutually reciprocal friendships. Regarding the quality of peer relationships, the life-course group experienced shorter friendships and engaged in fewer adaptive conflict resolution techniques than did the adolescent-limited group.

CHAPTER 7. THE FAILURE TO SELF-MANAGE: IMPULSIVITY AND GOAL SETTING

OVERVIEW

The investigation of impulsivity and goal setting data in this chapter explored the research hypotheses in chapter 2 pertaining to the same two codes. The first of these was based on Moffitt's taxonomy, holding that the life-course offender research group thought and acted more impulsively than adolescent-limited offenders. The second explored the argument arising logically out of this assumption, that the life-course offender group, relative to their adolescent-limited counterparts, set fewer long term goals, fewer prosocial goals, and were less persevering in their pursuit of these. The chapter begins by highlighting pertinent points from the literature review in chapter 1. Impulsivity and goal setting data are explored separately but linked in the conclusions drawn at the end of the chapter. The results analysis generally confirmed the research hypotheses.

1. Background to the Analysis

A characteristic of Moffitt's life-course offenders is poor self-control (Arbuthnot et al., 1987; Baumeister & Exline, 1999; Patterson et al., 1989; Sampson & Laub, 1990). Impulsivity and risk-taking (Cooper et al., 2003; Gerkovich, 2001) are aspects of poor self-control. The literature on low self-control (chapter 1, 4.3) indicates that taking a risk or acting on the spur of the moment are not in themselves maladaptive. Personality theorists recognise that adaptive behaviour balances spontaneity with planning. Moffitt's life-course offender fails to find this balance. His behaviour demonstrates an inappropriate or pervasive display of impulsivity (Ainslie, 1992; Apter, 2001; Miller, 1990). In terms of this feature, a helpful model of maladaptive self-control in the life-course offending trajectory is that of a *failure in self-management*. In terms of this metaphor, the current chapter investigates the adaptive significance of an overall *planned*, versus *unplanned*, lifestyle.

The text analysis investigated group differences in these two kinds of life styles through life-story evidence on impulsivity, low self-control, risk taking and goal setting or planning. There is an overlap between these concepts and antisocial behaviour, as shown in chapter 1, 4.31. Poor planning is a feature of both risk taking and low level hierarchies in action identity theory. While poor planners do not necessarily act impulsively, impulsivity is usually correlated with limited planning. Risk taking can also be explained in terms of Apter's (2001) "paratelic" orientation. As these points demonstrate, the literature around the theoretical relationship between impulsivity, its correlates, and chronic antisocial behaviour, is complex. To facilitate a better appreciation of the results reported in this chapter, a summary of the theoretical relationship between low self-control and chronic offending, covered in chapter 1, is given below.

It was argued in chapter 1 that a social learning explanation of the association between impulsivity and chronic antisocial behaviour best supports the developmental perspective of Moffitt's taxonomy. Especially relevant are social learning theories that emphasise weak early social bonds as a primary causative factor. An example is Baumeister's attachment theory, which makes a clear connection between early poor bonding with primary caretakers, subsequent poor self-control and an antisocial life trajectory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Other theoretical models, while not taking a developmental perspective, also contribute to an understanding of the link between impulsivity and persistent antisocial behaviour. Apter's (2001) reversal theory is a motivational approach that underlines the importance of balance between impulsivity and planning in adaptive behaviour. Ainslie (1992) introduces a psychoanalytic and cognitive slant, with his temporal preference or "temptation" theory. Vallacher and Wegner's (1985) action identity theory make a contribution towards understanding impulsivity by exploring the varying simple/complex cognitive levels behind actions.

The text analyses of the impulsivity and goal setting codes could not specifically test any of the above theoretical models, reviewed in chapter 1, 4.3, due to the research design.⁶⁸ The major value of the literature

⁶⁸ Developmental explanations such as that of Baumeister could not be pursued, due to limited early developmental data. The open-ended interview style lacked the focus necessary to investigate the other theories of impulsivity, such as temporal preference theory, reversal theory or action identity theory.

review around impulsivity was the wide range of research evidence showing *impulsivity, risk taking and poor self-control to be consistently associated with a life-course* rather than an adolescent-limited developmental trajectory. The present chapter presents the results of the investigations into differences between the life-course and adolescent-limited research groups on measures of self-control, impulsivity and risk taking, and goal setting behaviour.

Goal setting as an indirect measure of impulsivity and recidivism.

Data on impulsivity was obtained from the analysis of subjects' statements in the interviews, based on the operational definitions of impulsivity in 2.1 below. This information was limited due to the emphasis on descriptive accounts of past experience in the Biographical Questionnaire, rather than coverage of scenarios depicting impulsive behaviour. On the other hand, examples of goal setting were plentiful in the stories, as the design of the Questionnaire encouraged the expression of short and long term goals. There is limited information on a direct link between goal setting and delinquency in the literature, with the exception of some research into the neurological underpinnings of chronic impulsivity (Miller, 1990). However, it is a reasonable assumption that a person whose modus operandi is "reactive" rather than "proactive", is unlikely to set and achieve long term goals. In these terms, and given the rich data available, the analysis of goal setting in the texts became an important supplementary, albeit indirect, measure of subjects' self-control and impulsivity.

2. Method

2.1 Operational Definitions

There were three phases to the formulation of the operational definitions ultimately used to analyse impulsivity and goal setting in the life-stories. Phases 1 and 2 involved the text analytic process. Phase 3 was a reorganisation of some of the goal setting subcodes that emerged in Phase 2.

2.11 Phase 1

Two broad operational definitions was formulated, based on the literature around Moffitt's taxonomy. These were

1. *Low self-control* as used by Moffitt, (Wright et al., 1999), implies a lack of emotional control, irritability, distractibility, impulsivity and risk-taking. *Impulsivity* is the key manifestation of low self-control and is demonstrated differently across developmental stages in Moffitt's taxonomy (Wright et al., 1999). In the child it manifests as acting without thought, excessive shifting between activities, and the need for much supervision. The adolescent impulsive does not plan, is not reflective, careful nor rational. These latter traits endure in the adult impulsive, albeit less floridly. *Risk-Taking* occurs when the choice of short term rewards takes place at the expense of long-term costs (Cooper et al., 2003). The risk-taker makes rapid, poorly planned decisions, often in response to the frustration of his immediate needs and demands. He often tries to undo the consequences of his actions immediately after they occur (Weintraub, 1981). Where evidence of impulsivity was not overt in the life-stories, the "risk taking" element of the general definition allowed some statements still to be scored for impulsivity. This applied to statements about actions *likely to be* potentially harmful and which were often later regretted.

2. *Goal Setting* - The presence or absence of goals, and the nature of the goals themselves in life-stories gave an indication of an impulsive (unplanned) versus a controlled (planned) life style. While each style is appropriate at different times, Moffitt's theory maintained that the life-course offender utilized the former rigidly, or inappropriately. Adherence to goals and how realistic these were in terms of a subject's situation and abilities was also examined. Another area of interest in the analysis was whether goals were broken down into easy-to-achieve sub-goals, with a planned approach to life, or whether goals were unrealistic or vague.

2.12 Phase 2

After the analysis of several life-stories in each group, it became apparent that the rich data generated by the stories required more detailed subcodes to capture the information on impulsivity and goal setting. Accordingly, in Phase 2, all the stories were analysed/re-analysed, using these more detailed subcodes, which appear below.

Impulsivity.

While the subcodes below involve different aspects of impulsive behaviour, they all measure impulsivity. Therefore, the sum of counts across all these subcodes, for each research group, was used to in the comparisons between the groups.

1. Want it now

The subject was not prepared to delay meeting wants such as material wealth, clothing or opportunities and justified antisocial behaviour to get these if unobtainable any other way at the time.

2. Risk behaviour – choices to act antisocially

Two kinds of statements were scored, namely, a choice to act antisocially, for *immediate* gain, and a choice to act antisocially, *discounting* negative *long term consequences*.

3. Emotionally driven damaging impulsive acts

Two kinds of statements were scored, namely impulsive actions that were *immediately* damaging, and impulsive actions with potentially negative *long term consequences*.

4. Thoughtless

Falling into actions that were potentially harmful to oneself or others was scored (an arbitrary act, rather than one in response to pressure of fear or emotions).

Goal setting.

The initial analysis using the Phase 1 operational definition of goal setting also generated a range of goal subcodes. Unlike the impulsivity subcodes, these differed in their implications, and the total count of goal statements across the subcodes was not used in group comparisons in the quantitative analysis. Given the many subcodes generated by the initial analysis, the operational definitions below are illustrated by text examples, to assist with clarity.

1. Goal-less –these statements were scored where the subject stated specifically that he had no goals, or that these were antisocial.

Examples

What kind of a time was it for you then, those five years after your parents got divorced until when he [father] died?.

It was, it was same like when I, when I, when I was, when I was still a child. You know what I'm saying. There was nothing important about it, about living anyway..uh.

You had no goals ..

No goals. (1, P 93)

So are you then not even planning at this stage for the outside [out of prison], are you going to deal with that later?

Well actually, I don't feel it is necessary to do so now because when I first came to prison I only just wanted to get back my revenge. (6, P 311)

2. Unrealistic goals and realistic goals

Unrealistic goals were those unlikely to be achieved, in terms of the subject's situation, training and abilities, as portrayed in a life-story. The subject did not necessarily recognise the unrealistic nature of his aspirations. There were several types of unrealistic goals that emerged.

Examples

Oh, I wanna, I wanna go and uh, make things right with my son and my wife, that's my biggest dream.....

Do they visit you? [ex girlfriend and son]

No, I haven't seen him in four years. She's got a.. she's got a..a. another boyfriend now, she's got a child from him.

But I've got a vision from God. Ja, and I... I don't... like I told her, I don't really support ..., I don't really care, you

know what I'm saying, you know what I'm saying? As long I come out that she's still willing to take me back. (1, P 297)

Goals you wanted to achieve but haven't?

There's one thing that still attracts me. I don't have the patience to study, and I want to study. I still kind of get the ... to get the job 'cause I actually want to be an economist.

An economist?

Ja, I love to do all that. It's just that I can't get...my concentration levels... I don't have the patience to sit down for at least an hour and concentrate on something. Like I want to do it, but I can't do it. (31, P405)

Realistic goals, as with unrealistic goals, took a number of forms in the text analysis. Statements were further divided into three categories: (a) realistic goals; (b) hard/easy goals and (c) stereotyped goals.

(a) Realistic goals – Realistic goals were anchored in the subject's life experience and were personal rather than stereotypical. Whereas they could be blocked by external constraints such as high unemployment, they were within the subject's personal capacity to attain, given his personality, prior experience in the field, possession of prerequisite qualifications or information, family factors and so on.

Example

Oh, can you tell me three things that you wanted to accomplish if you were to view you future?

Complete school... Working.. When I was young. I also wished to work where my father used to work, because his work conditions were good. He used to run errands. (12, P87)

(b) Easy and hard goals – these were goals with or without clear steps towards their achievement. Goals were not "easy" because they were low level (e.g. "I am going to go to the shops") or "hard" because they aimed high (e.g. "I would like to get my doctorate"). "Easy" implied that the subject had devoted thought to the steps to be taken in order to reach the goal, or was already progressing towards achievement of the goal. The opposite held for "hard", where there was no sign of thought about steps to be taken to achieve the goal, or where the steps to be taken were simplistic and not based on a realistic assessment of the situation.

The emergence of "easy/hard" goal data was of interest in terms of the simple and complex cognitive action hierarchies in Vallacher and Wegner's (1985) action identity theory linking the pervasive use of simple hierarchies with Moffitt's chronic antisocial offender (see chapter 1, 4.32).

Example of easy goals

When you come out of jail what are you planning to do?

I think that when I come out here I will be having a certificate for something, but I can see that it is not as easy at I thought it would be. I think that I would buy sewing material from factory shops or reject shops and make teddy bears.

Do you think that people will buy them?

Yes, they can buy it, I have given it a thought, people want these teddy bears, and these things does not need you to be an expert to make it. (3, P 190)

Examples of hard goals

You see, if I will be outside jail, I know definitely that there is no way that I won't have a job, maybe I will have a house by then. (11, P 472).

Thirdly I wanted to work in the community and help them. Even now, I still wish for that, to help people in the community. I wish to have money, so as to be able to help them. (18, P 190)

In both the above extracts the subjects are impoverished, have no job prospects or means to earn money.

(c) Stereotyped, typical goals (e.g. marriage, home, car, commonly chosen occupations)-these goals were unconnected to specific events/ people/experience in the subject's life.

Example

What I wanted to see happening in my life, is that I wanted to end up having a home and a wife. I also wanted to have everything. I did not want to be short of anything in life. What I wanted or planned did not happen. (2, P 32)

3. Goal perseverance

There were two categories in this subcode. **Positive goal perseverance** was scored on evidence that the subject persevered towards achieving goals he set. **Poor goal perseverance** was scored on evidence that the subject showed little perseverance towards achieving goals set.

Example of goal perseverance

Oh, I managed to get a bicycle - to put together money and manage to get a bicycle. But that was after granny has died. I had managed to save some money and bought one myself. (19, P 38)

Example of poor goal perseverance

What do you want to do in life....?

At that time I was working my brother you see, I was working at Selborne Hotel you see.....

What I wanted to do first was to pay lobola [traditional Zulu custom - a bride "fee"] and have a wife, and after that have a house. Those were the things that I planned and hoped to do since I was working. Then being prisoner disturbed my plans. (2, P 69)

4. Altruistic goals – these were goals intended to help others in some way. These goals were spontaneously expressed. Intentions of good will towards individuals and the community were scored. Responses to the interview prompt: "How would you like to assist your community" were not scored, as these were potentially influenced by the desire to please the interviewer. The reader is referred to the review of moral development in chapter 1, 3.43 for a more precise definition of "altruism" as used in this research.

Example

Regarding your future plans when you were growing?

I wished to provide my family with better life.

Oh, I see you wanted to provide your family with better life, did you not succeed in doing that?

No, I did not since I am now here in jail. (15, P 30)

2.13 Phase 3

In establishing scorer reliability, it became apparent that some operational definitions of goal setting subcodes overlapped and this led to poor inter-rater reliability on some of these. The independent rater had a particular problem in identifying whether certain statements fell in the "hard" aspect of the "hard/easy" dichotomy under the *realistic* subcode, or in the *unrealistic* subcode. Some confusion also occurred as to whether goals in the "stereotyped" category fell rather into the "hard/easy" category of the *realistic* subcode. It was accordingly decided to reformulate some of these goal setting subcodes and redo the reliability rating process.

The "hard" variable in the "hard/easy" category of the *realistic* subcode was redefined as an aspect of the *unrealistic* subcode. The *realistic* subcode was then made up of the grouping of "realistic", "easy" and "stereotyped" goal categories. It was renamed the *general goal* subcode to distinguish it from its predecessor. This rearrangement of the goal data facilitated a better inter-rater reliability. There was a concern in this process that some valuable qualitative information pertaining to the "hard/easy" dichotomy would be lost, as this distinction ties in with Vallacher & Wegner's (1985) simple and complex action identities. More importantly, the category had implications for intervention programmes to prevent a life-course developmental trajectory, as discussed in chapter 12. Another reason not to reject the "hard/easy" data category was subsequent feedback from the second rater indicating that more detailed training examples and training on this category of the *realistic* subcode most likely would have averted the problem. Accordingly, the data category was retained as part of the qualitative discussion and in some of the quantitative percentage graphs, but was not used in the statistical analysis, on which definite conclusions about differences between the research groups were based.

2.14 The Final Operational Definitions

At the end of Phase 3, the final list of impulsivity and goal setting subcategories were

Impulsivity Code

Subcodes

1. Want it now
2. Risk Behaviour – choices to act antisocially
3. Emotionally driven damaging impulsive acts
4. Thoughtless

Goal Setting Code

Subcodes

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| 1. Goal-less | - | <u>Categories</u>
no goals; negative goals |
| 2. Unrealistic goals | - | generally not achievable; includes “hard” goals |
| 3. General goals | - | realistic goals; “easy” goals; stereotyped goals |
| 4. Goal perseverance | - | perseverance; poor perseverance |
| 5. Altruistic goals | | |

2.2 Process

The general points covered in chapter 3, 5.2 and 5.3 applied to scoring the impulsivity and goal setting codes. Statements and stories were both counted, and the rules for statement overlap applied. There was very little data input from third party interviews due to the personal nature of impulsivity and goal setting. A total count was made of all kinds of impulsivity in each life-story, the sum of which indicated the level of difference between the two research groups. The different kinds of impulsivity that emerged also were considered separately, to identify “tapestry” patterns at a more intricate level. Examples of impulsive behaviour were fairly obvious in the texts and the textual analysis for different kinds of impulsive behaviour could be finalised at the end of Phase 2, described in 2.12. As indicated, the goal setting analysis was more difficult due to the complexity of data generated here, and was finalised only at the end of Phase 3, as described in 2.13. Groups were compared across separate counts for each subcode here. The qualitative analysis also examined the “hard/easy” subcode data, that were insufficiently reliable to include in the quantitative evaluation.

2.3 Reliability

Reliability was calculated using the total count scores reached by two independent raters across two randomly chosen stories from each research group.⁶⁹ Cohen’s Kappa (Howell, 1997) gave a sound inter-rater reliability figure of .70 for on the impulsivity subcode, and one of .71 for the goal setting subcode.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Impulsivity Code

3.11 Qualitative Results

1. “Want it Now!” - Wanting things immediately and acting impulsively on this need

More prisoners (33.3% - 5 subjects) than non-prisoners (5.9% - 1 subject) made statements linking antisocial behaviour to the desire for immediate gratification of their needs. In addition, the impulsive actions of the non-prisoner in this subcode led to less serious antisocial outcomes than was the case for those of non-prisoners.

⁶⁹ Although group comparisons were not made on the sum of statement counts across subcodes, this was the case for the purposes of calculating inter-rater reliability.

Examples

Prisoners

What made you to listen to your friends rather than your parents?

I think it was because of liking nice things, when you see your friends having a nice thing and you would try and get the same thing as your friends. With parents, you can't see a thing that you like and go to your parent to ask him/her to buy it for you right then. The following day you see another thing that you like and again ask your parent to buy it. Parents do not go for that. (2, P 42)

What happened about the things that you did not succeed in doing them? [finish school, getting a job]

It is because I had to many things that I needed, you see now I could tell my granny that since I told you that my granny was not working. I then decided to be self- employed by allowing myself to be naughty [term refers to doing crime].

Oh, just because you could not get all what you wanted at home?

Yes.

And then you became naughty so that you could get money to be able to buy things that you needed?

Yes. (5, P 16)

So, in that way, I ran away from home again coming here to Durban. I started to be naughty. I worked at the supermarket for 6 years, stopped and went to work in another wholesale, at Makro and I stopped again. Because of the fact that the money that I was earning was too little, but I was working very hard, I stopped working. So, in that way I started to pickpocket then. (9, P 523)

When I was stealing , if I was asked to fix a car , I would fix it well, and I would take the stereo, I would say: "This one is damaged sir", but he didn't know that the stereo was still working , he didn't know how the car was before, and I would go and sell it, and would get the money quick. (10, P 33)

Non-prisoners

Stealing from...?

Work, not NICRO! But I had a part time job at CNA, and I'm a sweet-aholic, and I ate chocolate, and chocolate, and I think at the end of the year it was more than R5000 worth of chocolates. (32, P 220)

2. Risk Behaviour - choices to act antisocially

This category was characterized by decisions to act in antisocial ways that had a high risk of negative consequences for the individual and/or society. These consequences included punishment for breaking the law, but also personal costs such as not gaining further education. Two kinds of statements made up this grouping:

(a) poor decisions that were based on specific short term benefits in the subject's perception

(b) those where these benefits were not obvious

A common feature of both kinds of statements, classifying them in the impulsive subcategory, was their "risk" element. They did not pay attention to the potential long term costs of the choice. With the exception of one prisoner (ID5), subjects falling in this category showed little awareness of the long term detrimental outcomes of their antisocial choices.

More prisoners (40% - 6 subjects) than non-prisoners (23.5% - 4 subjects) made this kind of impulsive statement. Another difference between the groups was that prisoner statements involved antisocial impulsive behaviours leading to more detrimental consequences than did those in non-prisoner stories. For example, non-prisoners indulged in petty crime, while prisoners, in serious crime. In addition, non-prisoner subjects' progress in life (such as gaining an education), was not directly affected by their impulsive antisocial behaviour (e.g. they still obtained a matriculation, were not caught for cheating), while prisoners' antisocial behaviour arrested their progress (e.g. through imprisonment and/or not obtaining basic qualifications). Their actions led them to be ensnared in Moffitt's (1993) "trap" of the negative cycle of events stemming from initial poor choices.

Examples

Prisoners

Type (a) risks

If you knew you wouldn't get caught, would you be ok doing crime?

If I knew I wouldn't be caught I would do crime.

So what attracts you to it?

Yes there are a lot of things that attract me to it- things that you are not able to afford at your home, things that you can get quickly, that you don't have to work, you work maybe 5 minutes and you get it - there are a lot of things that can attract you to it. (4, P 272)

You want to be like everyone else, you see, you have no shoes, no money, to do anything you see. You just say "no not me too". You are going, you see if you were to take this thing you see, sell it to whoever maybe, sometimes sell it to a taxi driver maybe, you see...I could get money you see. (14, P 344)

I was a person who just wanted work, if work couldn't be found I would turn to crime. (14, P 443)

Type (b) risks

I don't know what went wrong. I just felt like stopping to go to school. At that time I was not in good terms with other children at school. I decided to go and work. (2, P 157)

Where I am coming from? Well my sister, I would put it this way, it is an idea that I given it to my self, that the time I am spending here in jail I should have spend it outside, it is a bad idea, and I know that it is bad. Okay I will be naughty once, if I succeed then so be it, if I don't succeed then the best thing for me is to die straight away, rather than coming back here, because being here in jail is a bad idea. (5, P 309)

To get most of the things that I have, I was making use of gun. So, when I say if I get that little bit of money, I will then retire from being naughty, just a meter, then I will retire and forget about a gun. Hmmm, can't you see that being naughty or getting that money will push you into wanting more, if you are planning to naughty just the way you do it?.... Yes, you see if I can go out and get that money, it will be better since I now know jail life and been here for some time. I would have to think very carefully in spending that money if I don't get caught. And I know that jail does not help to build up a person but destroys a person, so if I continue being naughty, it will mean that I want my life to end up this way. (5, P 314)

I really wanted to be like him- that's why I dropped out of school after he died. (6, P 47)

[reason why not subject did not pursue studies begun in prison] and during that time I had a further charge and I had to go to Pietermaritzburg prison to see the psychologist up there, so I was drafted, but when I was drafted, at Westville prison they wrote the exams. When I came back I explained to them and asked them to give me the exams so they told me, no, so they were wasting my time. (6, P 303)

I was looking after cattle in other people's houses. I could not take proper care of cattle since I was still young. It would be that I was looking after a big number of cattle, something like 30, maybe they would mess around with other people's gardens. Then the owner would fight me.

Would you then leave and find another place?

Yes, sometimes, they won't mess the garden but go astray and mixed with other cattle. I would then be very upset and would tell the owner that I am quitting since cattle are giving me trouble and go astray. (7, P 57)

We are here now, a place I'm growing up in my brother. My older cousin is in here for breaking into suburbs, you see [in jail]. And they did that and came back home with things, I also saw that. You dressed well, you see. I also from my own will decided that I could do this, you see to get money. You see, one day I thought about this. I saw that we kept on talking about this and I didn't do it. I thought should I go to school or not, and I said: "Let me go to school first". When I was at school I studied and during break I took my books and left you see.....No matter what I had to do this, when I got home I left my books you see. When I left I went to Westville suburbs. I was going to break in, in suburbs. I arrived there, guessed which house didn't have people inside. You see. I knocked and nobody came, I then took a brick and broke the window and I burgled it. (11, P 73)

Non-prisoners

Type (a) risks

It wasn't drinking, it was stealing. We would go around stealing car tapes... That was our drinking money. (31, P 285)

Cheating in exams, um, I knew the work, but that didn't stop me. If I could see someone's paper next to me, I'd take it [the chance]. (32, P 219)

Type (b) risks

Epecially when I was in standard 10, I told myself that my teachers were not the ones who were going to mark my papers so I could do anything. If I felt like leaving school at 11, I would leave school and go home. Things like that. Because I passed everything in the past years, I didn't have problems with my subjects. (21, P 43)

So was that what you got picked up by the police for?

Ya,I've ran quite a lot from them!

.....So they've been after you, but they haven't got you! Heheheh

Ya. In school, there's proper fights, some people bring guns to school, so I had this one classroom where I used to go and smoke my cigarettes, and we've got these, you know, these rugby bags that you...so I opened the top and I put the guns there. (32, P 190)

3 Emotionally driven impulsive actions with antisocial outcomes

The impulsive behaviour associated with category 2 statements was not strongly influenced by emotion, unlike those in category 3. These statements were associated with impulsive behaviours based on fear, anger or excitement. They were far more common in prisoner stories (60% - 9 subjects) over those of non-prisoners (17.6% - 3 subjects). Some of the actions described (a) did not lead to immediate negative consequences or (b) produced immediate negative results.

Examples

Prisoners

Type (a) emotional impulses

Now this is difficult to answer, but was there anything at that time that you remember you really wanted to do-like doing well at school. Was there anything you wanted to achieve?

The only thing I can remember was getting away. I even ran away once [re life with dad].

So all you thought of was getting out of that situation.

Yes. (4, P 51)

I was always doing something wrong in school like running away from school. (4, P 229)

...when I had corporal punishment I could not absorb information since I was also upset and would only think of fighting back. (5, P 200)

What were you fighting about with the teacher?

...just that this teacher taught at my girl-friend's school....This means that this teacher taught in one of the schools where my girl-friend was, and this teacher took this girl's ring and threw it away....

The teacher was also in love with this girl?

He taught her.

Oh, he taught this girl you are seeing?

Yes, he took the ring and threw it away. (12, P 373)

Type (b) emotional impulses

He then murdered a man who used provoke the younger boys in the area [murdered man taunted him]. (4-3rd, P 29)

No, it was towards the end of the year [stabbed teacher].

Did you know that you would be jailed one day?

Yes, but I did not think that it would be soon. (5, P 364)

This is actually murder, which I never ever [note emphasis] thought I would kill a person but it so happened that by mistake I killed a person. (6, P 216)

Before I did not know how to control my anger. If I had a fight with someone-I used to take any dangerous weapon, like a knife and stab him-maybe I would shoot him as we are fighting. Here in jail, I used to do it, if I fight with a person I wouldn't control my anger and beat him first. (9, P 449)

Non-prisoners

Type (a) emotional impulses

I did not think about changing it and doing something about it. I only thought about what we were doing at that time [re: excitement of delinquency].(23, P 18)

That is where I got hurt or injured [faction fight]-well what could I say, it was my last days of schooling, I decided to run away from school without finishing it. (24, P 285)

There were no examples of type (b) emotional impulses in non-prisoner texts.

4. Thoughtless - Drifting into actions that were potentially harmful

In contrast to the above categories of impulsive statements, this grouping referred to statements describing thoughtless actions that were not the result of strong emotion, nor of choices to engage in risk behaviour. These statements described actions that in themselves *were not seriously antisocial, but which had the potential to lead to further, more serious, antisocial behaviour*. This behaviour reflected a lack of foresight. Almost all the text statements in both groups linked these statements to the adolescent time period. A greater number of non-prisoners (41.2% - 6 subjects) over prisoners (13.3% - 2 subjects) made these statements.

It was conjectured that the lower number of prisoners in this category was due to many of the their impulsive statements being emotionally driven and seriously antisocial, excluding them from this subcode. This result is in line with other studies which show that during adolescence, adolescent-limited delinquents are at the least, as antisocial as their potential life-course counterparts (Moffitt, 2003).

Examples

Prisoners

My route went past Pinetown. As I was now old I had friends who were from studying at Clairmont [school]. We started from there to go and play machine games. We then started to fidget with the machine, opened it and continued playing without putting money. We then planned how to get money from the machine. The following day we tried magnets. (3, P 39)

Yes, one day we happened to be in Pinetown with my friends and we stayed there until there was no transport. By then we had eaten money for transport. We then came out with a plan that we were going to break in the shop. (3, P 153)

Oh, no I did have friends, because of the fact that whenever we are going out to be naughty, I went with them...Most of the time whenever we did that we get into trouble. (9, P 350)

They have again added more to my sentence.
For what now?

So, I have been working in Medium A...We were sharing dagga and the superiors caught us by mistake. (9, P 539)

Non-prisoners

We had a tendency of throwing stones on top of the roof at night, and unfortunately the stone went to the neighbour's window and broke it. We were then beaten for lying. (24, P 128)

And you find yourself doing that you never thought you would do. You do it because of friends.

Okay, you ended up smoking,

Yes.

Maybe alcohol as well?

Yes. (26, P140)

Before I started school when I still at home, I was a person who would go out and play with my friends, sometimes smoke our cigarette and sometimes go out to do hunting, this was the kind of life that we were living, we sometimes went to suburbs to steal, you see. (27, P 27)

Ok, did you bunk? [school]

Yes, a lot.-Ja. Especially in the high school years. (31, P 255)

And school work? Did you find it easy?

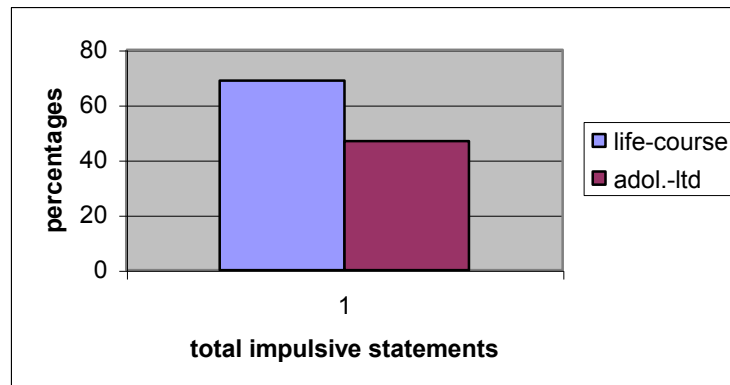
I didn't find it challenging. Didn't study, as long as I kept above 60%, I was ok. (32, P 162)

3.12 Quantitative Results

Graphs.

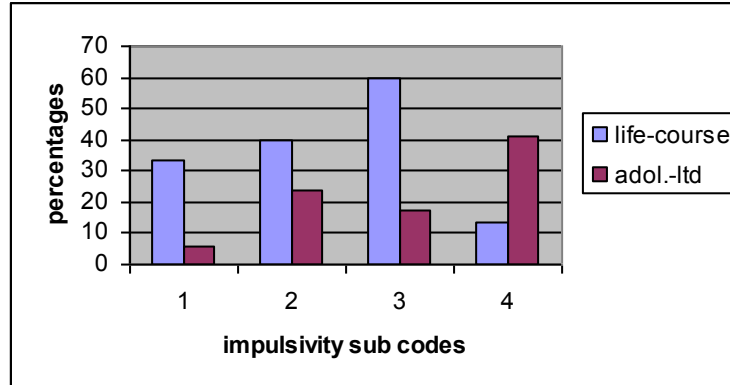
Figure 9 depicts group differences across the *total count* of impulsive statements in each group. Figure 10 reflects group differences across the impulsivity subcodes discussed in the previous section.

Figure 9. Group Differences in Total Impulsive Statements



Key	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
Impulsivity	31 (68.8%)	16.8 (46.9%)
* = No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)		

Figure 10. Group Differences on Impulsivity Subcodes



Key	Text Point above	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
Now!	1	7 (33.3%)	.8 (5.9%)
Risk	2	9 (40%)	4 (23.5%)
Emot.	3	12 (60%)	2.4 (17.6%)
T/less	4	4 (13.3%)	9.6 (41.2%)
* = No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)			

Statistical differences.

As there were many statements generated in the total impulsivity count, the t test for independent samples was used in a statistical analysis of group differences. No significant difference was found. However, when statements pertaining to the “thoughtless” subcode were removed, these differences became significant. As discussed in 3.11 above, this subcode dealt with arbitrary, impulsive minor antisocial behaviour, a common feature of general teenage behaviour and not expected to discriminate between the research groups. The significant results are given below.

“thoughtless” subcode

$t = 2.63$; $df = 30$; $sig. = .013$; confidence levels: lower = .3 and upper = 2.38

There were relatively few cases falling in each of the impulsivity subcodes of Figure 10. Given these small sample sizes it was decided that a statistical analysis of this bivariate categorical data would be inappropriate, as the power of the chi-square test at this level would be poor.

3.2 Goal Setting

Both the qualitative and quantitative analyses of impulsivity in the life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups showed the former as behaving more impulsively. Differences were less distinct as regards goal setting and there were both similarities and differences between the groups. However, overall, the results indicated that prisoners set less realistic goals and were less persevering towards goals than were the non-prisoners. As in the preceding section, the subcodes of this code (see 2.14 above) framed the discussion of results.

Unlike the impulsivity subcodes, goal setting subcodes were not additive, thus quantitative results are discussed separately for each subcode.

3.21 Goal-less: Absence of Goals; Negative Goals

Qualitative results.

No Goals

There were very few prisoner stories in which subjects specifically stated they had had no goals at any point in their lives. The incidence in non-prisoner stories was even less. Where instances occurred, non-prisoners referred to adolescent years only, whereas prisoners described being goal-less at different stages across the life span.

Examples:

Prisoners

What kind of a time was it for you then, those 5 years after your parents got divorced until when he [father] died?. It was, it was same like when I, when I, when I was, when I was still a child. You know what I'm saying. There was nothing important about it, about living anyway..uh.
You had no goals..
No goals. (1, P 93)

What other plans do you have?

Tell me - I don't have relatives. I have never had any relatives, I have nothing. What can I do? (14, P 548)

Non-prisoners

And can you name possibly two or three things during this period that you really looked forward to doing in the future, or was the future just something you weren't even thinking about?

I definitely [tape unclear] you just go just with the flow.

Ok, lived for the moment.

Live for the moment, at the moment. [during teenage delinquent years] (31, P 101)

Negative goals

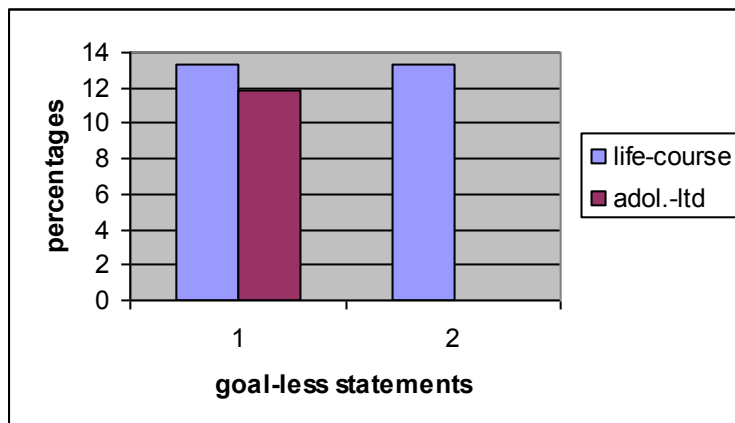
These were expressed by only two subjects, who fell in the prison group. One referred to a desire to take revenge on those who had led to his imprisonment, the other to a desire to possess an unlicensed gun. No negative non-prisoner goals were expressed.

Quantitative results.

Graphs

The limited cases in Figure 11 depicts that very few subjects in either group held no goals or blatantly antisocial goals.

Figure 11. Group Differences on the Goal-less Subcode



Key

1. No Goals
2. Negative Goals

Life-course *

- 4 (13.3%)
- 2 (13.3%)

Adol.-limited *

- 2 (11.8%)
- 0 (0%)

*= No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Statistical Analysis

This was inappropriate given the low incidence of statements in this category.

3.22 Unrealistic Goals

Qualitative results.

Both the *unrealistic goal* subcode and the “hard” variable of the “hard/easy” category in the *realistic* subcode (Phase 2) made up this subcode.

Unrealistic Goals

Two kinds of unrealistic goals emerged in the analysis. Some were illogical goals in that the subject showed an understanding that the goal could not be achieved, yet still expected to reach it. Others were clearly unachievable, but not in the subject’s perception. Overall, only a few prisoners, and even fewer non-prisoners, made statements demonstrating “unrealistic” goals. Interestingly, most prison subjects did not express goals that were *logically unachievable* in terms of their own understanding, indicating a need for cognitive consonance even in individuals whose behaviour is persistently maladaptive.

Examples –Unrealistic goals:

Prisoners

I wanted to become a policeman, which unfortunately I wanted also to run for my country, get married, and after losing the opportunity to become a policemen I really wanted to become a family man, to become a father.

Any of goals that you did achieve?

None of them. None of those that I have just mentioned. (6, P 354)

Okay, were there any things that you wanted to do during that time, that you were unable to do?

I want to make friends with the daughter I have and with her mother if it is possible if I come out.

Do you still keep contact with you girlfriend

My ex-girlfriend because she is living her life. Ya I keep contact with her but she don’t keep contact with me. I don’t phone her, I write letters to her. (4, P 142)

Non-prisoners

Can you name 3 things in this period you really looked forward to doing in the future.
Doing chemical engineering as a job. [subject has a year of bricklaying training as his only qualification.]..(18, P28)

Hard Goals

Hard goals were those where steps towards their achievement were missing. Of interest were the limited number of *hard* goal statements in non-prisoner, compared with, prisoner, texts.

Examples - Hard goals:

Prisoners

For prisoners, these goals mainly involved improving their lives after their release from prison without any strategies on how this was to be achieved.

But I try to mould myself, try to make sure that I know what I want to do when I come out from jail. I need to do something about myself and stop doing stupid things like joining gangsters, things like that, and that are stupid. (2, P 249)

Now look ahead, 10 years from now, what word would you like to describe you at 33?
I'd like to describe myself as someone that the community can look up to and make a difference in other people's lives. (4, P289)

Okay, what dreams do you have when you come out of jail?
Since I will come out being nothing, [direct translation of the isiZulu expression here is: "look like a cow"!], it would be nice if I could get sponsorship for R2000.00, so that I can go for driver's licence course since I have been driving without a licence. But I had a problem with police on the way. I kept on running away from them. So, if you manage to sponsor me with R2000.00, so that I can get my driver's licence, then they will find me driving trucks.
Okay.

In case I decide to drive the taxis, which I don't want. (9, P 576)

Non-prisoners

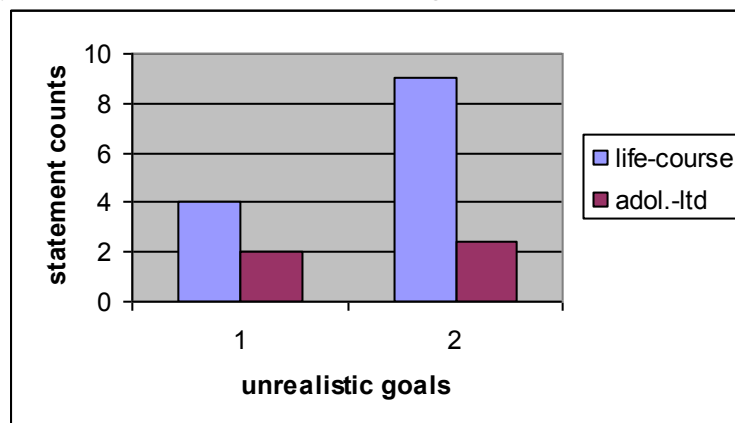
Okay, how do you think you could help them or your community?
By introducing projects that would control youth and make them to be aware of these dangerous things. (29, P 546)

Quantitative results.

Graphs

Quantitative results for the unrealistic goal subcode appear in Figure 12 below. Of interest is the notably larger number of "hard" goal statements found in prisoner versus non-prisoner life-stories, in this subcode.

Figure 12. Group Differences on the Unrealistic Goal Categories



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

Key	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
1. "Unrealistic"	4 (20%)	1.8 (11.8%)
2. "hard"	9 (53.3%)	2.4 (11.8%)

*=. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Statistical Analysis

The small cell sizes in the “unrealistic” category of the *unrealistic* subcode indicated statistical analysis to be inappropriate. Group differences on the “hard” category of the unrealistic subcode were significant.⁷⁰

T-test for independent samples: Hard goal category

$t = 2.31$; $df = 30$; $sig. = .028$; confidence levels: lower = .05 and upper = .8

3.23 General Goals

Qualitative results.

This subcode consisted of the “realistic, easy” and “stereotyped” goal categories that fell into the operational definition of the former *realistic* subcode as defined in Phase 2 of the operational definitions, 2.12.

Realistic Goals

These were anchored in the subject’s life experience and were personal rather than stereotypical. Whereas they could be blocked by external constraints such as high unemployment, they were within the subject’s personal capacity to attain, given prior experience and so on. The non-prison group expressed many more realistic aspirations than did the prisoners (20% - 4 prisoners : 76.5% - 21.2 non-prisoners).

Examples - Realistic goals

Prisoners

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time..., when you are out of jail?

I hope [emphasis] and think that I will be a much better person, who will be able to differentiate between wrong and right. By then I would be able to run my life without depending on other people. (5, P 377)

While vague, the above goal is anchored in the subject’s negative experiences of prison and is heartfelt. It also reflects his recognition of the negative influence of his erstwhile companions.

Can you tell me three things that you wanted to accomplish if you were to view your future?

Complete school... Working.. When I was young. I also wished to work where my father used to work, because his work conditions were good. He used to run errands. (12, P 87)

Non-prisoners

Yes, I wanna do a law or human resources degree. [Subject is in Grade 12, doing well, and father is a magistrate.] (16, P 306)

Can you name 3 things in this period you really looked forward to doing in the future?.

I would not say that I did not achieve because I am still hoping to achieve them since I have finished school, uh, I finished high school education, and went to college, then from the college I told myself that I will get a job as soon as I finish. But till now I have not got a job and I can’t imagine how I am going to feel if I don’t get a job since the year is now ending. (19, P 42)

The above subject has the qualifications to find work, and is trying, but there is a limited demand for his 1 year public relations diploma.

Ya, it [his goal] was getting educated and become something. But what I wished for was to be an altar boy, I convinced myself that I will be Reverend father, until I become a bishop, heh heh, [laughing].....The procedure went wrong...Ya, pal, I wanted to be a Reverend father or a doctor.

Hmmm, so did you manage to get what you wanted?

Ya, sis, I could say that I did succeed concerning education, but as the time went on, things went wrong. I did enrol at the University of Natal for medicine, but did not finish it. (22, P 39)

⁷⁰ This particular result is treated cautiously however, given the reliability problems associated with it.

The above participant achieved up to his 2nd year in Medical School at University but was excluded due to failing the 2nd year- he fooled around too much!

First of all I wanted to get education. That education was going to help me to move on with my life and benefit more, that would help me to determine what life had in store for me, to move on with life and to know where I stand. (25, P 26)

The above subject achieved Grade 12.

Ya, people can look up to me, I can be a role model, especially to my brother and sister. They can look up to me and say hey, I want to be like him one day. (32, P 312)

The above subject was now an qualified child care worker.

Easy Goals

These were goals where progressive steps towards their achievement were outlined. There was a similar number of *easy* goal statements in both groups (60% - 12 prisoners : 52.9% - 8.8 non-prisoners).

Examples - Easy goals

Prisoners

For prisoners these goals involved activities after prison based on past and present (many were studying) activities.

When you come out of jail what are you planning to do?

I think that when I come out here I will be having a certificate for something, but I can see that it is not as easy at I thought it would be. I think that I would buy sewing material from factory shops or reject shops and make teddy bears.

Do you think that people will buy them?

Yes, they can buy it, I have given it a thought, people want these teddy bears, and these things does not need you to be an expert to make it. (3, P 190)

Would you like to work with someone else or run your own business?

To run my own business, but I'd have to work for someone else to get money to start it. First I must train.

What kind of programmes? [in prison]

Programmes that are educational, that you can further your study

Now tell me what you have done?

I am doing Business Studies now. (4, P121)

What were your goals and dreams [at 15] at this time when the wheels started to fall off?

My goal was to get into any company and pick up a trade and work from there in turn.- I knew I would not make it into a company I wanted as this required a standard of education I did not have. (6, P 57).

Non-prisoners

For non –prisoners these goals were similar, if more ambitious. This was expected, given that they had greater freedom to explore opportunities than did the prisoners.

I am thinking of opening my own business.

Okay, why do you like to have your own business?

I am very good in the business since my father had a business and when I grew up there was family business at home. You see, I know everything about the business, I again learnt about the business at school. (17, P 54)

The above respondent took commercial subjects at school.

Okay, You are saying that you are successful person?

Yes,

What have you achieved, if we place you with the people that know you, your same age, what have you achieved?

I've tried to get money so that I can go to register for a course. A way to success is visible now. (26, P 374),

Well I wish to start a business, and continue with church maybe until I become a leader of something in a church. Third thing is that I wish to help people, who don't know about the Lord. (27, P 607)

The above subject was active in his local church.

My future? In a couple of years time? It revolves around education. I want to get my masters...in child and youth development, or maybe switch to psychology...whatever the case may be, I don't know...and one day become a doctor...family wise, I want to be a husband one day, I want to have my own family with 30 children running around! I want a whole African village!

Are there ways in which you might be able to help the community ...

Ya, I got involved in my school, I'm leading a drug campaign at my old school. (32, P 331)

This subject has a Higher Diploma in Child Care.

Stereotyped, Impersonal Goals

Both groups expressed a similar number of these statements (73.3% - 13 prisoners : 64.7% - 12.8 non-prisoners). It seems that we all have dreams of the rocket scientist, lawyer or teacher we would like to become, of marriage and family life, and of material comforts - regardless of our day-to-day progress towards reaching these goals.

Examples - Stereotyped goals:

Prisoner group

What I wanted to see happening in my life, is that I wanted to end up having a home and a wife. I also wanted to have everything. I did not want to be short of anything in life. (2, P 32)

Well, I did have things that I wished for but I was not successful to fulfil them. But I wished to be a clerk when I was growing but because of things that were not straight then it did not happen. (7, P 37)

Oh , just goals , first I wanted to finish school... Just finish matric.. Secondly have my own house..But I couldn't. Thirdly , eyh it's the car , I didn't have.

Hmmm, is there any that you managed to have ?

It is the finishing of matric , that just what I could get. (10, P 384)

Maybe during this period you were thinking about your future?

There were things that I wanted to achieve when I am old...

I wanted to have my dream car.

Hmmm, did you achieve you these things?

No I did not. (12, P 30)

I wanted to be a policeman. (12, P 37)

Non-prisoner group:

I see myself working having my own family, being married and having my own house [10 yrs from now]. (17, P 318)

When I was young, what I wished to do was, I wished I could become a teacher, that's what I grew up wishing for. (21, P 11)

I would say that I wanted to be educated, to pursue a career. I wanted to be professional so as to get a better job. (23, P56)

..and becoming a lawyer. (23, P 268)

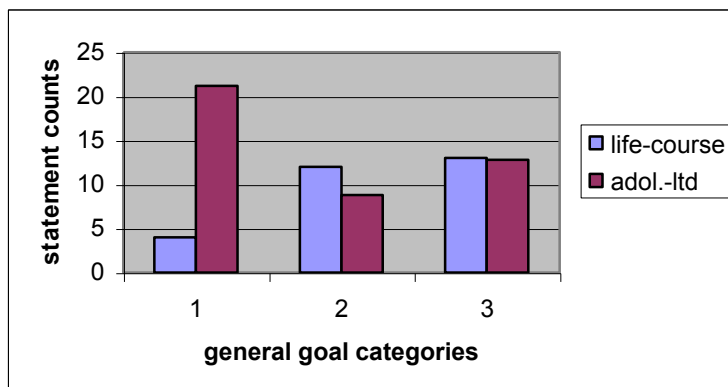
First of all, I wanted to finish school and get a better job. (24, P 63)

Quantitative results.

Graphs

Figures 13 shows the group differences in number of goals set across the categories of the *general* goals subcode. Figure 14 shows that group differences on the total count of general goal subcode statements occur in the expected direction. These differences (Figure 14) were damped down however, by the similarity between groups on "easy" goals (those broken into manageable steps) and on "stereotyped" goals (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Group Differences on the General Goals Categories

KeyStatementLife-Course*Adol.-Limited*

1. Realistic

4 (20%)

21.2 (76.5%)

2. Easy

12 (60%)

8.8 (52.9%)

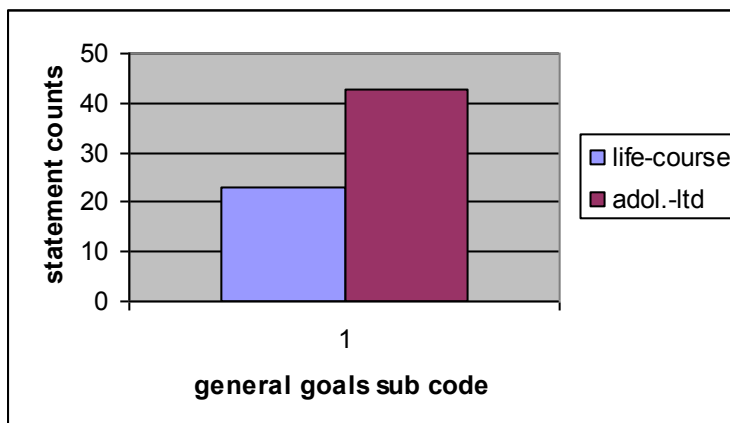
3. Stereotyped

13 (73.3%)

12.8 (64.7%)

*=. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Figure 14. Group Differences on Total General Goal Statements

KeyLife-Course*Adol.-Limited*

29

42.4

*=. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group were not calculated for this sum of statements as some subjects made more than one type of "general goal" statement))

Statistical Analysis

A statistical analysis of the results confirmed the points made under the discussion of the graphs above. Whereas the differences between the groups on the "realistic" category of the *general* goals subcode was significant, difference between total group statements on the general goals subcode was not.

T-test for independent samples: Realistic category of the general goals subcode

$t = -4.45$; $df = 30$; $sig. = .00$; confidence levels: lower = -1.46 and upper = -.475

The quantitative analysis supported the qualitative assessment regarding the *general* goal subcode. Both the life-course and adolescent-limited offender research groups set goals in their lives, some of which are quite

achievable (“easy” category). However, overall, the adolescent-limited group set more realistic goals, given the group differences on the “realistic” category.

It is profitable to consider the results of the *general* goals subcode also in the context of the significantly greater number of “hard” goal category responses made by the life-course group in the *unrealistic* subcode analysis (3.22 above). Together, the outcome of these analyses suggested that *the life-course group members were able to set realistic goals, albeit fewer than did the adolescent-limited group. However, they also set significantly more unachievable goals (“hard” goals).*⁷¹ Where this kind of “hard” goal setting is linked to life goals important to adaptive developmental progress, this would significantly impede life-course individuals’ progress towards a healthy adult lifestyle.

3.24 Goal Perseverance

Qualitative results.

There was a notable group difference on this variable. No goal *perseverance* statements appeared in prisoner texts while there were a number in non-prisoner life-stories (35.3% - 11 non-prisoners). Conversely, there was evidence of *non perseverance* in prisoner life-stories (73.3% - 13 prisoners), but none in non-prisoner stories. Figures 13 and 14 above show that both groups set goals, some of which were quite realistic. The results on the goal perseverance subcode suggests that *the life-course offender group had a major problem sustaining the impetus to achieve these goals.* Text statements indicated that it was a *personal decision* by prison subjects to relinquish long term goals, rather than this being the result of circumstances beyond their control, a finding complementing that in 3.1 on the greater impulsivity of prisoners compared with non-prisoners. Together, these two results suggest it was the related traits of poor perseverance, low self-control and impulsivity, rather than the absence of goals, that resulted in the unplanned life style of the life-course offender group. These traits, combined with an aggressive response to frustration, set him on the road to recidivist crime.

Examples - Goal perseverance

Non-prisoners

My being unsuccessful [failed Grade 12], I got in contact with a teacher who stayed near my house and told me that there was a place where I could supplement [my studies]. Eh...near ...[a town]. There was a school and said it was called Charles. You paid R50 and then you filled in forms, the ones they had were from standard 10. They didn't return them. (21, P 17)

I think there are times when you try to do things and you fail. Then you tell yourself that this thing must be successful no matter I go astray. So, my mom is that kind of person that you can sit down with and would encourage me and also if I am feeling down, she cheers me up, heh heh. (22, P 78)

Well sis, I could tell you this, that there is nothing much that they expected from me except for the fact that I have to pass [subject failed Grade 12] so that I could get a job, in so much that yesterday I went to apply for vacancies at the community hall. I am trying at least to register so that I could be able to ..[tape not clear]

Hmmm, did you manage to achieve those things, did they manage to help you to do those things?

Well, I came across those people that does not understand, does not want to get to know other people's problem. I got another guy and I talked to him and he told me a very difficult thing to do. He told me to first to go to RK Khan. He said that when I go to RK Khan, I must get the report that was made by the hospital after my injury and bring it to him, you see. (25, P 326)

Examples - Non goal perseverance

Prisoners

At that time I was working my brother you see, I was working at Selborne Hotel you see. What I wanted to do first was to pay lobola [customary dowry required by the bride's family] and have a wife. And after that have a house. Those were the things that I planned and hoped to do since I was working. Then being prisoner disturbed my plans. (2, P 69)

⁷¹ Given the strong group differences on this goal category result, further research to measure differences in “hard” and “easy” goals (i.e. different action identity levels) is needed, using more reliable measurement techniques, such as better training of the second rater.

Yes, I had dreams, like studying, finish studying and get a job.[when at school]

Did you succeed in doing that?

No, I did not succeed in doing that.

What happened about the things that you did not succeed in doing them?

It is because I had too many things that I needed, you see. Now I could tell my granny - that since I told you that my granny was not working - I then decide to be self- employed by allowing myself to be naughty. (5, P 13)

Were there things that you wanted to achieve during that time, things about your future?

Yes, there were, sister.....Like, I planned that by the time, I reach 30 years, I will be having my own house - maybe married. But I did not achieve any of these things that I planned to do.

Do you mean to say that you did not succeed?

Yes, I did not.

Did you manage to achieve any one of the things that you planned to do?

Yes, there were things that I managed to get, like a house.-I got a house; I bought a car but I had it for a very short time and all vanished.

Hmmm, how did it vanish?

I don't know the cause but I know that that by then I was involved with police and we were chasing each other. (9, P 34)

I will have to stop learning here in jail.

Why?

Since if you are learning you can not be transferred to the jail in your neighbourhood.

Oh!

It is still far from home to here.

Okay, so you are going to stop learning because you won't get a transfer to your neighbourhood jail?

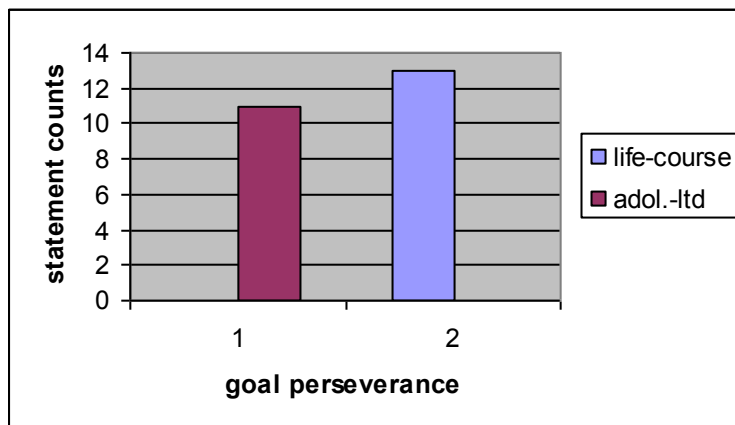
Yes. (9, P 66)

Quantitative results.

Graphs

Figure 15 shows the marked group differences on goal perseverance.

Figure 15. Group Differences on Sustaining Goal Focus



Key

Statement

1. Sustained goal focus

*Life-Course**

0

*Adol.-Limited**

11 (35.3%)

2. Poor goal focus

13 (73.3%)

0

*=. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Statistical Analysis

In that some of the above categories had no responses, further statistical analysis was not appropriate.

3.25 Altruistic Goals

Qualitative results.

Spontaneous expressions in life-stories of the desire to help others were scored. These were expressed intentions of good will towards family members and the community. The analysis of this variable indicated that more altruistic statements were made by non-prisoner, compared to prisoner, subjects, although the incidence of statements overall in both groups was low (13.3% - 4 prisoners : 41.8% - 7 non-prisoners). Comments regarding family well being were the most frequent kind of *spontaneously* generated textual evidence of altruistic goals in both groups. Prisoner “altruistic” goals regarding their communities were less “realistic” and more “hard”(see 3.22 and 3.23 above) than those of non-prisoners.

The greater majority of subjects in both groups were from relatively, or seriously, impoverished communities. Maslow’s theory of the hierarchy of needs holds that the satisfaction of basic wants such as safety, food and accommodation precede higher needs, including altruism (Bischof, 1970). The low incidence of altruistic statements in both groups suggests that the young adult participants (in particular, the non-prisoners), were focused on their own present and future basic needs (safety, food security and housing) to the degree that they gave limited thought to altruistic goals. Thus this subcategory not a good discriminator between the research groups. An interesting aside emerged from the relationship between altruistic statements relating to family, and information from the Socio-economic Questionnaire (Appendix 3) that non-prisoners, as opposed to prisoners, spent their disposable income more on family needs than on themselves. This suggests that, while most non-prisoner altruistic statements placed family needs below their own, *they acted otherwise*. An explanation for this behaviour was that it was due to cultural pressure, from a united and organized family group, to contribute to family well being. The more disjointed family structure of most prisoner subjects could not exert this influence (see chapter 5).

Examples - Altruistic behaviour

Prisoners

I wanted first, I wanted to have a house , because that was the one thing that my mother used to speak about , a house.....And a car..and have a family , that’s it. (10, P 75)

Do you still have goals , which you wish too accomplish , your future , starting from now?
Hmm, there are. Since I left being a child , I wish to reconcile my family,not to grow like I did who grew up with a single mom, to grow together , with a father and a mother so we could bond together. (10, P 396)

Regarding your future plans when you were growing?
I wished to provide my family with a better life.
Oh, I see you wanted to provide your family with better life, Okay, did you not succeed in doing that?
No, I did not since I am now here in jail. (15, P 30)

Non-prison group

After getting a profession, my dream was, after getting a profession, and having a better job, my dream was to make my parents happy. (23, P 58)
It is also my wish to have my own house and to take care of my parents and siblings. (23. P 270)

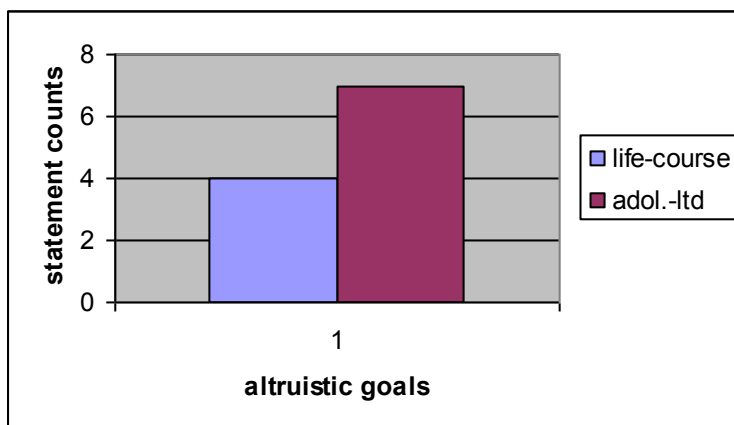
I wanted to be able to support my mother you see. I wanted her to enjoy being supported by her son. I wanted her to gain something from raising me up to this far. That woman did everything. (24, P 63)

Quantitative results.

Graphs

Figure 16 depicts the small number of altruistic goal statements made by either group.

Figure 16. Group Differences on Altruistic Goals



Key

Statement

*Life-Course**

*Adol.-Limited**

Altruistic

4 (13.3%)

7 (41.8%)

*=. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Statistical Analysis

The limited data precluded further analysis.

4. Conclusions

The metaphor used to describe this research is that of a tapestry, with results being the different threads, interwoven to produce a recognizable image. This imagery is particularly apt in the present chapter, where many set of results contribute to the analysis of differences in impulsive and goal setting behaviours between the life-course and adolescent-limited offender research groups.

Differences between the two groups on the impulsivity code were marked, with life-course offenders making significantly more impulsive statements. Key areas of difference between the groups, in the expected direction of greater life-course offender impulsivity, were

- * the desire for immediate gratification
- * the engagement in risk behaviour without considering the negative outcomes
- * impulsivity arising from strong emotions

Contrary to this trend, the adolescent-limited group made more impulsive statements linked to thoughtless, low level antisocial acts than did the life-course group. This difference was most probably due to the preoccupation with serious antisocial behaviours in the life-stories of the latter group.

A strong theme that emerged in the analysis of impulsivity statements was the more damaging consequences of the impulsivity of the life-course group compared with that of the adolescent-limited group. This tied in with the literature, that shows the long term antisocial behaviour of the life-course offender to be more violent and serious than that of the adolescent-limited offender. This distinction was also mirrored by the different incidence in each research group of status and indictable offences in chapter 4. There, adolescent-limited offender subjects described more status offences, such as alcohol abuse, truancy, public nuisance and under age sex. The life-course offender group described more serious offences, including robbery, assault, murder and rape.

While many of the group differences on the goal setting categories were minor, together they generated a pattern supporting Moffitt's taxonomy. Life-course offender subjects were less effective in shaping their lives.

They made more statements *about anti-social goals; about life periods when goals were lacking entirely; about unrealistic goals; those where interim steps towards their realization were absent; and about an inability to persevere towards long term goals*. On the other hand, the stories of non-prisoners produced a greater number of statements about *more realistic goals; greater ability to sustain goal direction; and more altruistic goals*. Overall, this section of the “tapestry” portrayed life-coursers as failing to set and work towards, realistic long term goals far more than was the case with adolescent-limited offenders.

The statistically strongest differences between the groups showed that *group differences* were most significant in the area of *realizable goals, those within an individual’s capacity, and broken down into bite sized sub-goals (“easy versus hard” goals)*. Another statistically strong group difference lay in the *lack of perseverance towards longer term goals* of the life-course group compared with their adolescent-limited counterparts. This distinction suggested that, while the results showed life-course subjects as *setting some realistic and achievable goals, even these were unlikely to be achieved*.

Finally, methodological problems involving poor inter-rater reliability indicated the need for further research to confirm some results, in particular those relating to “hard” goals.

SUMMARY

This chapter explored group differences on impulsivity and goal setting. The results supported Moffitt’s taxonomy regarding impulsivity. The life-course group thought and acted in significantly more impulsive ways than did the adolescent-limited group, according to their life-stories. The results did not support the contention that life-course subjects set fewer long term goals and fewer prosocial goals than their counterparts, as group differences here were not significant. However, the results did support the general implication contained in that hypothesis, namely, that life-course offenders are less likely to set *realisable* goals, and *to achieve the goals they set*. Results show this failure was due to a combination of their impulsivity and lack of perseverance.

CHAPTER 8. MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

OVERVIEW

The analyses in this chapter explores the seventh main research hypothesis of chapter 2, namely that the life-course offender group lagged markedly in their moral development, relative to the adolescent-limited group. The assumption was made in this hypothesis that the absence, or limitation, of variables associated in the literature with the development of moral behaviour, contributes towards a life-course offending trajectory. These variables underpin the third level hypotheses associated with moral development in chapter 2, which maintain that life-course offender group, relative to the adolescent-limited offender group

- * described fewer incidents of moral behaviour
- * used higher levels of moral reasoning
- * described fewer moral values
- * experienced fewer of the early parent variables associated with moral behaviour
- * described the communities in which they were reared as being less cohesive and value driven
- * described fewer altruistic inclinations
- * had a more externalised locus of control

The findings confirmed a sufficient number of these hypotheses to support the main contention that life-course offenders have retarded moral development relative to adolescent-limited delinquents. Most of the remaining hypotheses were not rejected but remained unconfirmed, due to insufficient data in the life-stories.

1. Background to the Analysis

The literature review (chapter 1, 3.4) indicated that the understanding of morality is contentious (Lickona, 1976). It supported Damon's (1999) assertion that no one theory fully accounts for what makes an individual *behave* in a moral way, although it argued that social learning theory makes the strongest contribution to the understanding of this process. It was beyond the scope of the current study to debate the taxonomic value of theories of moral development. Instead, a pragmatic approach was adopted. Certain key elements emerged from the literature review that were *common to all theories* of moral development, despite different explanations across theories as to *how* each element influenced moral behaviour. These elements, arising in either the child or the environmental, the two prongs of Moffitt's taxonomy, formed the basis of the hypotheses tested in this chapter. The following section outlines these key common variables, some of which are investigated in this chapter and others, elsewhere in this thesis.

1.1. Common Variables relating to the Moral Code Analysis

1.11 Variables Covered in the Present Chapter

1. Moral Behaviour

A distinction is made in the literature between moral reasoning or values, and moral behaviour. One is not necessarily synonymous with the other. The text analysis therefore looked for evidence of moral behaviour, in addition to moral values and reasoning.

2. Moral Reasoning

According to the literature, a certain level of moral reasoning is a necessary, but not sufficient, factor, in moral (versus antisocial) behaviour. Kohlberg's research suggests that moral reasoning at, at least, a stage 3 level (social approval or conventional level) or higher is required for an individual to behave in an acceptably moral manner in his society (Gibbs & Widaman, 1982). Evidence of Kohlberg's stages was therefore sought in the textual analysis.

3. Moral Knowledge, Attitudes and Values

These include beliefs about human rights, education and religion. Moral *knowledge* is the verbal expression of an understanding of the difference between commonly held "rights" and "wrongs" (e.g. it is wrong to murder

people). No link has been found in the literature between moral knowledge and moral behaviour (Arbuthnot et al., 1987).

Moral *attitudes* are defined as habitual beliefs about the “rightness” or “wrongness” of specific behaviours. Moral attitudes are poor predictors of moral behaviour. While differences might be expected between the attitudes of delinquents and non delinquents about the acceptability of various offences, this has not been the case for the majority of middle-class, and many lower-class, delinquents (Arbuthnot et al., 1987).

Moral *values* are defined as: “...convictions or standards used by individuals to judge and choose between modes of behaviour.” (Hugo & Van Vuuren, 1996, p. 12). Moral values are similar to moral attitudes but imply more strongly held and more central convictions. There is controversy whether common global values exist or whether these are defined by culture. Differing value systems for Western and non-Western populations, developed and emerging groups, males and females, are issues explored in the literature.⁷²

Despite this controversy, it has been shown that ideals or values are important motivating forces predisposing a person to overcome a negative developmental environment. The presence of strong values can counteract environmental risk factors and be antithetical to a criminal lifestyle (Coutu, 2002; Damon, 1999). A negative correlation has been found between delinquency and religious commitment in communities that stress the importance of religion. The correlation was much smaller in secular communities (Stark, Kent, & Doyle, 1982). These authors concluded that religious convictions restrain delinquency when such convictions are reinforced by the social environment.

Due to the poor association between attitudes and antisocial behaviour, and as moral attitudes form part of moral values, these were not discussed independently in the textual analysis.

4. Child Rearing Practices

A key factor in Moffitt’s taxonomy of life-course offending is the impact of parenting practices. These are discussed in detail in chapter 5 of this paper. The association between moral development and early parenting is also well established (see chapter 1, 3.4). General parenting practices highlighted by Moffitt and her colleagues as facilitating or protecting against chronic antisocial behaviour in the vulnerable child are covered in Chapter 5. The present chapter looks only at those parenting and family features specifically linked to moral behaviour in the literature. These are summarised below.

1. *Modelling* – Parents’ behaviour needs to consistently model their expressed opinions on right and wrong.
2. *Role taking* - By increasing the child’s role taking opportunities, parents help him develop his own set of internal moral rules.
3. *Empathy* - By sensitising the child to the consequence of his negative actions on others, parents educate him to develop his innate empathy.
4. *How to be good* - Children need to be taught how to be good, not only how not to be bad! Parental reasoning combined with suggestions for reparations help here.
5. *Responsibility* - Cross cultural studies show that assigning children some family responsibilities assists them in learning to act out their concern for others, and to take responsibility for their actions. This point is related to another important variable for moral development discussed below, namely, locus of control.
6. *Optimal Anxiety Levels* - A moderate anxiety level is the optimal motivating state for learning new moral behaviours (Hoffman, 1976). Hoffman sees the normal run of childhood experience as a necessary base for altruism, as long as this is mentored by the appropriate parenting practices. In particular, the child’s exposure to social conflict develops his sense of commonality with others and teaches him that differences can be resolved.
7. *Dialogue* – This point is related to the preceding one. By engaging the child in dialogue about moral values, parents allow him to develop his own moral views.

5. Cohesive Communities

Cohesive communities with strong moral values assist in the development of this behaviour in the growing child.

⁷² For example, the value system underlying a major measure of moral reasoning (Kohlberg’s Social IQ), where justice is the ideal, may be relevant only to developed, western communities (Ferns & Thom, 2001). It is also held that Social IQ idealises masculine values, which are not central to many women (Gilligan, 1982).

6. *Altruistic behaviour*

True altruism, while not necessary for *prosocial* behaviour (as opposed to *altruistic* behaviour - see 2. below), implies strong moral development. In that it was not possible to measure the degree of personal cost of altruistic acts described in life-stories⁷³, acts of good will towards individuals and the community, which were not *obviously* rewarding to the actor, were considered as altruistic for the purposes of the analysis, regardless of the level of personal cost to the individual.

7. *Locus of Control*

The ability to accept responsibility for behaviour is an internalisation process that is another important element of moral maturity. Absence of such individual responsibility is a factor increasing aggression and diminishing altruistic behaviour.

1.12 *Factors Related To Moral Behaviour Discussed in other Chapters*

1. *Antisocial or Immoral Behaviour*

These are covered in the textual analysis of the code “antisocial behaviour”, in chapter 4.

2. *Parenting Style*

As mentioned in 1.11 above, due to its centrality to the research topic, the influence of different parenting styles on a life-course developmental pathway is analysed in-depth in chapter 5.

3. *Peer Influences*

Peer relationships are a key factor in a life-course offending trajectory in Moffitt’s taxonomy and this variable is analysed separately in chapter 6, which deals with peer relationship.

4. *Self-control*

The ability to delay gratification and not behave impulsively is a temperamental factor that is aggravated or enhanced by poor early parenting practices. There is a negative link between persistent impulsivity and moral behaviour. This is that *the capacity to set longer term goals, associated with the capacity not to act impulsively, is necessary for systematic moral behaviour to occur*. Regular impulsive responses preclude the reflection needed to facilitate moral behaviour. These views are supported by Ainslie’s temporal preference theory (Ainslie, 1992), and by Baumeister’s work on self-control and “moral muscle” (Baumeister & Exline, 1999). They are expanded in chapter 7 on the impulsive and goal setting codes.

5. *Action identity Theory*

This theory (Vallacher & Wegner, 1985) suggests that moral goals, which have high level action identities, are best attained via a number of progressive lower level (or simpler) actions. It is expected that those who set high level goals without specifying steps towards achieving these (an approach associated with a general low level of action identity hierarchies) will also have difficulty setting and achieving moral goals. This topic is also covered in the impulsivity and goal setting chapter.

1.2. *Cultural Influences on Moral Development in the Current Research Population*

1.21 *Inductive Parenting*

Hoffman (1976) emphasised the importance of inductive reasoning in parental discipline to facilitate the moral development of children. However, an inductive parenting style may only be a feature of developed Western population groups, as well as of middle and upper socio-economic groups (Shaffer, 2000). In his review, Shaffer found that inductive techniques were associated with moral development in White, middle class families but not families from lower socio economic groups. He also noted that in African American groups, power assertion as a parenting technique was not linked to an antisocial developmental trajectory in children, as was the case with European Americans. Nsamenang, looking at parenting traditions in sub Saharan Africa, concluded that moral values are not verbally taught but *experienced* in traditional families. “...here children discern the tacit knowledge, values, skills and moral lessons woven into the texture of family tradition and daily routine” (Nsamenang, 2004, p. 108). Nsamenang’s findings suggest that moral behaviours are instilled in the child of a traditional African family through participatory practices rather than through verbal discourse (including inductive reasoning). There has been little research into traditional parenting practices over the past

⁷³ See Chapter 1, 3.43 for a discussion on altruism.

three decades in South Africa itself (S. Leclerc-Madlala, personal communication, February, 2006). However, in the view of an isiZulu speaking educationalist in Kwazulu-Natal, an authoritarian, non inductive parenting style still is regarded as appropriate in traditional Zulu families (Q. Zungu, personal communication, April, 2005).

A question investigated in this chapter is therefore the prevalence of inductive parenting methods in either of the research groups.

1.22 Responsibility in the Family

There is evidence that children's moral development is positively influenced by the degree to which they are responsible for the family's welfare, as this teaches them how to act out their concern for others (Mischel, 1986). This view was not supported by research into the education of South African disadvantaged isiZulu speaking children (Ludman, 2005). Ludman, citing the findings of the South African Limpopo Rural Education Survey, 1993, found that rural children were assigned a heavy load of household chores each day before leaving for school, and concluded that rather than being empowering, parental expectations of rural children were more likely to be seen as a burden. The chores included dipping cattle, seeing to livestock, washing and ironing, and preparing breakfast for the family.

In view of Ludman's (2005) findings, the relationship between responsibilities given to the child in the family and antisocial behaviour was of interest in the present study.

1.23 Disadvantaged Communities, Culture and Value Structures

Differences in moral values important in Westernised countries and those espoused in semi-rural traditional cultures as found in South African, was another potential cultural influence in the present study. Exploratory research using Joubert's Value Orientation Measure suggested that the value orientations of historically disadvantaged South African university students from diverse cultures were not based on the same value systems as their advantaged and more Westernised (White) peers (Hoelson & Stead, 1998). These differences were due to political, economic and cultural factors experienced by the students. Hoelson and Stead's findings replicated those in other parts of Africa, where a collectivistic traditional value system co-existed with an individualistic occidental value system (Dahourou et al., cited in Hoelson and Stead, 1998). Nsamenang (2004) also found that children reared in traditional African families are group rather than individual oriented, resulting in group goals superseding personal goals.

These differences between the value systems of developed Western countries, and those in the East and underdeveloped countries such as Africa, underpin the criticisms of cognitive theories of moral development (Chapter 1, 3.42).

2. Method

2.1. Terms, Definitions and Clarifications

The terms *moral knowledge*, *moral attitudes and beliefs*, *virtue*, *moral reasoning*, *moral affect* and *moral behaviour* are frequently used interchangeably in the psychological literature on morality. It therefore was necessary to define these and related terms, as they are used in the present study. Of particular importance is the distinction between moral behaviour and the other terms. The literature suggests that possession of moral virtues, knowledge, attitudes, feelings or moral reasoning does not necessarily translate into moral behaviour. The discussion below also clarifies another potential sources of misunderstanding, namely the distinction between "*moral*" and "*prosocial*" behaviour.

Moral Knowledge: This is information about what is "right or wrong" in a given situation.

Moral Attitudes and Beliefs: These are habitual beliefs about the rightness or wrongness of specific behaviours.

Values, Ideals and Principles: These terms refer to convictions that allow individuals to judge and choose between modes of behaviour.

Moral principles or ethics are terms related to moral values and used synonymously in this study. These are standards “on which behaviour is judged right or wrong, particularly in a relational context, where the impact of actions on others is significant.” (Hugo & Van Vuuren, 1996, p. 13).

The distinction between moral and prosocial behaviour.

These terms can be on the same continuum - These terms do not necessarily refer to the same concept, although they can be placed on the same continuum. *Prosocial* behaviour endears the “actor” to his audience. He is a likeable person because he wants to be liked by most people. Prosocial behaviour is defined here in terms of its intended consequences for others. Eisenberg and Mussen (1989) describe it as a voluntary act, intended to have positive outcomes for individuals in the general community (as opposed to only in an individual’s close relationships). There are many reasons for such acts, some of which may be selfish, others more altruistic. True altruistic intentions behind prosocial behaviour are rare according to Eisenberg and Mussen. Conformity to social expectations (prosocial behaviour) does not mean the individual will endure personal sacrifice for the good of others, especially those in whom he has no vested interest (Lickona, 1976).

When these terms are not on the same continuum - Prosocial and moral behaviour however are not always on the same continuum. Nazism was a case where prosocial behaviour towards a defined group (“pure” Aryans), led to immoral or antisocial behaviour towards those outside this group, especially Jews. At the individual level, some noted evil doers of our time were known as kindly by those familiar with them. Examples include Hitler, and Theodore Bundy, a serial killer of women, who was affectionate and gentle toward his own girlfriends (Carey, 2005). Alan Boesak, a respected anti-apartheid activist prior to democracy in South Africa, was later convicted of stealing large sums of charitable money under his care in post apartheid years.

Doris (2002), a moral philosopher, argued that the reason for these variations in prosocial and antisocial behaviour in one individual is the absence of any real enduring “personality” or stable “character”, so that situational factors have a strong influence on “moral” behaviour. From a psychological theory point of view, this fluctuation can be explained in terms of social learning theory (e.g. Hartshorne and May’s studies), particularly by Ainslie’s “temptation” theory (see chapter 1, 3.32 & 3.42). Underlying the behaviour of those who are prosocial in some situations and immoral in others may be the inability to resist temptation. Resistance to temptation is not only explained by socialisation theories of moral behaviour, but also relates to cognitive decisions made by those functioning above Kohlberg’s third stage of moral reasoning. Kohlberg’s use of the term “*moral dilemma*” to describe the scenarios he used to assess moral reasoning, highlights the element of choice making in the face of temptation, involved in a moral act.

The use of prosocial in the present study: Prosocial behaviour describes actions that improve the well being of others, regardless of whether the behaviour is truly “altruistic”. In addition, evidence of prosocial behaviour towards some in a life-story, may be coupled with other information in the story that a subject behaved in an antisocial manner towards others he encountered (e.g. statements of concern about a parent could be coupled with descriptions of robbery and violence).

2.2. Operational Definitions

The factors contributing towards moral behaviour presented in 1.11 above are operationally defined below.

1. Moral actions - Moral behaviour (as opposed to thought and opinions) that actually happened (according to the life-stories), was scored. These actions showed moral choice or “altruistic” (see the definition in 7. below) behaviour.

2. *Levels of moral reasoning* - Statements reflecting reasoning at any of Kohlberg's stages were scored.

3. *Moral knowledge, attitudes and values* – These statements included beliefs about human rights, education and religion. Statements showing a grasp of the difference between commonly understood “rights” and “wrongs” (e.g. it is wrong to murder people) were scored as moral *knowledge*. Habitual beliefs about the “rightness” or “wrongness” of specific behaviours were scored as moral *attitudes*. Convictions held by subjects on which they based judgements and choices about ways of behaving were scored as moral *values*. This concept is similar to that of an attitude, but implies more strongly held and central convictions. Moral attitudes and values were scored in the same category.

4. *Direct parenting influences* –

a. Evidence of *inductive* methods used by caregivers to shape the child's behaviour were scored. These included

- supplying verbal reasons for sanctions
- provision of alternate strategies to antisocial behaviour
- exploring with the child the outcomes of antisocial behaviour
- exploring with the child ways to repair damage caused by antisocial behaviour

b. *Role modelling* of right and wrong behaviour by caregivers.

5. *Indirect parenting influences* -

This category covered activities organized or facilitated by caregivers in the developmental years of the child, associated with moral behaviour in the literature.

- giving the child responsibilities in the home
- exposing the child to moderate social conflict, accompanied by appropriate parental guidance (e.g. consideration of the impact of drugs, alcohol, local conflicts)
- exposing the child to peers who model prosocial behaviour

6. *Cohesiveness of the subject's early community* - Statements reflecting a subject's perceptions of cohesiveness of his community were scored. Initially, this was understood to mean the subject's perception that his immediate community had a unified view as regards moral matters. For example, they might be unified in censoring serious crime perpetrated by members. The initial analysis indicated this view was too narrow. Ultimately, six community scoring categories emerged from the data.

- * the community's unified values regarding moral matters, or lack of unity thereon
- * community censor for serious antisocial behaviours
- * joint community support activities (e.g. helping those who are hungry or sick)
- * community value of prosocial behaviours by its members
- * condoning of antisocial behaviour by the community, if this was outside the immediate community
- * a subject's perception of the impact of community influence on his antisocial behaviours

7. *Altruistic behaviour* - Acts of good will towards individuals and the community, which were not obviously rewarding to the actor, were considered as altruistic for the purposes of the analysis, regardless of the level of personal cost to the individual.

8. *Locus of control* - Statements referring to the degree to which a subject took responsibility for his antisocial behaviour were rated. Both positive (internal locus) and negative (external locus) statements were scored. Comments that friends were a negative influence on the subject were included when this was used as an excuse for unacceptable behaviour. Comments on whether the subject felt he deserved punishment metered out for antisocial behaviour, be this jail or from family or community, were scored only if the statement also clearly indicated the subject's acceptance or rejection of responsibility for these actions.

2.3 Process

The variables analysed in this chapter were specified in 2.2 above. The data generated additional categories for some of these subcodes, in particular, the *values* and *altruism* subcodes. Those generated by the initial “community impact” analysis have already been specified (point 6 in 2.2). Where new subcodes emerged in the course of the initial text analysis of a subcode, this necessitated a re-analysis of stories to ensure all the data on the new categories was included.

The Measurement of Moral Development

The general scoring points covered in chapter, 3, 5.31, applied to scoring the moral subcodes. Both statements and stories were counted. Regarding overlap, statements that fitted more than one subcode were scored in each of these, as the total sum of statements scored across moral subcodes was not used for the between group comparisons in the results. The personal nature of moral matters led to third party interviews contributing little to the qualitative scoring of moral subcodes, although these sometimes supplemented life-story information.

Specific scoring issues.

The following points are relevant to the discussion of specific moral subcodes later in this chapter.

1. *Kohlberg's moral stages:* Kohlberg's moral dilemma technique, and even a later simplified standardized response format (Gibbs & Widaman, 1982), were impractical to use in this study, due to time constraints. Instead, moral judgement statements expressed in the life-stories were rated in terms of Kohlberg's stages. Kohlberg's stages of reasoning were measured in two ways. For the purposes of assessing the *frequency of statements* falling into each of the stages, the general method used elsewhere, namely a count of "1" given to each relevant statement at any one of Kohlberg's stages, was applied. However, in the statistical analysis of group differences, a *modal* stage count was allocated to each subject. Kohlberg held that people adopt a certain level of moral reasoning which they apply in most situations (Gibbs & Widaman, 1982). Thus the "typical" or modal (rather than mean) stage of moral reasoning was obtained for each subject. Where the modal level could not be derived (e.g. when there were only two reasoning statements in a story, each at a different level), the higher stage was used.

A shortcoming of the Biographical Questionnaire emerged in analysing this subcode. Most prisoner life-stories (86.7%), and those of three of the non-prisoners (17.6%) who had received a legal sanction for delinquency (NICRO and Boys' Town subjects), generated moral judgement statements. However, seven non-prisoner stories (41.2%) produced no moral statements. This was due to the absence of prompt questions relating to the "rightness or wrongness" of transgressions, in interviews with participants who had had no formal contact with the law. The open-ended format of the interviews failed to generate much *spontaneous* moral judgement material in non-prisoner stories.

2. *General and religious value statements:* These responses were weighted differently in the analysis. General value statements emerged spontaneously in the text and were not cued by interviewer prompts. As such, they were a stronger reflection of a subject's attitudes and values and less likely to reflect an attempt to impress the interviewer. These therefore needed to be scored separately from *religious values*, which were elicited by a specific Questionnaire prompt. The validity concerns about the measurement of religious values were offset by the open nature of the questions, which reduced their likelihood of influencing the subject to respond in a particular direction.

Were you involved with religion when growing up? Are you involved now?

Regarding the scoring of religious value categories, counts were based on the number of positive textual statements in support of the category being measured (e.g. family attended religious services). The absence of reference to a category in a story (e.g. that religion was meaningful) *was not scored as evidence that the opposite held true*.

3. *Community influence:* This score looked at a subject's perception of the community in which he lived. The emphasis was on the *subject's view* of his life circumstances rather than any "objective" measure of cohesion.

4. *Altruism:* The altruism subcode analysis presented a potential validity problem, in terms of the cue for this information on the Biographical Questionnaire:

What are the things you can do to help your community?

This prompt may have primed subjects, particularly prisoners, to make a socially desirable response indicating that they cared about their communities (Goffman, 1956). In view of this concern, while all “altruistic” responses were considered, those generated spontaneously (not in response to the above cue) were discussed separately.

2.32 Reliability

Reliability was calculated across all the moral subcodes, using the total count scores for each, as reached by two independent raters across two randomly chosen stories from each research group. Cohen’s Kappa (Howell, 1997) provided a good inter-rater reliability figure of .83.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Moral Actions

3.11 Qualitative Results

The few text statements of moral behaviour that emerged in the analysis referred mainly to acts of community caring, rather than to responses to moral dilemmas (see 2.2, point 1 above). The limited references to moral behaviour in the stories was probably due to the reflective nature of the Biographical Interview framework, which asked for subjects’ opinions rather than descriptions of things they had done. Across both research groups, only 5 (29.4%) non-prisoner stories referred to moral action, in the form of community outreach. This included protection against thieves, entertaining the youth, caring for the aged and helping youth dependent on drugs.

Examples

Non-prisoners

Okay, are there any things that you do for your community?

We are guarding the area here in Kwa Mashu. They mugged people; they get into people’s houses and steal. So we are guarding the place, working hand in hand with the community, so if there is someone trying to mug someone and they make a sound to make the community and the boys in the area aware that there is burglary, so that they could come. (17, P 271)

Are there anything that you are doing in your community right now?

Yes, there are, there are, I do them on weekends. I take part in these things, collecting donation for the old age homes. I was also taking part in sports. I was an organizer, for soccer matches. (19, P 367)

I took part in the choir as from boarding school. There were clubs known as CYC, so we used to run workshops most of the time. I was once a chairperson of the choir. We started a group for the people that were no longer fitting in the CYC because of the age. They were in the ages 22, 35-40. But it was for unmarried people but no longer a youth but old. They had nothing to do. (22, P 88)

What were the things that you did in groups?

It happened like this, we would help people that had problems, an example would be a person coming to us and saying that so and so took her/his bag or money. I would then contact my friends and help out with that problem. That is how we used to help people. (28, P 253)

...Newlands East. The flats where I used to live there were a lot of drugs, alcohol, the works, girls selling themselves, a lot of abuse happening, and one of my goals then was I wanted to do something about it, especially with the young people and the things that they do. [Subject is now a child care worker.] (31, P 45)

The limited data precluded conclusions being drawn about group differences. Within this proviso, there was a trend in the expected direction, namely that more non-prisoners behaved in moral ways, if *community support is accepted as a form of moral behaviour*.

3.12 Quantitative Results

The few statements of moral behaviour in the stories indicated a quantitative analysis was not appropriate.

3.2 Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Reasoning

Based on evidence in the literature that non-Western populations have a different value system to that espoused in the West (see chapter 1, 3.42), the possibility existed in the present study that the majority, (Zulu) of the participants would not support the value hierarchy implicit in Kohlberg's stages. However, even if this were to be the case, as the two groups were matched for culture, *some* differences in the expected direction were still predicted, if the hypothesis on moral reasoning differences between the group held. At worst, the cultural impact might reduce the number of scores achieved at Kohlberg's fourth and fifth stages.

3.21 Qualitative Results

Overall, the qualitative results showed that most prison life-stories reflected modal counts of Kohlberg's pre-conventional stages, namely stages 1 and 2, while most non-prisoner stories reflected modal levels of Kohlberg's conventional, stage 3. Some of the more illuminating responses appear below.

Examples

Prisoners

Stage 1

If you knew you wouldn't get caught, would you be ok doing crime?
If I knew I wouldn't be caught I would do crime. (4, P 272)

If you knew then, and even now, that you wouldn't get caught, would you still do crime?
When I look at it now and I think about it, I say, maybe, cause like they say, a thief has got 99 times to steal and only on the 100th day he will eventually get caught - soooo, if I didn't get caught I might have continued. (6, P 247)

Hey, yes, if I was not to jail I would have done too many crimes, because I would know that I won't be caught. (7, P 246)

I would not want you to do bad things because you would find yourselves in big shit like my self. (7, P 276)

The above extract alludes to how the subject would instruct youth in his community when he was released.

Eh, the way people live in prison, if a person commits crime these days. It is very hard. .. if you go to court they give you 15 year sentence, life sentence-If you kill one person only. So, I don't want to get involved in anything that will land me in jail. (9, P 398)

Uh, crime is unacceptable....Yes, all because when you do crime you might lose your life, die, be arrested maybe life imprisonment, die in prison. Yes, there are lots of things that could happen.....like get shot and be crippled, end in a wheel chair. (14, P 443)

Stage 2

Most of the things that I have [stolen], I was making use of gun. So, when I say if I get that little bit of money, I will then retire from being naughty, just a metre, then I will retire and forget about a gun. [subject plans a final crime to "make good" when released from jail.] (5, P 314)

And I stabbed one of my friends -now he is crippled.

Why did you do that?

I was defending myself. (6, P 199)

If I needed things from my mother's family, most of the time I would not get them since they also had children of their own. I grew up like that, until I realized that I don't get everything that I wanted, you see, then I decided to resort to doing crime so that I could be able to take care of myself. (8, P 10)

Only two prisoners made statements at Kohlberg's conventional or higher stages.

Stage 3

I see myself as a very successful person since I know that in order to be successful, I need to do good things, things that are going to be liked by everybody, and not do things that will hurt other persons. (3, P 221)

So, I am a very fair person, who would like other person to be satisfied. For an example, let say we have planned something then one of us betrayed another. I would not like a person to take advantage of the other person, do you understand? (15, P 346)

Stage 5

When I first committed offences, I did not feel anything for the other person's loss. But now that I am in jail, I know that if I can lose something I will feel bad and will never forget that I lost something. Now I know that committing offences affect or hurt other person since he/she does not forget that he/she lost something. (3, P 184)

Non-prisoners

Stage 1

Okay, right at that stage if you knew that you would be caught say bunking or drinking, would you still have done it?

No.

So you just thought you could get away with it?

Yes. (16, P 290)

If you would not be caught, would you commit crime now ?

No, I don't think since I could see where it went wrong. It is even worse outside, one can be taken to jail and sometimes die, you see all those things. (17, P 307)

If you look at people of your age, did they succeed?

Most of them did though there were those that did not, but I would not say that they are since they are involved in theft but they are succeeding. Well with me, I can't because I am a coward, and I also care for my life. I am scared to go to jail. (19, P 51)

Of interest is that almost all stage 1 non-prisoner responses came from the only subjects in that group who had had formal dealings with the law. ID16 and 17 were ex-Boys' Town and ID 19 had undergone the NICRO programme.

Stage 3

I told my friends that they must not come home with stolen cars.

What made you to say that to them?

It was for the fact that I had a fight with my father about that. He told me that it was wrong to bring stolen cars in the house. (20, P 440)

Yes, they were not at all happy about that, since they did not want me to do things that we were doing with friends. Well I was doing it because of peer pressure. (28, P 286)

I must say, I still had respect in myself. I wasn't really one to drink in public. I would drink slyly. It was like, my mother's a Christian, I mustn't be noticed. (31, P 310)

Your parents, have they expected you to behave in different ways to how you have behaved, at all? Expected you to have achieved different things?

Well, they believe a lot in morals, respect and...and I felt if they knew what I was doing it would disappoint them big time.

Well, do they know?

They don't. (32, P 210)

Stage 4

And ... the way the law looks at it, it affects people that have been with the culprit even if you did not do anything, but the fact that you were seen with them then affects you. They even look at what you had in hand when you walked out the yard. Then the law took me and searched me for the truth and then they proved that I was not involved. They warned me not to mix with them again. That is why I decided to stay away from bad influence. (27, P 509)

Stage 5

I was arrested because I had that material...It was 1988 since I was then collaborating with the reverend father that was around known as Father X and Father Y, and also other people that were taking big part in terms of politics and ANC. So, I was working with them. We even worked through youths, keeping them informed about everything. We were telling people about their rights and all sorts of other things. So mostly I always had information with me concerning those things. (22, P 392)

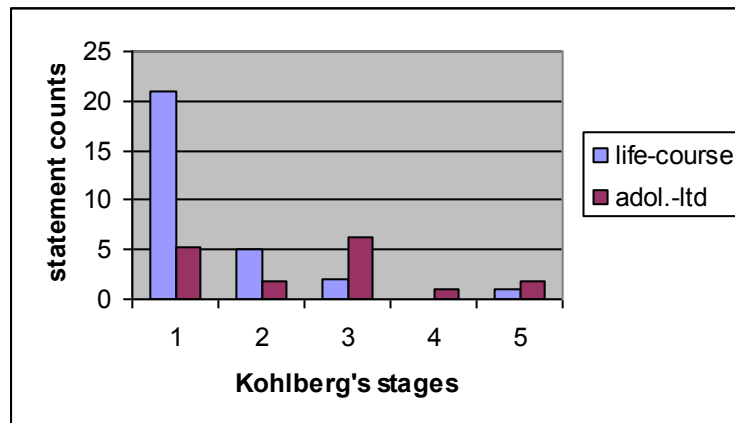
I would say the girls. I think the girls were damaged in a way [from the sexual advances of subject and friends when delinquents], and, when you kind of think about this, it's really something heavy. (31, P 329)

3.22 Quantitative Results

Graphs.

Figure 17 shows that the direction of the group differences supports other literature findings that life-course offenders function mainly at pre-conventional levels of Kohlberg's stages.

Figure 17: Group Differences in Statements across Kohlberg's Stages



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17;

Key	Kohlberg's Stages	Life-course *	Adol.-limited *
	1	21 (73.3%)	5.3 (29.4%)
	2	5 (26.7%)	1.8 (11.8%)
	3	2 (13.3%)	6.2 (41.4%)
	4	0	.98 (5.9%)
	5	1 (6.7%)	1.8 (11.8%)

* 1. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

2. Total % subjects per group can exceed 100% as the same subject could make responses in more than one stage.

Statistical analysis.

Given the nature of the Kohlberg stage data, a logistic regression analysis of the data was appropriate. The results supported the group differences across the stages portrayed in the qualitative analysis. The logistic model using Kohlberg's stages could successfully predict prisoner status of 78.3% of the subjects in the sample. The overall model was significant ($n = 23$; $G=4.32$, $df=1$, $p=0.04$) and the b-weight for stages was almost significant (Wald statistic=-1.88, $df=1$, $p=0.06$). The model indicated that each increment in a subject's Kohlbergian stage reduced the odds of his being a prisoner by 0.51.

3.23 Conclusions on the link between moral reasoning and recidivist crime.

Many more non-prisoner statements fell within Kohlberg's conventional and higher levels than did prisoner statements. Most responses occurred at Kohlberg's stage 3 (41.4% of non-prisoners). At this stage, moral decisions are underpinned by the need for social acceptance. Many more prisoner than non-prisoner statements fell into Kohlberg's first and second, pre-conventional, stages, with the largest number of responses

occurring at stages 1 (73.3% of prisoners) and 2 (26.7% of prisoners). Here, moral decisions are based on the need to avoid punishment, (stage 1) and on the need to satisfy personal desires (stage 2).

Of interest in the present study is that seven (41.2%) of the adolescent-limited offenders made some responses at pre-conventional levels, and three (20%) of the life-course offenders made some responses at conventional or higher levels of moral reasoning. These findings support other research indicating that a low level of moral reasoning is a likely, but not necessary, correlate of serious recidivist behaviour (Blasi, 1980).

3.3 Moral Knowledge, Attitudes, and Values.

3.31 Moral Knowledge

Qualitative results.

Arbuthnot et al., (1987), in a review of the literature, found a weak relationship between moral *knowledge* and behaviour. The present study also revealed little difference in the number of text references to moral knowledge of “right” and “wrong” between the prison and non-prison groups. These occurred in three prisoner (20% of the group) and five (29.4% of the group) non-prisoner stories. Possession of this knowledge by the prison subjects clearly failed to contain their criminal activities! ID 8, was jailed for murder and rape, ID 11 engaged in violent crime, including murder, and ID 15 admitted to committing at least 13 crimes, some capital offences.

Examples

Prisoners

I think I deserved it because I had committed a crime. (8, P 210)

If I can ask you to describe yourself now, what would you say?

I would say that shooting people is not right even though you may justify it by saying that one was trying to control crime, killing people made it worse. (11, P 470)

Well, once I joined [a gang as a hired killer] I later realized that it is

not good or nice. The problem with it is that once you join it there is no way out. (15, P 405)

Non-prisoners

From home up until I came there [Place of Safety], we were doing all the wrong things with friends, since we could not correct each other, no one notices that what we were doing was wrong. But since I am now old I can tell between wrong and right. (17, P 255)

Okay, do you think that it was fair for you to be arrested?

By law, it was fair. Since the law does not allow one to take revenge. If you take steps to protect yourself, there is a limit. If you have a gun, you can only protect yourself by shooting. (23, P 221)

We had a tendency of throwing stones on top of the roof at night, and unfortunately the stone went to the neighbour's window and broke it. We were then beaten for lying. But if you look at it was fair since they had to pay for the window. (24, P 128)

Did you think that they were right to have been coming after you? Right to have picked you up that time. [Subject hid guns at school.]

I was doing wrong. (32, P197)

Quantitative results.

The limited responses in this category were not compatible with a quantitative analysis.

3.32 Values and Attitudes

In the literature review (chapter 1, 3.42), values are ascribed an important role in theoretical explanations of moral behaviour. The absence of moral values is linked to group acts of social evil in history. In Kohlberg's cognitive approach, strongly held values are implicit in conventional and higher levels of moral reasoning. In socialisation theory, the child learns parental values as part of his moral development. Finally, using Damon's concept of a moral identity, the person with a strong moral ID defines himself in terms of moral goals, implying a developed set of moral values. Although moral values are a significant component of moral

behaviour, research suggests that alone, they do not guarantee such behaviour. As with a stage 3 level of moral reasoning, they are a likely, but not sufficient, element of moral behaviour (Damon, 1999).

The expectation in the current study was that the possession of strong moral values and attitudes would correlate with a degree of non-impulsive, goal oriented behaviour, elements antithetical to chronic antisocial behaviour. Thus it was expected that the prisoner group, who demonstrated significantly greater impulsivity (see chapter 7), would also display fewer strong moral values and attitudes.

The analysis generated two value categories. These were general and religious values. The former category was generated spontaneously by subjects in their stories and the latter, mainly in response to a Biographical Questionnaire prompt.

General values.

Qualitative Results

Analysis of the results in this values category showed that adolescent-limited offenders held more general values, relative to life-course offenders (33.3% - 5 prisoners : 70.6% - 12 non-prisoners). These covered parenting, education, the law and human rights. Two themes emerged in the text analysis of group differences.

1. Broader responses in the non-prisoner group

The value statements expressed in the prison group were limited to responses to unpleasant prison experiences and were aimed at avoiding such consequences in the future. Non-prisoners' values covered a broader aspect of life and dealt with beliefs on how to achieve personal and community growth.

Examples

Prisoners

On women...

If I come across a person and see that he is doing bad things, and doing things he does not know where he will end up at, I would advise that person that "look brother, if you want to be a good person do like this and this. Get a job and forget about all other things and women. Especially because other things that put you in trouble are women. Women are involved in competition most of the time. A woman can see another woman having nice things and want it too and you end up in jail trying to make her happy". (2, P 236)

(value = work is good; women are bad)

On parenting...

And as you say, parents need to show love for their children, and that's where a lot of things go wrong, you find people in places like this. (1, P 452)

(value = parents showing love for children is good-it keeps them from crime)

Non-Prisoners

On parenting....

Do you think that the punishment that you got was fair [vigorous beatings]?

During these days, they are saying that it is not fair but according to me, judging by the way how things are now, most of time, these children who does not get punishment, are worse children, as they don't listen. (19, P 191)

(value = discipline of children makes them socially responsible)

On education....

Okay, did that help you, did you gain anything from attending school class?

Yes, I did gain, because it changed my way of thinking, or my attitude towards many things, I even decided to stop doing immoral behaviours in this world. (27, P 143)

(value = education matures one)

On human dignity....

It was behaving well and treating other people fairly or with respect.

Do you think that those were the things or the way to have a bright future?

Yes, I think that, that is very important. (17, P 40)

(value = the dignity of people)

2. Awareness of the needs of the other

This was demonstrated only in non-prisoner responses, and related to the values of fairness and concern for others. These values related to the welfare of the group as opposed to the individual.

Examples

Non-prisoners

A person that I did not like was a person who was known as being bad, a person that would stab people and kill people. [Subject speaking generally.] (18, P 82)

We had a tendency of throwing stones on top of the roof at night, and unfortunately the stones went to the neighbour's window and broke it. We were then beaten for lying. But if you look at it, it was fair since they had to pay for the window. (24, P 128)

It is important to mix with other people since you sometimes get time to know other people and their perceptions, you see--and grow somehow, you see. You grow and look at things in another angle, which can be helpful to you. I noticed that if you are always single out and have only your own perspective, it is not right. Whereas if you are with other people, you are able to get their insight, maybe they look at things in another angle, which is better than yours, then the thing become even more easier. (22, P 275)

Quantitative Results

Graphs: Figure 18 reflects the finding that more than twice the number of non-prisoners made moral attitude/value statements than did prisoners. No statistical analysis was conducted due to the limited data.

Figure 18. Group Differences in Values and Attitudes



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

Key	Life-course*	Adol.-limited *
Values/Attitudes	8 (33.3%)	18.4 (70.6%)

* 1. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

The results on general values show that not only did adolescent-limited offenders raise a wider and more socially concerned set of values than did the life-coursers, but the latter group held very few values overall. Only 33.3% of prisoners expressed any values in their life-stories, compared with 70.6% of non-prisoners. This finding supports other research showing the strongly held values are an important element in counteracting environmental risk and thus, avoiding a criminal lifestyle (Coutu, 2002).

Religious values.

Qualitative Results

Religion is an obvious vehicle for beliefs about good and evil, right and wrong. The extent and depth of religious beliefs and values held by subjects were examined in the text analysis. This generated several categories themes which acted as a framework for the presentation of results. Some of these themes provided more valid information about group differences than others, as discussed below. A trend across all these themes was the more frequently stated positive religious values of the adolescent-limited group.

1. Family's religious observance: Positive statements that the subject's family attended religious services when he lived at home were scored here. Regular prayer meetings and other evidence of "non formal" observance were also scored, as were comments about faith practices in the family (e.g. "we followed the bible at home"). This category was still scored when the subject only participated in these observances because obliged to, or did so infrequently. In that a family's religious observance was the focus, the scoring unit was the *count of subjects* whose families practiced religious observances, rather than the number of statements on the topic in a life-story.

The results showed early family religious observance as not distinguishing between the two groups. A similar number of prisoner and non-prisoner families followed some form of religious observance when subjects were growing up in the home (53.3% - 8 prisoners : 41.2% - 7 non-prisoners). While this mainly involved attending church services, some families read the Bible regularly, or had home services.

A concern about the measurements in this category was a difficulty in establishing the *degree* of religious observance practiced by families or primary caregivers, given the open-ended interview tool used. A more probing interview tool than the open-ended approach of the present study, was required to do this.

Examples

Prisoners

I grew up as a person who attended church. When I went to church , eyh, going to church so it means that we went to Apostles . Yes, the Apostles had services on Wednesdays maybe at the house, [religious meetings in the home]. At home you would sometimes have your own services. (10, P 10)

Did you go because you wanted to or because you were forced by parents?

No, it was because the whole family went to church.

If the family did not go to church, so you also would not go?

I would also not go. (13, P 69)

Non-prisoners

Have you ever been involved in religion in any way

Yes , my father was a Christian-Ya, I was brought up in Christian home.

And had you always followed it willingly or do you feel that has been, how do you feel about it . ?

At times I really like never felt like going to church , just because my mother was calling me to go church I would also go. (16, P 112)

What is important at home is going church. They belong to Roman Catholic Church. So we grew up under that Roman religion and the fact that they are very strict. (22, P 18)

2. Subject attended services when young: This category grouped statements that a subject attended services regularly when at living at home - this could have been willingly or because he was forced. It was also scored if a subject spoke of having a strong faith when young, even if this did not involve church attendance. Informal religious observance (home services, reading the Bible extensively) was also scored. In that evidence was sought about whether *subjects practiced religious observance or not when young*, the number of statements on the topic in a life-story was less relevant than the *count of subjects* who made these statements.

Most prisoners and non-prisoners practiced some religious observance when young (80% - 12 prisoners : 82.4% - 14 non-prisoners). As with the preceding religious theme, a finer discrimination between the types of observance would have been useful, but was precluded by the open-ended interview tool.

Examples

Prisoners

Were you actively involved in church activities?

Yes, I would say that during 95's, I started going to church up until I was jailed. (7, P 64)

Did you take part in church activities?

Well, I did go to church as we were instructed to go. (15, P 72)

Non-prisoners

I was very involved in the church [as a child]. It was at later stage that I started not to go to church. (17, P 60)

Were you involved with religion? How?

Yes- I just attended church. (18, 36)

Did you take part in religion?

I used to go to church every Sunday. (20, P 94)

3. *Subject still attends sometimes*: Scored here were statements that the subject currently (or just before jail for the prison group) practiced systematic religious observance. Statements about a strong faith at the present time were also scored, even if the subject did not attend services regularly. Subjects scoring in this category were scored separately from those that scored for category 5 below, which looked at a *return, or introduction, to religion* as an adult. As the focus in this theme was whether the subject practiced religious observance in adulthood, the number of statements on the topic in a life-story was less relevant than the *count of subjects* who made these statements.

Relatively few subjects in either group maintained their religious practices in adulthood. Those that did fell mainly in the non-prisoner group (13.3% - 2 prisoners : 35.3% - 6 non-prisoners).

Examples

Prisoners

Were there any religions, like church, that you affiliated to?

Okay, here in jail, what can I say, I go to church. A friend to me is a person who goes to church with me; a person whom I talk to and a person whom we speak church things with him. (2, P 230)

Okay, were you involved in church activities?

Ya, that is another thing, I do go to church when I am outside jail.

(14, P 117)

Non-prisoners

Yes, I have been going to Roman Catholic Church. At this very moment they are shouting at me, telling me to come back to church. It is not very long that I have been away from the church, since it is only one month that I have missed. (24, P 86)

Okay, do you go to church? Did you go to church when you were a child?

I could say that I go but I don't go that often but when I was a child I went to church as often as I can. (27, P 123)

Were you ever involved with religion?

Ya, I'm Catholic

Practicing?

Practicing Catholic

Have you always been?

Yes. (32, P 67)

4. *Religion meaningful when young*: This was an assumption made on the strength of statements about *active participation* in church activities (in the choir, counselling, prayer groups and so on), or by a direct statement that religion was meaningful. Direct statements that religion was not meaningful when young were also considered here, but not included in the quantitative analysis. In assessing the responses, both *the number of statements* made as well as *the number of subjects* making them were of interest. The former became more important than in the previous religious categories as "meaningfulness" was likely to be shown by a subject's degree of involvement, as well as by a description of his religious involvement.

A similar number in both groups found religion meaningful when young (40% – 6 prisoners : 47.1% - 8 non-prisoners). The number of statements were proportionate to the number of subjects who found religion meaningful. The only notable differences between the groups related to the very few (2) non-prisoners who positively stated religion had *not* been meaningful to them, versus many more (7) prisoners who had this view.

Examples

Meaningful religion

Prisoners

When I say I was actively involved, you know Zionist, there things taking place there like healing of people and people who are praying for people, so I was taking part in that healing of people and praying for people. At home they were proud of me, in so much that they did not want me to leave the church because I was helping people. (2, P 41)

I was actively involved in church when my step dad was alive. I went to church regularly. I liked going to church nobody forced me [up to the age of 15]. (6, P 72)

At home you would sometimes have your own [religious] services, discuss each other's troubles ..., you see that how we lived, good life, asked what problem I had at that moment, our home situation as well, I would say mine, and she would say hers, and it would be nice, and we would pray. (10, P 10)

Non-prisoners

What did you gain for going to church?

It was a known fact that Boys' Town boys were behaving very badly. So going to church helped us a lot since we got guidance and how great the Lord is, praying, asking everything from God and that God is powerful if you trust him, so we were taught about all those things, you see. When you believe in God your life style changes, you don't go out doing wrong things or immoral things. You promise, you learn, you are able to distinguish between good and bad, between right and wrong, you have a choice. (17, P 60)

Okay, were you involved in church?

Yes -I was collecting offerings [usher], and doing voluntary work for the church.

Yes, yes, did you benefit from those doing those things?

Yes, I did. (28, P 65)

Not meaningful religion

Prisoners

Oh, did you take part in church activities? Did you go there because you wanted or because you were going with granny?

I was forced since I had to go with granny. (5, P 54)

Well, I was forced to go to church. They would come and fetch me to go to church, the next minute I am no longer there, gone. (11, P 223)

5 Religion "now": Statements that the subject discovered or rediscovered religion as an adult and that this was particularly meaningful to him, were scored. Scoring took place only if there was also text evidence elsewhere that the subject had lost interest in religion earlier, or that he never had "had" it. Religion found or re-found in prison was also scored here. As in the previous theme, group differences in "meaningfulness" of the new found religion were measured both by *the number of statements*, as well as by *the number of subjects* making these, in a group.

An interesting difference emerged on this measure. In the prisoner group, only three (20%) of the subjects had strongly rediscovered religion, but between them they generated many statements on the topic (9 statements). In the non-prisoner group, two (11.8%) subjects re-found religion but were more contained in their responses (2 statements). This difference reflected the different approach subjects in each group took to the rediscovery of religion. For prisoners, the experience influenced them strongly. They felt that they now were strong enough to resist prison crime, that the only relationships they wanted were with fellow "reborn" Christians, and that, with their new religion, they were sure to leave crime behind when released. Of concern was the brittle nature of these beliefs, exemplified in a close study of the text of ID 1 below. The impression was gained that should things not go well for these subjects, they would quickly forsake their new found beliefs. The primary function of the new found religious belief seemed to be a means of avoiding unpleasant realities, and of having friends, where previously they were loners. Should this purpose no longer be served, the beliefs might be abandoned.

Examples

Prisoner

Ok. Were you ever involved with any religion in any way? At any stage in your life?
Not until I came to this place. (1, P 111)

...Describe for me in one sentence, you - ten years in the future.
Ten years in the future? Wohoh! Ah, a man of God, teaching Christ on the outside, living a holy life, ja, married, just living for God. (1, P 334)

[re: exposure to religion in prison] I call it "God counselling". I got a... very close relationship with God, so ... he's teaching me so much. And a lot of the experiences I go through in this place, or the experiences that I went through outside, uh, I have learned lots from those experiences, you know what I'm saying. (1, P 384)

Ok. Have you made friends here?
Yes.-I am part of a group-part of a Christian thing ...part of a church, ja. (1, P 295)

Do they visit you? [ex girlfriend and son]
No, I haven't seen him in four years. She's got a.. she's got a..a. another boyfriend now, she's got a child from him. But I've got a vision from God. Ja, and I... I don't... like I told her I don't really support ..., I don't really care, you know what I'm saying, you know what I'm saying? As long as when I come out that she's still willing to take me back. (1, P 309)

Right now? [long pause, laughs] I think the most important thing about me right now is my love for Christ. And prior to this, prior to being reborn, what would you have said "the most important thing about me is..."?
I wouldn't have known. (1, P 312)

In contrast to the fragility of prisoners' new found religious beliefs is the moderate and logical tones of the extracts below from non-prisoners who refer to re-finding religion. Both are ex-Boys' Town subjects

Non-prisoners

At times I really like never felt like going to church , just because my mother was calling me to go church I would also go , but my mind was already off church.
Okay , that was before. Is it the same now ?
No, things have changed home and I like going to church. (16, P 114)

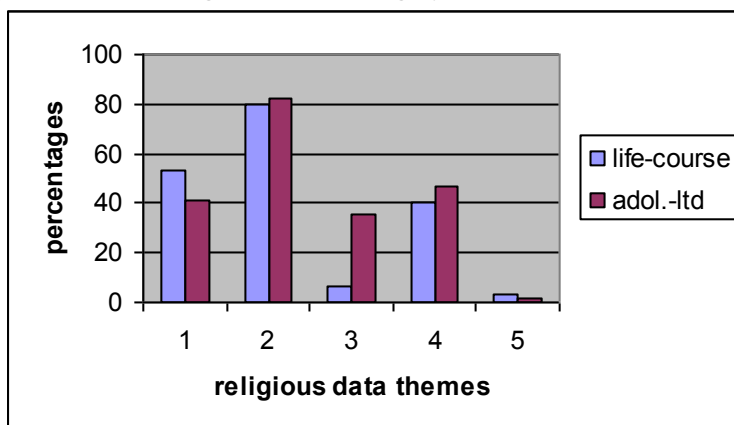
It was a known fact that Boys' Town boys were behaving very badly. So going to church helped us a lot since we got guidance and how great the Lord is, praying, asking everything from God and that God is powerful if you trust him, so we were taught about all those things, you see. When you believe in God your life style changes, you don't go out doing wrong things or immoral things. You promise, you learn, you are able to distinguish between good and bad, between right and wrong, you have a choice. (17, P 60)

While "trusting" in God, ID 17 recognizes the need for personal effort in making his life work, through choices and behaviour change.

Quantitative Results

Graphs: In the *values subcode*, group differences were assessed across the religious categories described above. In this evaluation, the *number of subjects* who made statements in any one theme, rather than statements, was the unit of measurement. In general, the *strength* of a subject's response was not at issue, as with the moral reasoning subcode, but simply *whether or not he fell into one of the religious subcode categories*. The exceptions were categories 4 and 5, where degree was also important, shown by a statement count. In practice this proved not to be a problem, as statements and texts matched in category 4, and category 5 involved so few subjects in either group that it remained an area of interest only.

Figure 19. Group Differences on 5 Religious Value Category Themes

**Key****Religious Categories**

	Life-course*	Adol.-ltd*
1. Family's religious observance	8 (53.3%)	5.6 (41.2%)
2. Subject attended services when young	12 (80%)	11.2 (82.4%)
3. Subject still attends sometimes	1 (6.7%)	4.8 (35.3%)
4. Religion meaningful when young	6 (40%)	6.4 (47.1%)
5. Religion 'now'	3 (20%)	1.6 (11.8%)

*1. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

2. Total % subjects per group can exceed 100% as the same subject could make responses in more than one of Kohlberg's stages.

Figure 19 shows that slightly more non-prisoners than prisoners had some religious involvement when young, had had religious involvement in the recent past, and had found religion meaningful when young (categories 2,3 and 4).⁷⁴ A slightly larger number of prisoners' families observed religion when subjects were young (category 1), and slightly more prisoners found religion in a serious way in adulthood (category 5). This last category was measured for interest rather than for evidence of early factors influencing the development of a life-course or adolescent-limited offending trajectory.

Statistical Results: Only one of the chi-squares conducted on religious value categories was significant. This was for theme 3 which measured subjects' current involvement in religious practices. The log-linear statistic calculated on the data gave the same outcome.

Religious Category 3 - Subject still attends sometimes

Fisher's exact test: X^2 exact probability: $df=1$; $p=.05$ (2-sided) (sig.)

Log linear: Lambda for the interaction in the table = .51; $df=1$; $p=0.04$

In spite of generally non significant group differences, the quantitative results showed a trend towards the greater exposure to, and involvement in, religious practice, by the adolescent-limited subjects. Four of the religious themes (1-4) in Figure 19 demonstrated the expected trends. However, the non significance of these differences indicates that overt evidence of early family religious practice, of participation of the young child himself in early religious practice, and the meaningfulness of this involvement, are not sufficient predictors of subsequent trajectories into either life-course or adolescent-limited delinquency.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ This conclusion is based on subject percentages per group.

⁷⁵ As discussed in the qualitative results of this section, a more specialized assessment of religious beliefs and practices might measure more accurately the relevance of religion on a person's behaviour. Such assessments are beyond the scope of the present broad investigation of group differences.

Conclusions on the link between values and recidivist crime.

It is informative to consider the outcome of the religious values theme analysis in the light of the general values results. The latter identified life-course offenders as possessing noticeably fewer and less socially aware general values than did adolescent-limited offenders, despite responses being too limited in this category to merit statistical analysis. This result supports, anecdotally, the general hypothesis interrogated in this chapter, that life-course offenders lag behind adolescent-limited offenders in their moral development. These general values emerged from the life-stories without prompts, unlike religious values. Hence, these results carried more weight than those relating to religious values, as they were likely to have been important to those who stated them. The presence of group differences as regards general values leads to the logical assumption that similar differences might also exist between the groups on other kinds of values, in particular, religious values, and that the outward signs of these beliefs, as measured in the study, were not an accurate indicator of their depth and strength.

This assumption is supported by Stark et al.'s (1982) finding that religious conviction correlated negatively with delinquency. Stark also found that community support for religious convictions was a moderating variable in this relationship. In the present study, by virtue of the Nchanga non-prisoners' physical proximity to the local Roman Catholic church in a semi-rural area, and by virtue of the fact that most of their families were church parishioners (whether practicing or not), there was some community support in this group for religious beliefs.

In light of the above discussion, tentative support is given by the present results to literature findings (see Chapter 1, 3.42) that at risk children, placed in a criminogenic (Moffitt's term) environment, who possess strong positive values, be these religious or otherwise, are provided with a resilient shield that helps protect them from a life-course offending developmental trajectory. An alternate or supplementary interpretation of the results relates to the parenting style of *watchfulness*, which acts as a preventative factor against delinquency in children raised in disadvantaged, delinquent prone settings (e.g. many inner city areas in large cities). Snyder & Patterson (1987) in a review of the literature on factors associated with, and protecting against, long term antisocial behaviour, found that parental monitoring of children's behaviour is a key prevention element of delinquent behaviour. In the present study, the adolescent-limited group experienced significantly greater parental watchfulness than the life-course offender group (see chapter 5, 1.2). Parents who ensured their children attended church regularly probably extended this good supervision across their general disciplinary style.

The analysis of attitudes and values leads to the tentative conclusion that the inculcation of moral values in the child acts as one protective factor against chronic antisocial behaviour. There is a suggestion that specific religious beliefs number amongst these values, although, in the light of the methodological problems discussed above, further research is needed to confirm this latter point.

3.4 Direct Parenting Influences (excluding parenting style)

Two data categories were investigated in this subcode: parental inductive discipline, and parental role modelling. In that responses were limited in this category of the moral subcode parenting, no quantitative results were calculated.

Qualitative results.

Inductive Reasoning

Few subjects in either group described caregivers using inductive reasoning in their discipline (33.3% – 5 prisoners : 23.5% - 4 non-prisoners). Of these responses, only IDs 2 and 13 in the prisoner group and IDs 20, 28 and 29 in the non-prisoner group gave clear examples. Inductive parental reasoning was inferred in the remainder. Verbal reasons for sanctions was the main kind of inductive reasoning described. One story also referred to being given alternate behaviour strategies to those sanctioned.

Examples

Clear evidence of inductive reasoning

Prisoners

My parents were giving advises, good ones telling me things that about the things that I was not supposed to do and things that I was supposed to be doing. (2, P 156)

When a person did something wrong, they would talk to the person that what he, she did was wrong. But when a person has done more damage than expected then they would beat that person, just to punish him/her. (13, P 232)

Non-prisoners

I told my friends that they must not come home with stolen cars.

What made you to say that to them?

It was for the fact that I had a fight with my father about that. He told me that it was wrong to bring stolen cars in the house. (20, P 231)

So, my parents kept on warning me about bad influence from friends that it would one day land me into a serious trouble. Or else this would lead to this and that. So, that thing ended up hurting them in a very big way previously. (28, P 416)

'If you had an argument or not seeing eye to eye with that person, how would you solve that problem? I would say as they were adults, they were able to make up things with me, they would call me maybe after having given me a punishment and tell me that what I did was wrong and I was suppose to do like that, things like that. (29-2, P 79)

Inferred parental use of inductive reasoning

Prisoners

The problem began when mom was staying at another place, and I started changing, and it showed that I wasn't staying with a parent. Because my parent was very strict, yes fairly well, and discussed things, she didn't use physical punishment but punishment by reprimanding. (10, P 57)

This text could indicate mother reasoned why actions were wrong, but the only firm conclusion to be drawn here was mother did not use much physical discipline.

Uh, in my home, my parents were not the kind of people who liked using a stick, they were not the type of parents who believed in fighting or beating, they were people who believed in negotiations you see. You should be a person who listens. (14 P 136)

As with ID10, this text could show parents used inductive reasoning to explain a sanction, but the only firm conclusion to be drawn here was they did not use much physical discipline.

The limited evidence in life-stories of inductive reasoning used as a disciplinary method in both life-course and adolescent-limited groups is in line with evidence that an authoritarian rather than inductive reasoning style is regarded as "good parenting" in traditional Zulu families [Q. Zungu, personal communication, April, 4, 2005], and that values in the child of an African traditional family are not typically taught by verbal exhortation, but are gained through participation in family tradition and daily routines (Nsamenang, 2004, p.108).

The findings in this study, together with the culturally relevant literature, suggest that for youth developing in traditional Zulu homes, the presence or absence of inductive reasoning used in parental discipline is not a predictive variable of their moral development, and by implication, in the development or avoidance, of a serious recidivist criminal lifestyle. The absence of mention of this kind of discipline style by the Coloured participants in either research group, leads to the same general conclusion, albeit the moderating influence here would be socio-economic class rather than culture (see below).

Role Models

There was also little evidence in the stories that subjects' perceived their parents as being good models of what was right and wrong, although indirect evidence of this arose in the life-stories of 2 of the 3 Coloured, adolescent-limited subjects. IDs 31 and 32 referred to caregivers as strong examples of Christianity and of civic behaviour, an image they themselves did not wish to tarnish in public, through delinquent behaviour.

Examples

Non-prisoners

Yes, [my mother's] always been a very strong Christian...And, uh, ja even up to now. And in fact I wouldn't say that, uh.....you know she's always been a very strong Christian, and I think I also am in my own way, you know as a teenager, still wanted to try please God, and up to today still a very strong Christian. And I think it's part and parcel also that maybe...my whole life as well. (31, P 170)

[feelings about being discovered drug dealing] Myself, I would have been disappointed, let down. My parent would have known, and that would have...

Would that have made a difference?

That would have made a difference big time. At the end of the day I think my parents go to work every day for me, and here I am doing this. (32, P 250)

The absence of mention of role models for the Zulu subjects in both groups suggests a cultural influence. This may be that it is impolite to refer spontaneously to important authoritarian (parental) figures (there were no specific prompts to elicit this information in the stories), or it may indicate immediate caregiver role modelling as being less significant in a community where many senior figures in the extended family are regarded as role models. The matter requires investigation in further research. It is also dealt with in a limited fashion in chapter 5 on parenting influences.

Overall, evidence of the direct parenting methods outlined in 2.2. above is sparse in both prison and non-prison texts, due to three factors:

- * The design of the Biographical Questionnaire tool was not intended to explore nuances in any one area of interest (e.g. specifics of parental disciplinary style) but rather, obtain an overview, in terms of the subject's perception, of the areas under consideration (and others he chose to include).
- * The non-Western cultural background of most subjects in the current research did not support inductive reasoning methods.
- * All subjects fell in a lower socio-economic group. More use is made of verbal explanations (i.e. inductive techniques) by parents in middle and upper class families than in lower socio-economic families (Shaffer, 2000).

A quotation from ID19 is a good reflection of the general, non inductive, discipline style adopted by caregivers in both life-course and adolescent offender groups:

After having beaten you [father] did he sit down with you and tell you where you went wrong?
He would beat us and just keep quiet, and then you will learn that you were wrong. (19, P 181)

In conclusion, an inductive parenting style, as well as caregiver role modelling of values, did not emerge as important distinguishing features between life-course and adolescent-limited isiZulu speaking subjects. While role modelling may have been a corrective influence in the Coloured subgroups, numbers were too limited to assess this.

3.5 Indirect parenting influences

Three categories were generated by the literature for investigation in this subcode. These were the allocation of some responsibility to the child in the home, his exposure to minor social conflict, and to prosocial peers. The analysis produced plentiful data relating to home responsibilities but little in the remaining categories. In that the qualitative analysis indicated a large, similar, number of subjects in both groups were given responsibilities on the home when young, it was decided that a further, quantitative analysis of these results was unnecessary. The research groups were clearly similar on this category of moral development.

Qualitative analysis.

1. Responsibility in the Home

The rich information generated in the stories showed subjects' early familiarity with household chores! Common responsibilities assigned were household cleaning, cooking, tending of cattle or crops, and looking after younger siblings, chores which called for the performance of routine tasks rather than for initiative. Only one, non-prisoner, subject undertook additional responsibility on his own initiative, as shown in the text extract below. He was tasked to care for younger siblings after school, as parents worked long hours. He expanded this role to include resolving siblings' personal problems and doing homework with them, so parents would not be disturbed after a long day at work. Of interest, this was also the only research subject to subsequently entered a caring profession (child care worker). This cameo finding, albeit unsupported, correlates with research findings that it is the *opportunity for personal input in carrying out family responsibilities* (rather than execution of rote tasks) that enhances moral development (Mischel, 1986).

...but there were a lot of good times, as much as I had a lot of responsibilities, it was also a fun time in my life, where I was obviously in control of things, I made decisions, and I liked being in charge [subject in high school].

You liked the responsibility?

It became a burden at times, like when I'm coming back from school, I want to go with my friends and play soccer, but I couldn't. I had to wait till my parents came home, make sure everything is done, and then go. (32, P 39)

Well, my brother was so small, and my sister, when she got back from school I'd tell her what to do, she had to clean up maybe the two rooms, I saw to the kitchen the bathroom, the toilet, the lounge, everything, and I'd say she must cook this tonight, or I'll do it the following night...that sort of thing.

Did your parents not get involved at all in the discipline, or the responsibilities?

Thing is, I didn't want to tell them what happened at home when they weren't there.

Why, what was happening?

I mean like if my sister did anything wrong, like I'd see a boy around, or anything, I'd see to it, so when my parents came home they didn't have hear...I think that they're at work the whole, day, working hard for us. (32, P 83)

Three themes, common to both groups, arose from the textual analysis of responsibility in the home. Specific to the isiZulu speaking subjects in both groups were themes relating to

- * the hierarchical ranking in assigning duties
- * the differential treatment of male and female children

Relevant to all subjects was

- * attitude to chores

In the Zulu group, older children were normally expected to take on the most of the chores assigned to the children. This was demonstrated in two prisoner and four non-prisoner life-stories.

Examples

Non-prisoners

I did most of the chores when we were growing, the reason being that I was the eldest at home, heh heh, [laughing]. My parents were working, obviously, I was the one to do the cleaning, and make sure that my siblings had a bath. (22, P 104)

Female children were also more likely to be assigned chores than male children. In many families there was a further division between boys and girls as regards the kinds of duties assigned (e.g. girls worked in the house, the boys kept the yard clean). Three subjects in each group referred to this. Text from ID 2 gives a good example.

Prisoners

When you were growing, who from your sisters.... were doing household chores?

Well, I can say that some of them. One of them was older than me... they were the people who were doing household chores.

....And why was that?

The cause? Hey, I won't be able to explain that, well I can say maybe because they were females. A female knows that she must do this and that in the house, you see. (2, P 115)

Regarding attitude towards duties imposed, with four exceptions, all subjects in both groups were philosophical about having to take on responsibilities in the home. Those who resented chores came mostly from the prison group. This resentment arose from a sense of being done down for IDs 3 and 6. ID 3 resented his chores as it interfered with playing with friends. ID 6 felt his chores were unfair in that they favoured his younger sister. ID 15 was irritated rather than resentful about his situation.

Examples

Prisoners

The problem was that my parents did not want me to be with my friends after school since they expected me to do house-chores. I would do my chores very fast and went to play ball with my friends. My parents refused me permission to play with my friends. (3, P 16)

When you were living at home did you have duties?

Yes, which I did not like as a boy doing such jobs I was basically forced to clean the house, wash dishes, do my ironing.

What did your sister do?

My sister just cleaned the [indistinct]. I had to clean the rest of the house. She was my baby sister you see. My mother gave her the lighter jobs.

Did you do them?

If we were forced to. (6, P 88)

Who was doing most of the chores at home?

Well, concerning home chores, my siblings were problematic; they did not want to do home chores.

Do you mean girls?

Yes, girls, they used to leave beds undone, leave dishes unwashed.

Hmm, so who did most of the chores at home?

I would say that it was myself. (15, P 109)

In the non-prisoner group, ID 16 felt used by the family when he did chores. This attitude ties in with his perception of being the "black sheep" (as revealed by the overall life-story), rather than the degree of work he had to do, as the family also had a maid.

Example

Non-prisoners

Did you and your brothers and sisters have to do chores around the house?

No.

You weren't expected to ?

Yes.

So did any of you ever ..., was it your older brother?

No, it was like me and my older brother, he had to like cut the grass.

Okay, and your sister?

Hmm, like she had to do dishes.

Okay, so you did have to help out?

Yes.

Did you ever feel like one of you was having to do a bit more than the other ?

Yes, (laughs) I thought was like always, cause they would say my brother is busy he is doing school work and I'm like sitting and doing nothing but I should do it

How did that make you feel?

I felt like they treat me like I'm not important I had to do the hard work by myself. (16, P 148)

Overall, the qualitative results did not support findings in the literature that exposure in developmental years to responsibilities in the home facilitates prosocial rather than antisocial behaviour (Apter, 2001; Hoffman, 1975). The findings in the present research suggested this was not the case for semi-rural South African

disadvantaged children of the 1980's. This outcome may be related to the nature of the responsibilities assigned. There are two elements here. The first of these is the value ascribed to the completion of chores by the family, the second is the number of chores assigned.

Subjects in both research groups described being given a large number of chores by their caregivers, with harsh punishment (e.g. a beating) for tasks undone. An exploration of Hoffman's understanding of "responsibility" helps explain the divergent findings of the present study. The life-stories of the Zulu subjects in both groups indicated that doing chores was not recognised as an individual contribution to family life – a recognition that has potential to enhance self-esteem. In traditional child rearing in rural and semi-rural families it is *expected* that children carry out chores (personal communication, Q. Zungu, April 3, 2005). The stories emphasised punishment for non compliance rather than recognition for having done the chores. As such, the perceived locus of control by these youngsters was likely to remain external rather than progress to the internalisation of parent values about doing one's duty and about obligations to others. Hoffman's understanding of "responsibilities" refers to the latter outcome.

Chores given to the Coloured prison subjects were of a similar, obligatory nature. The extension of this attitude towards family chores across two culturally different groups of subjects suggests it is not be only a feature of certain cultures but also is linked to socio-economic class. With the exception of ID16, all prisoner and non-prisoner subjects came from a lower socio-economic background. On the other hand, chores assigned to subjects by the families of non-prisoner, Coloured, participants did allow for some individual response and initiative, as shown below. Of interest is that this subgroup overall had a *slightly better* socio-economic status than other subjects and their caregivers held down more regular jobs.

Examples

Non-prisoners

When you were growing up, was there a way of handling things like washing the dishes...how did it work in your family?

Um, there was a period when we had a roster.

Did it work?

There was a bit of shirking which ...but it worked for most parts. That was actually introduced by my step father, before that it was just an informal thing. We were told to do the dishes , that kind of thing. (30, P 188)

When you were growing up, did you kids all have duties that you had to do, did you all have to do it?

Yes, we all had to do it. Specially when it comes to washing the dishes. Nobody likes to wash, we all just like to dry.

Did you take it in turns, or did you all have specific things that you had to?

No, we used to take it in turns. (31, P 197)

In the family situation, obviously you took on quite a responsible role, did all the siblings have duties to do?

Well, my brother was so small, and my sister, when she got back from school I'd tell her what to do, she had to clean up maybe the two rooms, I saw to the kitchen the bathroom, the toilet, the lounge, everything, and I'd say she must cook this tonight, or I'll do it the following night...that sort of thing. (32, P 82)

The second reason why "responsibility in the home" did not achieve moral growth in traditional rural (Zulu) families could relate to the seemingly heavy burden of chores in many cases. This conclusion ties in with that reached by Ludman (2005), reporting on the Rural Education Survey report of 2003 (see 1.2 above). The Survey suggested that responsibilities of this kind were more likely to create confusion about family versus school values in the child than engender a sense of duty towards others.

2. *Exposure to Social Conflict*

The life-stories provided no information on caregivers' controlled exposure of the child to some social conflict. The absence of this specific item of information from the stories may reflect the generalist nature of the Biographical Questionnaire format than comment on the presence/ absence of this factor.

3. *Exposure to Prosocial Peers*

There were only two examples of caregivers who exposed subjects to prosocial behaviour. Notably, both these occurred in the non-prison group.

Well, it was a happy time for me, since one was controlled since I was still young. It was nice to meet with other children after going to church. (28, P 147)

No, I was never a loner. I had a group of friends. It was more or less like church-going people, like Sunday school friends, you know, like close to the family. (31, P 278)

3.6 *Community Cohesion and Values*

Damon maintained that growing up in a tight knit community with clear values positively influenced the development of a moral identity (Damon, 1999). Specific Biographical Questionnaire cues elicited information about subjects' communities:

Was there anything you did that was unacceptable to the community?
What sort of things does your community value?

These prompts gave an indication of group prosocial values, as well as joint community activities and care projects. As discussed in the Methods section of this chapter (2.2), the initial analysis of the community subcode created data that fell into six categories. The results of this final analysis appears below.

Qualitative results.

1. Communities Values

Twice the number of non-prisoner life-stories referred to community held values. Overall however, these allusions were limited in both groups (20% - 3 prisoners : 41.2% - non-prisoners). The value seen as being given the highest priority in the communities of both life-course and adolescent-limited offenders was religious observance. A good work ethic, achievement in life, respect for elders and education were also valued. A few references were also made by both groups to their communities lacking positive values or cohesion (2 prisoner stories; 2 non-prisoner stories). Examples of these negative views follow.

Prisoners

What sort of things does your community value? Are they quite a religious community, or do they value.. Uh..sort of bonds between neighbours? What are the things in your community that they value?
....Ya, the priests have got no opinions, gangsterism has always been there. You know what I'm saying.
That's what's valued?
Ja, gangsterism, ja. (1, P 236)

Was there anything important which was happening in your community, things like donating to the poor or anything that you can remember?
There, I don't want even to tell lies, there was nothing, which was happening there, to say that there were poor people who were receiving help, I would be lying. (2, P 204)

Non-prisoners

Okay, but does your community see to those things?
....Well, for now I have not seen a single soul taking care of another person. (25, P 317)

Within the community that you live, what behaviours are valued?
The community..? Values? That would be loyalty, they value...I just don't even think about it...
Money?
They value money, they value...drugs is important to them, alcohol is important to them...they value themselves...
Is there no sense of community spirit?
Nothing. (32, P 204)

2. *Community Censure*

Violent crime was condemned across both groups by subjects' communities. A higher percentage of prisoners described this censure by their communities (46.7% – 7 prisoners : 29.4% - 5 non-prisoners). Only prisoner stories referred to violent crime as occurring in their immediate communities. ID 1, a noted gangster and drug peddler, describes this censure:

Nobody in my community actually likes me. I was poked [stabbed] one day because, uh, a lady was telling her son that.... I..in my district, you know where I, where I was living, that was the thing, nobody liked me, nobody wanted me to hang around with their children, because of the kind of person I was. (1, P 233).

ID 5 was condemned by the community for killing a community member in a gang fight. ID 6's family were persecuted after he brutally murdered a girl from the community.

I would want you to look back at the time when you were in trouble with your parents, maybe your teachers, or the law.

It was that time when I killed a person. Police and community members were looking for me high and low.

Who is the person that you killed?

It was X from Umlazi.

Why did you kill him?

We had a fight. (5, P 334)

...when I first came to prison I only just wanted to get back my revenge.

Revenge on who?

Half of the society in that area.

Were they the ones that reported you?

No my boarder did. But, when I was arrested and they found the body parts and stuff, they petrol bombed my house- burnt my house down. (6, P 312)

A similar number of prisoner and non-prisoner life-stories also reported community censure for less violent antisocial behaviours, such as bunking school, beating up other youth, drinking and drug peddling.

3. *Joint Community Support Activities*

Again, life-story statements suggested communities were not proactive here in either research group.

Reference to community based supportive activities of its members appeared in only two, non-prisoner, stories, which referred to helping the needy. Another non-prisoner reference was made to youth vigilantes protecting members against crime.

Okay, are there any things that you do for your community?

We are guarding the area here in ...[city suburb]. They mugged people; they get into people's house and steal. So we are guarding places, working hand in hand with the community, so if there is someone trying to mug and make a sound to make to make the community and the boys in the area aware that there is burglary so that they could come. (17, P 271)

I mean other things like giving food parcels to poor people?

Well about that sis, let say there is a family that has lost a family member/died and where people could not afford to take responsibility of the funeral, the community put together some thing and help out you see. The community had done that twice. I would say we work together in things like that. (19, P 379)

Those are the things that your community does together as a group or as a one and not individually?

I could say that it is to love the Lord, going to church, and also taking care of the needy people.

Okay, what do they do for them?

It is things, which might be like that, collecting old clothes and giving it out to them. This is normally clothes and food. (27, P 453)

4. Community Support of Prosocial Behaviour

References that communities reinforced “good” behaviour rather than just condemned antisocial acts were sought here. Statements appeared in three, non-prisoner, stories only.

Do they respect you? [the community]

They respect me, they are noticing improvement. (17, P 277)

They are telling me that I am behaving well, I don't even give my family troubles. (20, P 426)

Ya, most of the time they [community] were impressed with the fact that I am a respectful person. They always mentioned that fact, especially the elders. (22, P 353)

5. Support for Community Members at the Expense of Other Groups

In each group one story suggested that some communities had a qualified set of moral values, which sanctioned antisocial behaviour towards those outside the immediate community, but censured this when it occurred in the subject's community. This behaviour is compatible with an idea of cultural honour, where males have the obligation to protect the group, regardless of the means used. While this practice may win some support in traditional settings, it is not conducive to protection against a recidivist criminal life style. Such acts have the potential to incur a criminal sentence, putting the perpetrator at risk for falling in Moffitt's developmental trap (Moffitt, 1993) of the cycle of further crime. Thus statements reflecting this kind of community cohesion *were not included* in the count of stories reflecting community *prosocial* values.

Examples

Prisoners

Okay, have you done things your community...things they didn't want?

No, I've not done things that my community didn't want.

But your hitting [breaking] those windows at the teachers house was abusing the community?

Sorry, I mean my community, because the teacher lived in another section, in X section and I lived in Y section. (12, P 364)

Non-prisoners

So, because of those reasons, we had no option but to be taken to jail. But if we look at it with the eyes of the community, then it was unfair [subject going to jail]. Since we did not just go to other person's house and attacked them or just went to the street and shoot out. It was something that started the previous day and continued the following day, and same people were behind it. They started with the boy that was with us the previous day. They chased him. Fortunately for this boy, he came across my friends and me. We then ended up in a black fight. Unfortunately for them they lost it. They then went away with serious injuries.

Did you do anything that the community did not approve of, such as beating people?

I think that, at times when I was beating people could not be taken as misconduct. Most of the time, when I was beating people, I had the support or background that all people that noticed it approved of it. I don't just fight anybody in the streets. (23, P 222)

6. Perception of Community Effect

Finally, the question arose whether subjects perceived the community values/pressures they described, as influencing their anti- or prosocial behaviour. There was no difference between groups in this regard. One subject from each group described community standards as influencing him to behave better (anticipating better behaviour when he left prison for the prison subject.) Two non-prisoner Nchanga subjects specifically stated their communities had had little influence on the behaviour of the youth.

Quantitative analysis.

In that no systematic differences emerged between the groups in the qualitative analysis of community cohesion, and given the small number of statements in each category of this subcode, a statistical analysis of these results was not appropriate.

The table below outlines for the interested reader the counts for community sanctions of antisocial acts, of community cohesion, and of communities described as having no values.

Table 12. Group Differences across Categories of Community Cohesion

	Censure	Cohesion*	No/Negative values
Prisoners	46.7%	66.7%	20%
Non-prisoners	29.4%	64.7% **	17.6% **

* = community prosocial values; joint activities; community caring

Conclusions on the link between community cohesion and recidivist crime.

The present analyses of references to community cohesiveness did not confirm Damon's (1999) contention that close knit communities with strong values facilitated moral behaviour in the youth. The results failed to show communities of either research group as being more cohesive than the other, in terms of community censure for antisocial behaviour, community held values, community activities, or support for prosocial behaviour by its members.

Neither of the groups' communities were especially cohesive. Community disunity was exemplified by the lack of censure for antisocial behaviour of the youth, as reflected by the life-stories. All subjects from both groups behaved in antisocial ways in their teenage years and/or later, yet *relatively few of the subjects reported community censure*, (see Table 12) despite this being a specific prompt in the interview. The literature suggests that traditional African communities take a close interest in the lives of community members (Nsamenang, 2004) unlike many Western cultures, where individualism is promoted. Thus, the relative absence of censure for antisocial behaviour suggests disunity in the communities of *both* life-course and adolescent-limited subjects. This was most likely due to the effects of persistent faction fighting, economic hardship and the assault on traditional values in the semi-rural communities of most isiZulu speaking subjects at the time of their youth. Many of these problems were also present in the communities of Coloured subjects. Overall, significant social problems were described in the stories of all groups, and included gangsterism (4 stories), faction fighting⁷⁶ (3 stories), and alcohol and drug abuse⁷⁷ (3 stories).

3.7 Altruistic Behaviour

The focus in this chapter has been on prosocial manifestations of moral development. As clarified in chapter 1, 3.5, altruism goes beyond prosocial behaviour and is difficult to measure, in terms of assessing the motivation behind a kindly act. In the current analysis, acts of goodwill towards others, that were not clearly self serving, were defined as altruistic.

Most subjects came from a lower socio-economic background, where the daily family focus was on making ends meet. Many Nchanga subjects also spent their youth in an area beset with faction violence. In terms of Maslow's hierarchy, such subjects were more likely to be motivated to meet lower order needs such as physiological and safety requirements, rather than those higher up the hierarchy involving self-esteem and self actualization (Bischof, 1970). The latter motives underpin altruistic behaviour. Therefore relatively few examples of altruism were expected to emerge in the life-stories of either group. This proved to be the case. Nevertheless, the statements that *were* made showed non-prisoners as being more altruistic than prisoners, thus supporting the research hypothesis on this moral subcode.

⁷⁶ Politically orchestrated faction fights were rife in Nchanga around the time this group of non-prison subjects were youth.

⁷⁷ This was perceived as a community problem by the 3 non-prison Coloured subjects but was clearly rife in many of the other prison and non-prison subjects' communities, according to the life-stories.

Qualitative analysis.

This section begins with a clarifying comment on the altruism subcode categories presented below. Points 1-3 refer to the range of altruistic comments made. Counts in these categories were summed to provide a measure of group differences (see the quantitative analysis below). Point 4 logically does not fit in this additive process but complements conclusions drawn from points 1-3. Point 5 isolates spontaneous altruistic information, that is *not prompted* by the Questionnaire, to strengthen the validity of the conclusions drawn. Point 6 looks at differences in altruistic *acts* between the groups (as opposed to intentions).

1. Desire to Help Other Youth

This rated statements expressing concern for the state of community youth. Comments mainly referred to drug and alcohol abuse and crime. More prisoners than non-prisoners (33.3% - 5 prisoners : 11.8% - 2 non-prisoners) made statements of this nature, possibly because the former were more acutely aware of their own misspent youth.

Examples

Prisoners

What are things that you can do to help your community?

Well as I see it, things that I can do for my community is to sit down with youth and advise them on how they could lead their lives, things like that, you see. (2, P 270)

Non-prisoners

Hmmm, are there any ways that you would like to use to help the community?

Yes, I would say that if I can get right channels, I would try my best, with all ways, to work with youth. Whether you smoke or not, whether you drink or not, as long you are the youth in the area or community. You must have something to do before thinking about purchasing cigarette or dagga. Even if you have been think of doing some other things different from being good, as long as at the end of the day, you would not benefit from it. (23, P 276)

2. Advice Giving

Mainly prison life-stories contained statements on offering advice to the community, possibly for the same reasons given for the preceding item (40% - 5 prisoners : 5.9% - 1 non-prisoner). An additional explanation for the predominance of prison stories in this category relates to the desire of life-course offenders to enhance their self esteem (Baumeister et al, 1996). Giving advice also gives power to the advisor! A common response in the stories was the intention to advise the youth to behave differently from themselves so as not to waste their lives with crime, alcohol and so on. Advice to follow the Lord was also given.

Examples

Prisoners

Are there any ways that you will help your community?

Like as you say, if I get an opportunity of going back them I would really like to share with them the good news of Jesus and try and show them that the way they are living now is not the way, especially for the way they indulge in alcohol- drugs is not the way Jesus is the way now. Most of them can have a better life if they come to the general understanding that they must make a complete change now, before it is too late. (6, P 365)

Non-prisoners

...Like giving advise to people not to take drugs. I've also been through them. (26, P 396)

3. Practical Help

Of interest here is that many more non-prisoners generated practical ideas to help the community than did prisoners (26.7% - 4 prisoners : 76.5% - 13 non-prisoners). Prisoners were asked to assume they were out of jai for this response. Most practical suggestions involved ways of keeping children and the youth occupied so that they did not become involved in crime, as well as to enhance their general quality of life. Feeding schemes, helping AIDS orphans, drug campaigns and skills training were other suggestions from both groups, indicating that some prisoners and most non-prisoners were in touch with the hardships in their communities. The proliferation of practical versus less concrete suggestions, by the adolescent-offender participants, suggests there was a greater likelihood that this group would become more involved in helping others than would their life-course counterparts.

Examples

Prisoners

Okay, if we look at this community here in jail and also outside the jail, what would you do if you were given a chance to help them?

Hmmm, my perception would be to help those people who are unemployed in giving them skills if I had all certificates that I wanted - work with them to in getting skills. I would involve them in the type of job I would be doing, and convince them that even though there are no jobs opportunity, there are some ways of getting money. (11, P 503)

Non-prisoners

Are there things you would like to do to help the community now or in future?

Yes, there are, I am targeting the youth that their lives revolve around drugs. And there is also AIDS/HIV out there and they don't bother about it.

Okay, how do you think you could help them or your community?

By introducing projects that would control youth and make them to be aware of these dangerous things. (29, P 568)

Are there ways in which you might be able to help the community?

Ya, I got involved in my school, I was leading a drug campaign. (32, P 332)

4. *Ideas/No Ideas on How to Help*

Slightly more prisoners found it harder to think of ways they could help the community (40% - 5 prisoners : 23.5% - 4 non-prisoners). This is unsurprising as non-prisoners were more exposed to the every day needs of their communities. Also, as raised under point 3, this response pattern ties in with a trend in the results suggesting that the adolescent-limited offender group were more likely to *act* in altruistic ways towards their communities, than were the life-course group.

Examples

Prisoners

Are there any ways of helping your community now or in the future?...

Yes, I am prepared to help the community outside jail...Maybe helping poor people, give what ever help they need. (7, P 309)

Non-prisoners

Thirdly I wanted to work in the community and helped them. Even now, I still wish for that, to help people in the community, -I wish to have money, so as to be able to help them. (18, P 90)

5. *Spontaneous Mention of Help*

Quite a few more non-prisoners spontaneously (rather than in response to a cue) expressed a desire to help their communities than did prisoners (13.3% - 2 prisoners : 35.3% - 6 non-prisoners). These statements were usually made when discussing life goals. As noted at the beginning of the Altruistic subcode section, spontaneously generated altruistic responses were given more weight than those that were cued, in terms of indicating group differences.

Examples

Prisoners

And your future goals?

My future goal is to preach God's word on the outside. Uh..another one is community development. I've got so much talent in me, I.. as I said just now, I'm a talented sportsman, I play all kinds of sports, and I excel at everything I put my hand to. So I wanna go outside and try help the little ones in my...in my...in my community. To find the talent and develop it. (1, P 394)

Non-prisoners

What were the things that you did in-groups?

It happened like this, we would help people that had problems, an example would be a person coming to us and say that so and so took her/his bag or money. I would then contact my friends and help out with that problem. That is how we used to help people. (28, P 253)

6. *Help already given*

One non-prisoner described how he had already helped his community, and another was in the process of doing this. These were the only concrete examples of existing altruistic acts in the life-stories. As discussed above, this was not surprising. The life circumstances of all subjects did not lend themselves to altruistic action, in terms of Maslow's hierarchy.

Example

Non-prisoners

Ok, ID 31, are there any ways that you think you might be able to help your community, either now or in the future?

I'm the kind of person who'd actually...I'd love my community to be together, as such. I would love the alcohol and drugs to be taken out. This year, I'm trying...I'm trying now to organize a fun run, for the community, especially for kids there, like come now Christmas time, that won't be going out. I know also that at least eighty percent of them will not be going for holidays and stuff like that, you know financially. I've got in mind a fun run, you pay R5 each, and put it towards something in the community. (31, P 423)

Are there ways in which you might be able to help the community ...

Ya, I got involved in my school, I'm leading a drug campaign. (32, P 332)

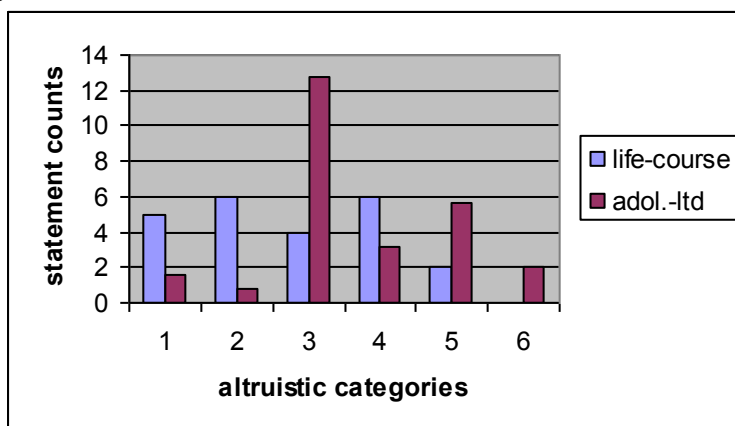
Quantitative results.

Graphs of frequency counts appear below. No statistical analyses were done, given the small cell sizes of most categories.

Graphs

Figures 20 and 21 show group differences across altruism categories.

Figure 20. Group Differences in "Altruism"



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

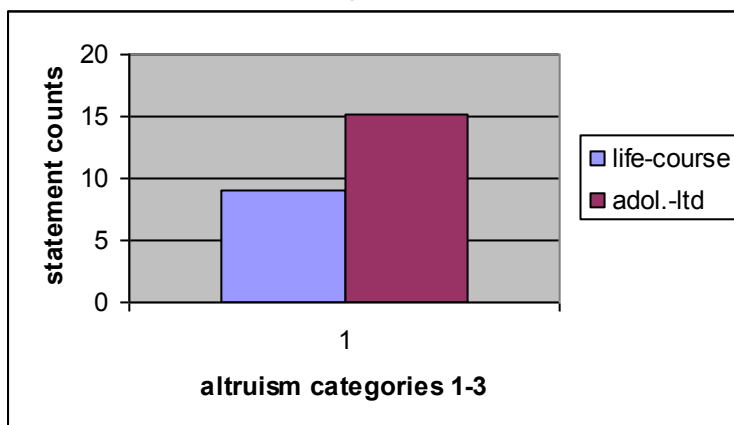
Key**

		Life-course *		Adol.-limited *
1. Desire to help the youth		5 (33.3%)	1.6	(11.8%)
2. Advice giving		6 (40%)	.8	(5.9%)
3. Practical Involvement	4	(26.7%)	12.8	(76.5%)
4. No idea on how to help		6 (40%)	3.2	(23.5%)
5. Spontaneous mention	2	(13.3%)	5.6	(35.3%)
6. Help already given	0		2	(11.7%)

*1. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

**2. Total % subjects per group can exceed 100% as the same subject could make responses in more than one altruistic category.

Figure 21. Group Differences across Altruistic Categories 1-3



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

Key	Life-course *#	Adol.-limited *#
Categories 1,2,3.	9 (60%)	15.2 (88.2%)

* = no. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

Adjusted for statements falling into more than one of categories 1-3. No statement was counted more than once. If it fell in more than one of categories 1-3, the main category type was scored.

Figure 20 depicts the qualitative analysis results showing that a greater number of life-course offenders compared with adolescent-limited offenders made altruistic statements about concern for the youth and a desire to help through giving advice. The adolescent-limited group responded more strongly with practical ideas on helping the community, offered fewer responses indicating a lack of interest in community welfare, and made more spontaneous comments about helping the community. In Figure 21, items in categories 1,2 and 3 were summed to give a total count of altruistic statements across the life-stories of each group, showing that adolescent-limited altruistic statements exceeded those of the life-course offender group.

Conclusions about the link between altruism and recidivist crime.

Despite the limited responses, the qualitative and quantitative analyses together portray an image of the adolescent-limited offender group as being more likely to act in supportive ways towards their communities than their life-course counterparts. While many life-course offenders made cued responses showing concern for their communities, these were vague. In addition, prisoners made *less than half the number* of altruistic responses generated spontaneously compared with non-prisoners. The results showed the adolescent-limited offender group as acting overall in more altruistic ways within the community, in terms of offering greater practical help, having a more positive approach to helping the community, and more spontaneous (genuine?) concern for the community.

In further support of this point is the comparison between the total number of altruistic statement (Figure 21) relative to those spontaneously generated (point 5, Figure 20). Of the 9 altruistic statements counted in the prisoner group, 2 (13.3%) were spontaneous. Of the 15.2 (adjusted total) statements counted in the non-prisoner group, 5.6 (35%) were spontaneous. As discussed earlier, spontaneous responses were regarded as more powerful indicators of altruistic inclinations than those that were prompt driven. This finding further supports a pattern indicating adolescent-limited offenders to be more altruistic than life-course offenders, as suggested by the literature (Hoffman, 1975).

3.8 Locus of control

The results of the analysis of this subcode strongly supported Mischel's (1986) contention that a lack of individual responsibility for behaviour is a significant factor increasing aggression and limiting moral behaviour.

Qualitative analysis.

Most prisoner life-stories provided input into this code (93.3% - 14 stories). In these stories, with the exception of one statement, all the responses indicated an external locus of control. Fewer non-prisoner subjects produced relevant statements, but those that did all showed an internal locus of control (41.2% - 7 stories).

Inadequate resources to meet the subject's wants were the most frequent justification for criminal behaviour (33.3% stories). The family was blamed mainly for not meeting these needs, although one subject took to crime as the job "paid very little". The second most common justification for antisocial behaviour was laid at the door of corporal punishment, meted out by parents, school or the prison authorities, which subjects believed made them aggressive and even more antisocial (20% stories). The influence of bad friends was blamed in two stories. Also given as reasons in two stories each respectively, were having no job; envy of the better lifestyle of others; parental rejection; and other people holding a grudge against the subject. One off reasons included justifying the murder of a crime boss for non payment of (hit man) services rendered; "temptation" that visited another subject; murder as self-defence; racial prejudice; and reduced responsibility due to drugs and alcohol. Overall, a varied and creative range of explanations were used by the life-course group to justify their criminal lifestyles.

Non-prisoner stories referred to personal responsibility taken for antisocial actions, and to the efforts made to turn these around.

A few of the more interesting texts appear below:

Prisoners

So you know that you were the one that killed him? He was still alive when you stabbed him, the last time?

Ja, he was still alive.

What had he done?

Nothing.

He was just a guy?

Ja, he was just someone walking on the road. But ah, the reason why we went after a Black guy, was because, uh, one of my friends girlfriends was raped by a Black guy the same night. So we waaing him, what the hell... (1, P 275)

My parents were giving advice, good advice telling me about the things that I was not supposed to do and things that I was supposed to be doing. I would take my parent's words but when I meet with friends, they would brain wash and influence me. I would say that it was my friends who misled me because I listened to them up until I landed in jail. (2, P 17)

Hey, when I had corporal punishment I could not absorb information since I was also upset and would only think of fighting back. In fact at the end I was expelled from my school because of stabbing the teacher - just because of corporal punishment.

Hmmm, so corporal punishment caused you to be violent, and create hatred in your heart?

Yes and I would want to fight back. (5, P 199)

Yes, I did continue [with crime], and sometimes the situation would force me to - that they did not have enough money to provide for me. Since you would find that one is going to school and don't get enough money. Sometimes there were school trips, things like that so I had to provide for myself, you see things like that. (5, P 260)

Actually, I killed a female. I cut her body into pieces. This person died in my arms.

What were the circumstances in which this happened? Where you angry?

I was drunk and drugged.

And just decided to kill her for no reason?

Ya well when I became conscious, to my senses, I really thought to myself, how could I do something like that.

So you were not in your normal ...you were drunk and drugged and so did you just look at her and decided..Hey..!

Well actually I can't really remember what happened at that time, when she died, and when I came to my senses and I looked at her and I saw her neck was slit open, stuff like that and a lot of stab wounds on her body. (6, P 222)

Okay, when you were a teenager? [subject asked to describe a life stage]

Not all of my life was right.

Okay.

From when I reached temptation. (10, P 333)

I was a person who just wanted work, if work couldn't be found I would turn to crime. (14, P 432)

Non-prisoners

Do you think that your friends had any influence over your behaviour or do you believe that you were to blame? – or both?

Yeah I was to blame. (16, P 256)

I had that belief that all what I have done is my problem, nobody else's [re delinquency]. (23, P 18)

I left school in 1997, but have not worked in the firm or anywhere else, never. I have done nothing. Not because I don't look for it, but has never had luck. (23, P 208)

Although the above quote does not refer to antisocial behaviour, it is exactly this condition of unemployment that one of the prisoner subject's blamed as causing to him to commit crime.

I have not touched liquor for the passed 3 months. Not because I don't have access of it, I do. I could resist it even when it is there.

What made you to change?

I could say that it is maturity. Since I have never experience a bad situation, that could have forced me to stop drinking. I have not killed a person under the influence of liquor. I have not broken in the house just because I was drunk or have not been jailed because of it. I have never broken somebody's windows just because I have taken drugs or am drunk. I think I have decided to change my life style. (23, P 265)

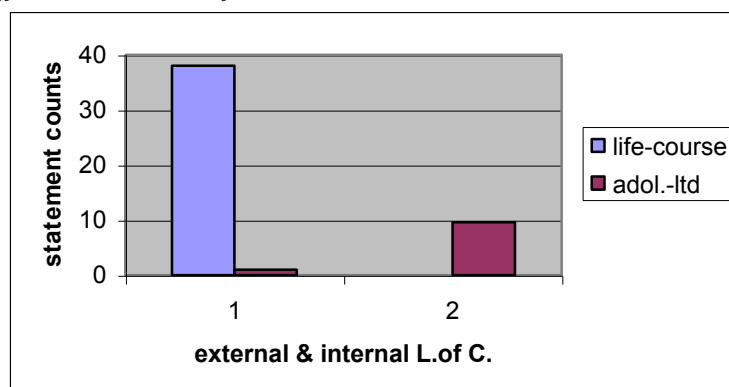
I have been a drunkard, I have dealt with drugs and being naughty, all those experiences. The time came for me to overcome all those experiences. (29, P 553)

I think I probably compromised my morals and values, and I was being somebody I wasn't. I think that's the worst thing I can say, and...I let my self go...(32, P 239)

Quantitative analysis.

Graphs

Figure 22. *Group Differences in Locus of Control*



n= life-course-15; adol.ltd-17

Key

1. External Locus

Life-course *
38 (93.3%)

Adol.-limited *

0
9.6 (41.2%)

2. Internal Locus

* 1. No. of statements, adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group): 2. Total % subjects per group may exceed 100% as the same subject could make responses both negative and positive categories.

Statistical Analysis

Due to the relatively large number of locus of control statements, a statistical analysis of group differences was conducted. The t-test for independent means supported qualitative data evidence of marked differences between the groups on internal and external locus of control.

T-Test for Independent Means – Locus of Control

Negative Locus: $t = 3.85$; $df = 30$; $sig. (two\ tailed) = .00$; *confidence levels: lower*-1.2 *and upper* =3.73

Positive Locus: $t = -2.82$; $df = 30$; $sig. (two\ tailed) = .01$; *confidence levels: lower*= -.91 *and upper*= -.13

Conclusions on the link between locus of control and recidivist crime.

The qualitative and quantitative results showed that *prisoners predominantly used an external locus of control and non-prisoners, an internal locus of control*. This result was stronger for the life-course group than the adolescent-limited group, in that almost all subjects in the former group each produced at least one spontaneous statement to show their locus of control bias. Less than half the adolescent-limited subjects produced statements indicating a locus of control bias. Thus the *conclusion that adolescent-limited offender group regularly used an internal locus of control was less firm than one that life-course offenders regularly used an external locus of control*.

The relatively fewer statements pertaining to locus of control (either internal or external) in non-prisoner stories suggested prisoners had a stronger need to justify their antisocial actions. Non-prisoners, possibly because they were involved less in such behaviour, had little to say on the matter. The significant psychological effort the life-course offenders invested in denying responsibility for their antisocial behaviour is a block that would make it difficult for them to entertain the idea that they might play a role in their troubles. This attitude is an obstacle to the likelihood of future rehabilitation and is compatible with literature findings on the link between negative locus of control and persistent antisocial behaviour (Mischel, 1986).

4 Conclusions

This chapter explored the complexity of variables associated with moral behaviour, and their association with a life-course developmental trajectory. The conclusion drawn in the literary review of chapter 1, that no one of these variables alone explains moral behaviour, also led to the assumption that no one of these variables alone would account *definitively* for a life-course offending pathway. This assumption was contained in the research hypotheses around moral development in chapter 2. It was hoped that *the sum of the findings across all the variables* investigated would produce a pattern that could be linked with some confidence to the development of chronic antisocial behaviour. After consideration of the results across all the moral development subcodes and categories analysed in this chapter, it is the contention that this modest aim has been achieved.

Information in the life-stories on some variables was sparse, due to the open-ended and reflective nature of the interview tool used. In evaluating group differences on most factors, formal statistical analysis was not feasible due to the limited number of subjects or statements falling in a category. In spite of this limitation, the textual analysis revealed systematic differences between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders on a range of moral developmental factors. This overall trend in both the qualitative data, and the available statistical evidence, supported an inverse relationship between life-course offending and moral development, as measured by the variables in this chapter.

Two of the moral subcode categories did not support research findings in developed, Western populations. These pertained to the associations between positive moral development and the use of inductive reasoning in discipline, and moral development and the assignment of responsibility to the child in the home. Text evidence suggested that these discrepant results were due primarily to a cultural influence. The majority of subjects had not experienced a typical “Western” early family upbringing, being predominantly semi-rural isiZulu speakers, with a unique set of traditional beliefs and value systems.

Table 13 summarises group differences on the moral subcode and category results analysed in this chapter and is an aid to understanding the following overview of the research findings in this chapter.

Table 13. *Summary of the Moral Development Analyses*

Subcode (variable)	Category	Qual. result*	Statistical result**	Comment
Moral behaviour		√	?	Limited data
Moral reasoning		√√	√	
Moral knowledge		√	?	Hypothesis that this is not discriminatory
Moral values	general	√√	√	
	religious	?	√X	Results inconclusive
Parenting	Inductive reasoning	X	?	Very limited data on other parent variables
	responsibility	X	?	
Community	cohesion	X	?	
	values	√	?	
Altruism		√	?	A-L more likely to <i>act</i> in supportive ways towards the community
Locus of Control	external/internal	√√	√	L-C greater external locus; A-L greater internal locus

*=support for research hypotheses: X= no support; √=moderate support; √√=strong support; ?=inconclusive

** √ test done, sig. at .05; X=test done, not sig.; ?= test not done

Results Summary: This chapter investigated the relationship between chronic antisocial behaviour and a range of variables associated with moral development. It interrogated the research hypotheses that life-course offenders, relative to adolescent-limited offenders, demonstrated less moral behaviour; reasoned at lower Kohlberg reasoning stages; had fewer moral values, experienced fewer of the parenting influences directly associated with moral development; came from less cohesive communities; showed fewer altruistic inclinations; and had an external, rather than internal, locus of control. As shown in Table 13, some of these hypotheses were confirmed, one disconfirmed, and many left hanging due to insubstantial evidence.

Moral reasoning, moral values and locus of control (emboldened in Table 13) were strongly discriminating between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders, in the predicted direction. Moral behaviour, community prosocial values and altruism discriminated in a more modest manner between the groups, due to limited data or some conflicting outcomes. The non significance of the assignment of family responsibility to the child and of the use of inductive reasoning in the discipline process (parenting variables) did not support the research expectations. This was also the case for community cohesion, as the majority of subjects in both research groups came from disjointed communities. The limited data falling in the remaining subcodes and categories precluded any conclusions being drawn about their discriminatory ability.

Key Results:

Moral behaviour: Results were inconclusive in that life-story evidence of moral behaviour was limited due to the reflective nature of the interview tool. However, the available evidence, describing community outreach activities, supported the research hypothesis, as only adolescent-limited offenders had considered or carried out, practical means of assisting their communities.

Moral Reasoning: Rich data in the form of many statements reflecting Kohlberg's levels of moral reasoning was obtained. The results supported the research hypothesis that adolescent-limited offenders functioned at

significantly higher levels of Kohlberg's reasoning stages than life-course offenders. Exceptions to the rule for both groups supported the view in the literature that pre-conventional levels of moral reasoning are associated with antisocial behaviour, but that this is not invariably the case.

Moral Values: The results partly supported the research hypothesis that values are an important element in shaping prosocial (as opposed to antisocial) behaviour. As regards general values, adolescent-limited offenders generated more than double the number of value statements than did life-course offenders. The range of these values was also broader in the adolescent-limited group, covering human rights, the law, education and parenting. Life-course offenders' values were limited to personal issues aimed at avoiding imprisonment.

Religious values were analysed separately and the results here were inconclusive, with no clear differences between the groups on several measures of the importance of religion to subjects. The need for further research was recommended, given the limitations of the interview tool in measuring relevant religious values.

Parenting: Parenting style is a central factor in Moffitt's taxonomy, and its relevance to moral development was covered separately in chapter 5. In the present chapter, additional direct and indirect parenting factors were considered. These were the use of inductive reasoning in discipline, parental role modelling of moral behaviour, assignment of responsibility in the family, and exposure by caregivers of the child to prosocial peers and to some socially stressful situations. Most results were inconclusive due to limited data in the life-stories of both groups. However, the analysis was clear on the findings that inductive reasoning in the discipline process, and the assignment of family chores did not discriminate between Moffitt's two kinds of offenders in the present research population.

Community cohesion and values: *Community cohesion* did not discriminate between the research groups. Subjects from both groups came from disparate, fragmented communities and very violent behaviour was regarded as unacceptable in both. There was also little evidence of community behaviour that modelled value driven behaviour for the subjects in either group (e.g. helping needy members within a community).

There was some, limited support for literature findings that cohesive, tight-knit and *value driven communities* are a factor in the growth of a moral identity, in the form of more references to religious and educational values held by their communities, by adolescent-limited offenders than by life-course offenders. The former communities also provided greater validation of subjects' prosocial behaviour than did those of life-course offenders.

Altruism: Altruism was defined as evidence of prosocial behaviour towards others (aside from close friends and family). Adolescent-limited offenders generated more altruistic statements when scores across altruistic categories were summed. In looking at the different altruistic categories, the adolescent-limited offender group were more *functionally* altruistic, despite more of the life-course offender group expressing a general desire to help others and to offer unspecified advice. The adolescent-limited group offered greater practical help, had a more positive approach to helping the community, and more spontaneous concern for the community.

Locus of Control: Data on this factor strongly supported literature findings that a persistent external locus of control is associated with morally immature antisocial behaviour. All responses, produced by almost all of the subjects in the life-course group, indicated a negative locus of control. All those produced by adolescent-limited subjects indicated an internal locus of control.

SUMMARY

This chapter investigated the relationship between a life-course offending pathway and a range of variables associated with moral development. The results showed a strong relationship between three of these variables and Moffitt's two types of offending. Adolescent-limited offenders had broader and more profuse moral values. They generally performed at higher levels of Kohlberg's moral reasoning stages. While their actions were dominated by an internal locus of control, that of the life-course offender group were characterised by an

external locus of control. The analysis of the life-stories gave some modest support for the discriminating ability of three other variables, namely moral behaviour, community prosocial values and altruism. The need for more specific research into the relationship between religious values and a life-course offending pathway was highlighted by the analysis.

CHAPTER 9: SELF-ESTEEM

OVERVIEW

This chapter describes the investigation of differences in global and component measures of self-esteem between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders, using data from both the life-story analysis and the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory-2. Findings provide support for group differences, as regards social, personal and general self-esteem, although these are not statistically conclusive. Suggestions for more valid methods to assess self-esteem differences in Moffitt's two kinds of delinquents are made.

1. Background

The literature review on self-esteem in chapter 1, 3.6 described the limitations of self-report measures, the impact of culture on self image, and the debate between those who support a fragile, low self-esteem explanation of persistent high aggression and those who punt an over inflated, unrealistic and brittle self-esteem explanation.

The present study did not investigate all the above elements of self-esteem. In particular, two aspects could not be evaluated easily:

1. The "realistic" versus "inflated" nature of high self-esteem statements in the stories could not be readily measured, given the interview tool used and limited resources for following up a subject's assertions about his competencies, with his past school, family and community. Some assertions were corroborated in other parts of a subject's story or the third party interview, but this was not always possible.
2. Du Bois et al. criticised self-esteem questionnaires for evaluating a subject's perception of his competencies but not his satisfaction with that perception (Du Bois et al, 1996, cited in Wild et al., 2006, p. 196) This was also a problem in the text analysis. Statements about failures or successes were sometimes merely descriptive, without a clear attached positive or negative value. To accommodate this, the convention used by Battle (1992) in the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory-2 (CFSEI-2) was followed. The analyst made the assumption that descriptive statements about an individual's successes or failures were experienced positively and negatively respectively by that individual.

In view of the above difficulties in measuring self-esteem, modest research hypotheses were made in chapter 2 regarding the expected differences in self-esteem between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders in the present study. It was hypothesised that

- * a significant difference between the groups in *either* direction, on global and component measures of self-esteem, would occur on the CFSEI-2. Should the prisoner group measure more highly, this would support an inflated, fragile high self-esteem argument.
Should levels be lower for this group compared to non-prisoners, this would support a fragile, low self-esteem argument.^{78 79}
- * differences in the same directions as those on the CFSEI-2 would be found in the qualitative and quantitative textual analyses of the life-stories.

⁷⁸ It was stated at the outset of this chapter that the realistic/unrealistic basis of self-esteem could not be reliably assessed. However, tentative conclusions regarding support for either a chronically low or inflated self-esteem link to persistent aggression were drawn in the discussion of the various results.

⁷⁹ Arguably, evidence of low self-esteem in the prison population might also be partly the result of their incarceration experiences. It would however be difficult to find comparable sample groups to test this assertion, namely, a group of serious recidivists who were in prison, and a group of serious repeat offenders who had never been caught.

2. Method

2.1 Operational Definitions

Self-esteem was measured in two ways in the analysis, described in 2.11 and 2.12 below. Firstly, high versus low esteem was measured. Secondly, these measures were made across the different sub components of self-esteem in Battle (1992)'s CFSEI-2, namely, personal, social and general self-esteem. The text analysis generated a further category, academic self-esteem⁸⁰.

2.11 High and Low Self-esteem

Statements containing positive or negative value judgements about a subject's competencies and "worth", or those where this was implied⁸¹, were rated as indicators of high or low self-esteem.

Examples

low self-esteem:

Okay, if you compare yourself with people whom you went out with, would you say that you were successful or not?

I feel that I am far behind them. (11, P 491)

Failure, and thus low esteem, was assumed in the above extract.

high self-esteem

If you have a best friend, which you do, what would you think they'd say was your best quality?

Um ,I'm very thoughtful, and I'm very considerate. (30, P 315)

The use of the adjective "very" emphasised the positive value of these traits to the subject in the above statement.

At school, I did succeed.

Oh, okay,

Since I finished school. (19, P 54)

I had a good relationship with that teacher, I was good at her work. (19, P 296)

Finishing school in the communities of both prisoner and non-prisoner Zulu subjects was not common, so a positive self-esteem was assumed in the two above texts. The use of "good" repeatedly, reinforced this impression.

2.12 Category Specific Self-esteem

Comments around a subject's self image on the categories below were given a score of "1". Each category consisted of high and low self-esteem subcategories, as many subjects obtained scores in both across their stories.

1. *Academic self-esteem* reflected a subject's perception of his scholastic abilities and progress.

Examples

Were you interested in schooling?

Well I was fortunate because at home I used to beat everyone when its comes to school work. I even did standard 10 with my oldest brother. I used to feel comfortable at home because I used to do well every time. (12, P 49)

⁸⁰ This category is found in the junior version of Battle's Inventory but not in the adult form of the test used in the present research.

⁸¹ See point 2 in section 1 above for comments about an individual's perceptions about, versus, satisfaction with, his competencies.

You said you used to get cross with him cause he was always so good why do you think it was like that ? [subject's older brother]

Eh , I would say cause he also, my brother went to the school I wanted to go to

Really a nice school, I thought like my parents never wanted to send me because I wasn't good enough to go there.

Like that's why I really didn't like him. (16, P 387)

2. *Personal self-esteem* reflected a subject's perception of his personal worth, rather than of specific competencies.

Examples

How would you describe yourself?

As friendly, caring, loving. (6, P 345)

If you had a close friend how will he describe you?

That person will say that I am a good person. A kind person, a person who likes other people and has no problems with other people. (26, P 342)

I was a bad person

Okay

I could not even think of going to church.

Were you naughty?

I grew up being a naughty person. (9, P 615)

3. The *social self-esteem* analysis investigated a subject's relationship with girlfriends, as well as his perception of how the community, teachers⁸² and others who were not closely involved with him (i.e. not a close friend) saw him. His perception of his peer relationships was *not* measured as this was analysed in-depth in chapter 6. The results from this latter analysis are correlated with the outcomes of the social esteem measures, later in this chapter.

Examples

How popular are you with girls?

Eyh, sister I think I'm not popular to girls, so I give up in that area. (9, P 386)

Okay, it was nice, did you like the teachers?

Yes, because they liked me too much.

Yes, why did they like you?

I think it is the way I conducted myself, I was very respectful. (27, P 253)

Yes, there are compliments. They are telling me that I am behaving well, I don't even give my family troubles.

[community says this now]

Do you behave well?

Yes, I am. (20, P 425)

4. *General self-esteem* reflected a subject's perception of his competencies rather than intimate views of self worth. These related to

- * meeting of expectations/surpassing/ failing to meet them
- * general perceived competencies-excluding social relations
- * any comments relating to "success"
- * praise for actions and talents. However praise, when this was for work that all the children in a family did and was expected by family or community, was not scored, as this did not show personal esteem

Examples

Like when she came from work, and the garden would be shining. So I just worked on the garden, she was just happy and asked if I've also planted flowers as well , so that pleased her. (10, P 128)

I'm a...talented sportsman, and I came and found that out here in prison, you know what I'm saying. I came into this place and actually found myself. (1, P 99)

⁸² Only teacher views on non academic abilities, such as persistence, were measured here.

Are your parents proud about your behaviour?

I think so. (23, P 231),

What would they have wanted you to achieve? What did they hope for you?

I don't know because they, they never said but I know that they, that my mother's totally disappointed in me.

Did you ever... do you feel that you met any expectation of theirs?

No. (1, P 246)

What have I achieved?

Yes.

I have achieved so little. (27, P 619)

2.2 Process

The general scoring procedures in chapter 3 also applied to the present analysis. As with the parenting code, subjects' perceptions, rather than third party impressions, were sought, thus third party data was not considered in the data analysis of self-esteem. Additional scoring issues are covered below.

Two measures of self-esteem were used. One was the NVIVO coding of text, the method used in the qualitative analysis of most variables in this research. The second was Battle's (1992) formal test of self-esteem, the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI-2). Details of this latter measure and some problems in its application to isiZulu speakers were covered chapter 3, 2.23.

2.21 The Nvivo text analysis.

Prompts.

Two groups of responses were used to measure self-esteem in the story analysis, namely, those arising from specific prompt questions; and those arising from random other comments across a story. The prompts included

How would you describe yourself in one sentence?

How would your best friend describe you?

How would your enemy describe you?

Do you think you would make a good leader?

How did you get on with girls [girlfriends]?

Were you successful at school?

If you look at people whom you grew up with, and look at how they have progressed, where do you see yourself, do you see yourself as a person who has progressed?

A further prompt:

Are you popular with peers?

investigated self-esteem but was dealt with under the peer relationship analysis in chapter 6.

The prompt questions generated data that fell into the topic categories described in the operational definitions (2.2) above.

Scoring.

Subjects and Statements: A subject's statements, rather than his overall life-story, formed the basis of the scoring unit. These placed him in several of the self-esteem topic categories described in 2.2 above. Within these topic categories, the statements also classified the subject into one or both of the high/low esteem categories. (Both positive and negative esteem statements, in the same esteem topic category, emerged in some stories.) *Group differences were then calculated on the number of prisoners and non-prisoners who fell within the high or low categories of any of the topic areas.* Any one subject could generate statements in his story that placed him in several categories, although *each statement* was placed in one category only.

Missing Information: Some respondents generated no material that could be classified within a particular self-esteem category. For this reason totals for subjects on any one esteem category (e.g. high social esteem; low academic esteem) did not always total to the full number of subjects for each group.

Qualified and Unqualified Totals: A self-esteem subcode was scored in two ways. A *qualified* total was the count of stories with statements supporting a given esteem subcode (e.g. high personal esteem), regardless of whether the story also carried statements supporting the opposite orientation of that subcode (low personal esteem). An *unqualified* total was the count of stories with statements supporting a given esteem subcode (e.g. high general esteem), where there were no statements also supporting the opposite value of that subcode (low general esteem). The use of these two types of scores was based on the assumption that the high or low direction of self-esteem of a subject with an *unqualified count* on a subcode was stronger than for that of an individual who made both positive and negative statements in that category.

2.22 The CFSEI-2

This test was administered to subjects as a group, in the Nchanga and Durban non-prisoner groups and to prisoners. It was administered individually to the NICRO and Boys' Town subjects. Where respondents' mother tongue was isiZulu, the test was administered in this language by the isiZulu speaking interviewer. For prison subjects, an isiZulu speaking prisoner, who was not part of the research, was trained to administer the test. The principal investigator was present simultaneously in this latter group testing to administer the test to the three English speaking prisoners.

As discussed in the next section, there was concern about the "culture fit" of a few of the test items for the isiZulu subjects. However, it was felt that the additional explanations made by test administrators to pre-empt problems with these test items went some way towards maintaining the validity of the items.

2.3 Problems in the Measurement of Self-esteem

2.31 Perception of, versus Satisfaction with, Self Adequacy

A criticism of self-report measures of self-esteem, mentioned in section 1 above, is that they assess an individual's *perception* of his competencies but not his *satisfaction* with that perception, the second not being necessarily synonymous with the first. A similar difficulty emerged in rating self-esteem in the text analysis. While it was sometimes possible to obtain further information later in a story about a subject's *satisfaction* about an earlier comment on a competency, this was frequently not the case. As stated in section 1 above, it was consequently decided to follow the convention used in the CFSEI-2, namely text comments relating to self-esteem were accepted at face value, with statements about success and failure *implying* high or low self-esteem.

Example (1)

There was only one person who actually knew me, the person I was. I had a very, I got a very good heart. But because of my friends I used to put up a front. So I was always in the front line, you know what I'm saying. That was just to prove to my friends, you know what I'm saying. Ja, so, I was always called a rubbish, and nobody actually. I was always rejected in my community. Even up to today, people reject me in my community.

This subject referred to quite a damning view of himself by his community, but did not explicitly indicate whether this worried him. In the scoring it was assumed this led to a lower self-esteem.

The problem was aggravated where comments across an *entire* life-stories were mainly concrete and descriptive, with few value judgements. Events and actions, with potential to have a positive or negative influence on esteem, were described factually, with no comment by the subject as to how he saw these himself. This occurred more frequently in life-course offender stories than in those of the adolescent-limited group. The extracts below from ID8's story exemplify this propensity to issue descriptive accounts.

Examples (2)

Okay, were you taking part in sports at school or in any clubs like music clubs?

No, I did nothing at school.

Nothing?

Yes, I did nothing.

And

How were you at school, were you successful?

I was not doing okay in lower classes, that was from standards 1- 3 but doing okay from 5-6, I was trying hard.

In the example (1) above, the description involved negative or positive values, even though the subject did not make the link to his self view. In examples (2) the subject expressed no value judgements at all. One explanation for the preponderance of a concrete, descriptive style in the prison stories relates to research evidence that life-course delinquents have lower *verbal* cognitive abilities than adolescent-limited offenders (Moffitt, 1993). This hypothesis was not investigated further in the present study as verbal reasoning was not measured and there was no significant differences between the research groups on a non-verbal intelligence measure, Raven's Standard Progressive (chapter 3, 1.3).

2.32 *Measurement of Leadership Potential*

A subject's perception of his leadership ability (a form of social self-esteem) was tapped by the Biographical Questionnaire prompt

Do you think you would make a good leader of your group?

Almost all Zulu subjects in both research groups answered in the affirmative, leading to a concern about the discriminating ability of this question. Consequently a question was included in the follow-up interviews with isiZulu speaking Nchanga subjects to clarify their understanding of "leadership". The question asked

Why did you think all the Zulu subjects saw themselves as leaders?

The consensus reply was that this was a regular aspiration linked to being a Zulu man. It was concluded therefore that the "leadership" probe in its existing form was not useful in providing an insight into any Zulu subject's opinion about his personal strengths, reflecting instead a cultural stereotype. Consequently, responses to this question were not utilized in the analysis of the self-esteem code.

2.33 *The CFSEI-2: A Culture Free Measure?*

While the translated version the CFSEI-2 test seemed to be generally well accepted and understood by subjects, it was not as "culture free" as it propounded to be. There were no isiZulu equivalents for certain concepts in the test (for details, see chapter 3, 2.33). The difficulties arising in its administration, with isiZulu subjects' understanding of certain ideas in the CFSEI-2, indicated there is potential for future research into creating a *culture specific* self-esteem questionnaire that contains concepts better understood by mother-tongue isiZulu (and other African) speakers. Some past and current research (Mboya, 1994; Wild et al., 2006) suggests only minor changes would be required. A focus group method may be a good tool to gain a preliminary understanding of the characteristics that reflect high and low self worth in isiZulu speaking groups. A method that ranks individuals in terms of the community respect they evoke, akin to that used to assess wealth in rural societies (B Parker, personal communication, March 21, 2003), also has potential.

2.4 *Reliability*

Reliability was calculated using the scores of two raters on two randomly chosen prisoner and non-prisoner stories, across all the subcodes measured. Cohen's Kappa gave a moderate inter-rater reliability figure of .55 for the self-esteem code (Howell, 1997). Analysis of the inter-rater reliability scoring for this code showed reliability was pulled down by the confusion of the second rater regarding the difference between positive

goals set by the respondent and positive *self-esteem*. This reliability exercise underlined the need for a more thorough training of the independent rater, using more practice texts, when establishing reliabilities for more complex variables in the research.

3. Results

3.1 Qualitative Results

3.11 Academic Self-esteem

Although academic self-esteem is not measured in the adult version of the CFSEI-2, the prompt in the Biographical Questionnaire about school progress provided ample data for this category. This prompt, aimed primarily as testing the finding that life-course offenders typically achieve less well at school than do adolescent-offenders (Moffitt, 1993), generated useful information on self-esteem as a by product. In terms of her taxonomy, the poor academic progress of Moffitt's life-course offenders has a cause and effect relationship with early conduct disorders, poor concentration and a relatively low verbal IQ. (See chapter 1, 2.2 for a discussion on the cognitive deficits of life-course delinquents.) The findings of the Socio-economic Questionnaire (see chapter 3, 2.31) showed that in the present study, prison subjects indeed achieved much lower school grades than the non-prisoner group.

However, despite their poorer scholastic achievement, a marginally greater percentage of prison subjects expressed *satisfaction* with their school progress than did non-prisoners in the life-stories. Overall, most subjects in both groups had a positive self image about their scholastic progress (66.7% - 10 prisoners : 64.7% - 11 non-prisoners). Only 6.7% (1 subject) of prisoners and 17.6% (3 subjects) of the non-prisoners were dissatisfied with their progress⁸³.

The results of the analysis of academic self-esteem suggest that prison subjects held a more inflated and unrealistic opinion of their academic abilities, in terms of their actual achievement. *This supports the contention that persistent aggression is underpinned by a fragile, inflated self image (Baumeister, 2005) rather than by a chronically low self-esteem.*

Examples

Low academic esteem

Prisoners

Did this worry you?

It did because I never used to do well at school. I used to fail and repeat and fail and repeat.

I repeated class 1, std 1, std 3 and std 4. (4, P 166)

Non-prisoners

Though there were times that I felt okay at school but there were also times that I could not feel good.

Okay, do you mean that it was hard at school?

Since I was playful, yes. (18, P 155)

High academic esteem

Prisoners

Oh, how did you cope with school, did you have problems?

I studied well at school.

Did you pass?

Yes. (13, P 247)

Non-prisoners

And school work? Did you find it easy?

I didn't find it challenging. Didn't study, as long as I kept above 60, I was ok. (32, P 162)

⁸³ The outstanding subjects in each group gave vague comments that could not be rated.

3.12 Personal Self-esteem

Personal self-esteem reflects a subject's perception of his personal worth rather than of particular talents, general success, scholastic or social competencies, although these would contribute to his most intimate feelings about himself. Two areas for discussion emerged from this analysis. The first of these gave insight into which personal attributes were valued in the research population. The second looked at the distribution of these across the stories.

The nature of high and low personal self-esteem.

There were several common concepts relating to high personal esteem across both groups but fewer commonalities regarding sources of low personal esteem.

Commonly shared concepts included

(positive)

- sociability, with the associated concepts: warmth, friendliness, confidence
- caring, with the associated concepts: kind, good listener, sensitive, loving
- managing life well
- clever
- well behaved
- happy, with the associated concepts: fun, bubbly
- fair

(negative)

- general inadequacy

Concepts peculiar to one research group

- most concepts with a moral connotation, such as "responsible, hard working" and "moral" occurred in non-prisoner stories only
- "inward looking, sad" and "lacking maturity" featured in negative self-esteem statements of non-prisoners
- "bad, violent, scary" and "not tough enough" predominated in prisoner stories

It is not surprising that many prison subjects now described their past life style as a source of negative self-esteem, using terms such as "bad" and "violent", given that this had led to long jail sentences for all of them. At the same time, many prisoners also described generally desirable qualities as a source of their positive personal esteem, such as sociability, caring, fairness and so on. The question arises whether these qualities, attributed to themselves, had a basis in reality, or rather reflected Baumeister's (1996) inflated and vulnerable self-esteem, given the antisocial, aggressive personalities these subjects presented to the world (and in their life-stories). The limited time span and the open-ended interview of the present study could not answer this and the topic remains one for future research.

The distribution of high and low personal esteem statements in the stories.

More prisoners than non-prisoners made *qualified* (see 2.21) high (100% - 15 prisoners : 94.2% - 16 non-prisoners), and low personal esteem statements in their stories (66.7% - 10 prisoners : 23.5% - 4 non-prisoners). The pattern reversed when the group count of stories reflecting *unqualified* positive or negative personal esteem was compared, where more non-prisoners than prisoners made high personal self-esteem statements (40% - 6 prisoners : 70.6% - 12 non-prisoners). Very few in either group showed *unqualified* low self-esteem (1 subject per group). We all need to think something positive about ourselves! These results are depicted in Figures 23-26.

The conclusions drawn from the measures of qualified and unqualified personal self-esteem were that

- * both the life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups had high personal self-esteem but that of the adolescent-limited group was more *consistently* positive for each individual than that of the life-course group.

- * adolescent-limited offender subjects had less negative personal self-esteem than did the life-course offenders.

The results of the analysis of personal self-esteem support the fragile, inflated self-esteem theory of persistent aggression in life-course offenders.

Examples

High personal esteem

Prisoners

My best friend? Oh, what would she say? Um..Kind, uh.. ja.. A very kind person. (1, P 340)

Ok. Ok. How would your enemies have described you?

Oh, tough [laughs]!

Scary?

Not scary, but tough. (1, P 361)

How would you describe yourself now?

Now? Fun to be with. [Laughs] That's always why they just want to be around me, fun to be with, uh... I'd say special, ah, ah, ja... fun to be with.... ja. (1, P 389)

How did you feel after each actual incident?[of violent crime]

Felt very proud. I think, I mean I was doing what my friends were doing.

So it felt like the right thing? Or did it...

Ja, felt like the... felt like the right thing at the time.

Ok. So you were doing things in order to be accepted by a particular group of people?....

Ja, ja. (1, P 435)

How do you think your friend can describe you?

As sensitive person, who does not bear a grudge and is kind. (3, P 246)

Okay, if your friend had to come, how would he/she describe you?

Heh heh [laughing] well my friend would describe me as a person who likes laughing most of the time. (8, P 254)

So, I am a very fair person, who would like other person to be satisfied. (15, P 346)

Non-prisoners

Okay, now if your best friend were to describe you to me what would he say ?

He would say eh... I'm a very kind loving person and I can understand people's needs because I can put another person before me (16, P 321)

I am now a councillor, if you given a position of being a councillor at Boys' Town, means that you are then straight, and won't do anything stupid. It means that even if you go back home you won't do anything wrong or stupid or bad. I am now okay, even at home they are noticing difference from old behaviour, and they can see that I have changed a lot. (17, P 172)

If your best friend has to describe you what would he say about you?

He would describe me as a person with passion and who is able to give advice to others. And a person who does not take hasty decisions. (20, P 301)

Yes, most people love me, they are very few people who does not love me. (20, P 324)

I would say that I am a passionate person and a person who is able to understand another person. (20, P 352)

I was growing, most of the time, I was. Uh, I was reserved but still happy.[as a child].

Hmmm, were you always laughing?

Ya, most of time, I was called "mooi, mooi" which means ever smiling. I always wore a smile, heh heh, [laughing]. (22, P 33)

Low personal esteem

Prisoners

All right - your best friend when you were in a gang, as a teenager, how would they have described you? How do you think they saw you? You say you had this front, so they were seeing the front, how would they have described that?

Uh, I think they.... I think they, I think they saw [through]my front [of being tough] , that I really was involved. So I think they'd call me a coward. ["friends" in gang]..because I think sometimes ... I was always defending people. So, to them, having a soft side was not on. You had to be tough. Why? [laughs]. I mean I...I...I'm not going into battle with someone who's soft. And we were gangsters and always involved in...in fighting. So I mean, you yourself wouldn't want to take me with you if you knew I had a soft side. You had to be tough. (1, P 341)

Ok did your mother or father ever notice when you did a good thing?
I never ever did anything good. (4, P 205)

I was a bad person. I could not even think of going to church.
Were you naughty?
I grew up being a naughty person. (9, P 615)

How would your friend describe you?
My friend would describe me as a hard or cruel person.
Are you cruel?
Yes, most people look at me like that. (15, P 291)

Non-prisoners

How could your close friend describe you?
..... I also get angry easily, I could even cry when I am angry. Then my friends would complain that I am touchy, that was not a big issue - only to find that to me it is a big deal. (24, P 255)

How would you have described yourself when you were a teenager?
Um, very withdrawn.
So as a teenager in fact you didn't...and you became almost inward.
Ya, and ...I wasn't very happy, in fact. (30, P 303)

And your enemies, try think what might be your weak points.
For my age I'm not very mature. If you didn't know me you'd say....In my job people don't give me the respect.
Is it the way you behave, or look?
It's not the way I behave, it's the way I like carry myself.
Ok, you lack confidence, could you say?
That's pretty much it. (30, P 317)

3.13. Social Self-esteem

As indicated in section.2.1 above, the text analysis of social esteem *excluded* subjects' perceptions of their peer relations, as these were examined in chapter 6. Those latter results showed that life-course offenders experienced poorer quality peer relationships than did their adolescent-limited counterparts. *In particular, they related to peers in a more self centred manner and saw these relationships as less satisfying.* The analysis of the social self-esteem subcode examined perceptions of subjects' other social relationships, such as with girlfriends, the community, and teachers.

The results of the analysis of peer relationships in chapter 6 suggested that the comparison of social self-esteem in the present analysis would show prisoners as having lower social self-esteem. As shown in 3.22 below, this was the case on a formal measure of self-esteem, the CFSEI-2, where non-prisoners achieved significantly higher than prisoners on the social self-esteem component score. The outcome of the text analysis supported this finding. Notably fewer prisoner stories contained positive social esteem statements compared with those of the non-prisoner group (40% - 6 prisoners : 58.8% - 10 non-prisoners). In addition, more prisoner than non-prisoner stories contained negative social esteem statements (20% - 3 prisoners : 5.9% - 1 non-prisoner). This trend held across comparisons of both qualified and unqualified measures of positive and negative social esteem for any one subject. These social self-esteem results are shown in Figures 23-26.

Prisoners' experienced high social esteem only in relation to girlfriends. The high social esteem of non-prisoners was more broad based. They felt valued by the community, school mates and teachers. Prisoners' limited source of social esteem correlated with their overall poor social relationships, as shown in chapter 6.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ These results showed they also related much better to deviant peers than normative peers.

Results suggested the life-course offender group felt positive about their image with girls, based on sexual prowess, but saw themselves as failing in social relationships without this “prop”.

The social esteem text analysis supported a chronic low esteem explanation for persistent aggression.

Examples

High social esteem

Prisoners

.....Well, I also liked girls, can I also mention that? Yes, I did like girls and they used to fight for me, well, I can say that there many things that I liked. (5, P 192)

Non-prisoners

I don't have a problem with ladies,-uh, not girlfriends but socially they are my girlfriends, ya, I am okay. (22, P 290)

Okay, it was nice, did you like the teachers?

Yes, because they liked me too much.

Yes, why did they like you?

I think it is the way I conducted myself, I was very respectful. (27, P 253)

Yes, there are compliments. They are telling me that I am behaving well, I don't even give my family troubles. [The community says this now.]

Do you behave well?

Yes, I am. (20, P 425)

School was cool. I was well-known. (32, P 159)

Do you think you should have been punished at the time? Do you think it would have made a difference if you'd been caught and found out?

No.

Why?

It would have just made me more popular. (32, P 246)

Low social esteem

Prisoners

I was always called a rubbish, and nobody actually, I was always rejected in my community. Even up to today, people reject me in my community. (1, P 236)

How popular are you with girls?

Eyh, sister I think I'm not popular to girls, so I give up in that area. (9, P 386)

Non-prisoners

Yes, I could say that to people of my age that I mix with and I have noticed that there is no person, what could I say, that cares about me or that pays interest in me or sensitive to my feelings or worries about me if I am okay or not, if I need something or not. I think there is no woman that could show interest in me. (25, P 438)

3.14 General Self-esteem

The general self-esteem measure reflected subjects' perceptions of specific competencies as well as of their general success in life. Statements about praise earned personally for tasks well done, and sporting and other talents, formed part of this scoring.

The results of the general esteem analysis showed life-course offenders as making fewer high general esteem statements than the adolescent-limited group (see Figures 23-26). They also made fewer low general esteem statements in their stories, suggesting they were less self critical compared to the adolescent-limited group regarding their successes and talents. This pattern held across both qualified and unqualified stories. High general self-esteem was expressed by 10 prisoners (60.7% of the group) and by 14 non-prisoners (82.4% of the group). Fewer subjects in both groups expressed negative general esteem (33.3% - 5 prisoners : -52.9% - 9 non-prisoners).

According to the analysis, the adolescent-limited offenders had better general self-esteem than their life-course counterparts, but were also more realistic about their shortcomings (their higher number of negative esteem ratings). *This trend supports a vulnerable low self-esteem argument regarding persistent aggression.* Not only did the life-course group feel generally less successful and less able than their adolescent-limited counterparts. They also were less able to acknowledge specific areas of failure than the latter group.

Examples

High general esteem

Prisoners

Yes, it was soccer and athletic sports at school because I was talented. My school was doing well at athletic sport because of me. (3, P 83)

I can help my community in many ways. Firstly by sharing my experiences with some of the boys in my township. Most of them they know me very well and they know what I have done -they've heard- and most of them, some of them, would like to be like me - they'd like to be on top. (4, P 303)

Were there things you did at home that you would be praised for?

Yes,.... ..

How did they praise you?

Maybe.. what can I say, maybe bring things that would make me feel happy- They would say that I did well by making my thing look good, you see. (13, P 123)

Non-prisoners

I tried my best to make sure that people around me are happy,

So were you successful to make those around you happy?

Yes, I was even when my dad has gone, I was able to stay with his family, as like it was my own family. (18, P 138)

Who would start the fight most of the time if you can remember?

I am gifted in talking, I would talk and she would get angry and beat me first, I don't want to lie, I was the one who would start the trouble. (19, P 233)

Okay, are your parents proud of you?

Eh, they were proud of me. I think they were disappointed when I didn't pass matric. But they are sometimes proud of me when I do something good and try to move forward, they get happy that they are raised me. (21, P 396)

And compared to the people you mixed with back then, how successful would you say you are, now.

Very. Very successful. (32, P 298)

Low general esteem

Prisoners

I would also say that even this sentence has been like heavy to me since, it is very heavy. They have progressed outside as you can see, when I go out, what do I come with, nothing. (5, P 300)

Okay, if you compare yourself with people whom you went around with, would you say that you were successful or not?

I feel that I am far behind them. (11, P 491)

Non-prisoners

There is nothing that I have achieved. (23, P 273)

Dagga punished me since it destroyed me and I did not succeed in what ever I did. I find myself busy with dagga instead of doing something else, like going to tertiary. I only realized very late that I am left behind when I compare myself with my classmates. (24, P 303)

3.15 Conclusions drawn from the Qualitative Analyses

The analysis of self-esteem from the life-story data supports both schools of thought in the literature regarding the relationship between self-esteem and chronic aggressive, antisocial behaviour. The first of these holds that this arises from a fragile high self-esteem, and the second, that this originates from chronic low self-esteem.

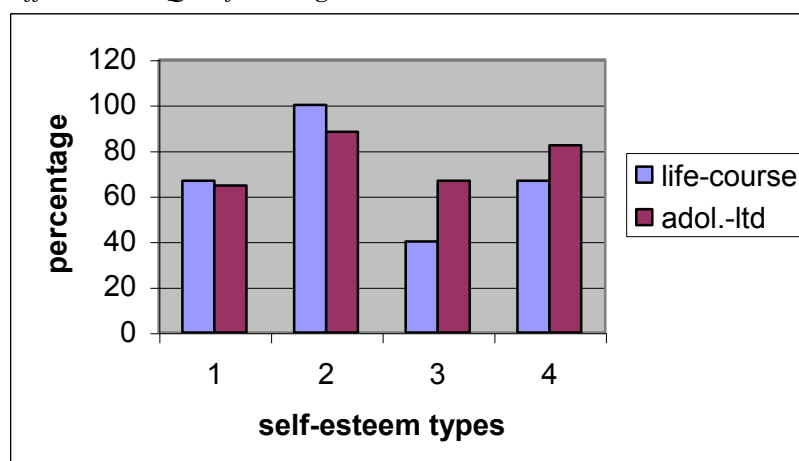
There was no difference between groups regarding *academic self-esteem*, but the analysis suggested the self-esteem of the life-course offender group was inflated and unrealistic. More life-coursers had higher *personal self-esteem* than the adolescent-limited offenders, but were less consistent (fragile) in this view. For both groups, personal self-esteem was centred around socially desirable attributes. Two factors in the personal esteem results supported the view that life-course offender subjects possessed an inflated and vulnerable personal self-esteem. These were the inconsistency of prison subjects' high personal esteem, and the questionable likelihood that prison subjects could actually display the socially acceptable traits on which they sourced this type of esteem, given their histories of aggression and poor peer relationships. Fewer life-course subjects expressed positive *social self-esteem* regarding how girlfriends, teachers, and others in the community perceived them. The results supported a fragile low self-esteem explanation for persistent aggression. Regarding *general self-esteem*, fewer life-course than adolescent-limited offenders expressed positive perceptions about their successfulness, specific talents or experience. This result supported the low self-esteem interpretation of persistent aggression.

3.2. Quantitative Results

3.21 Graphs

The percentage graphs below, depicting the counts of the qualitative text analyses, clarify the differences between qualified and unqualified counts on the four self-esteem categories.

Figure 23. Group Differences in Qualified^s High Esteem



Key

Esteem type

1. academic

2. personal

3. social

4. general

Life-course*

10 (66.7%)

15 (100%)

6 (40%)

10 (66.7%)

Adol.-ltd*

64.7% (8.8)

88.2% (11.2)

66.7% (9.6)

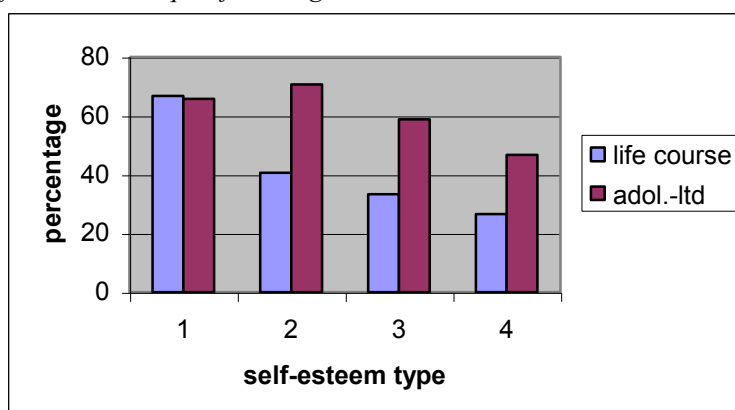
82.4% (11.2)

*=number of subjects adjusted for differences in group size (% subjects in each group)

^s= each of these stories carried both high and low esteem statements in the particular category

Figure 23 depicts the qualitative findings that, in stories containing both high and low esteem statements, a similar number of life-course and adolescent-limited offender subjects felt positive about their academic successes; more life-course subjects felt positive about their personal esteem; and more adolescent-limited offenders were positive about social and general self-esteem components.

Figure 24. Group Differences in Unqualified^s High Esteem



Key

Esteem type

	Life-course*	Adol.-limited*
1. academic self-esteem#	66.7% (10)	64.7% (8.8)
2. personal self-esteem	40% (6)	70.6% (9.6)
3. social self-esteem	33.3% (5)	58.8% (8)
4. general self-esteem	26.6% (4)	46.7% (6.4)

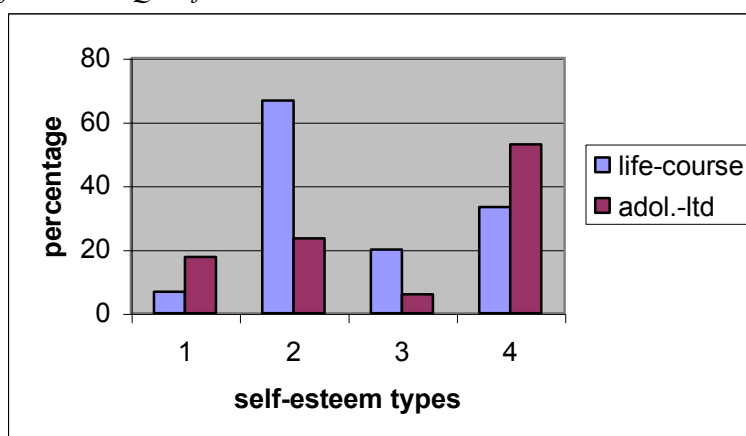
*= % subjects in each group (number of subjects adjusted for differences in group size)

#=there were no stories with both high and low academic self-esteem statements, thus these figures remain as in Figure 23.

\$=each of these stories contained only high statements in the particular esteem category.

The picture in Figure 23 changed somewhat in Figure 24, which reflected high self-esteem statements in life-stories that did not also contain low esteem statements in the same categories. While the relative positions between the groups remained the same for academic, social and general self-esteem, the adolescent-limited group now demonstrated a relatively much higher personal self-esteem. The differences between Figures 23 and 24 highlighted the fragility of the life-course offender groups' personal self-esteem.

Figure 25 Group Differences in Qualified^s Low Esteem Scores



Key

Esteem type

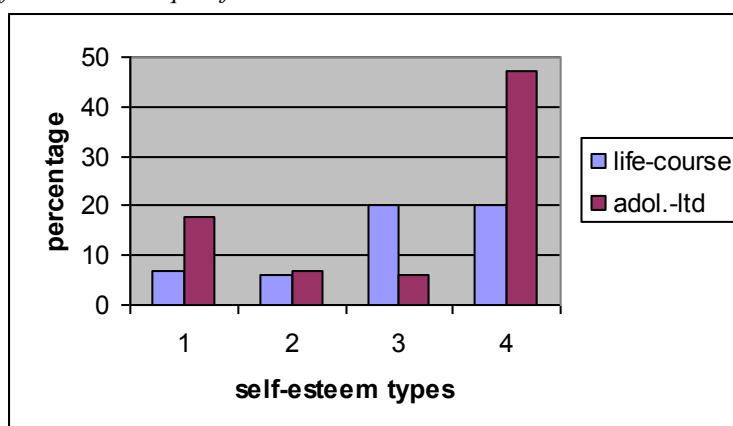
	Life-course*	Adol.-limited*
1. academic self-esteem	6.7% (1)	17.6% (2.4)
2. personal self-esteem	66.7% (10)	23.5% (3.2)
3. social self-esteem	20% (3)	5.9% (.8)
4. general self-esteem	33.3% (5)	52.9% (7.2)

*= % subjects in each group (number of subjects)

\$=each of these stories carried both high and low esteem statements in the particular category

Figure 25 depicted low self-esteem scores in stories that also contained high scoring statements in the same category. This graph underlined the fragility of the life-course offender groups' personal esteem, given the high count of low personal esteem statements in their stories. It also confirmed the trend in Figures 23 and 24 regarding their low social self-esteem. Given that the adolescent-limited group actually achieved better at school and in life than the life-course group, and given the greater number high academic and general esteem statements in Figures 23 and 24, their relatively lower scores in these categories in Figure 25 may reflect a realistic appraisal of the obstacles to their continued success in these areas.

Figure 26. Group Differences in Unqualified^{\$} Low Esteem Scores



Key

Esteem type

1. low academic self-esteem#
2. low personal self-esteem
3. low social self-esteem
4. low general self-esteem

Life-course*

- 6.7% (1)
- 5.9% (1)
- 20% (3)
- 20% (3)

Adol.-limited*

- 17.6% (2.4)
- 6.7% (.8)
- 5.9% (.8)
- 47.1% (6.4)

*= . % subjects in each group (number of subjects)

#=there were no stories with both high and low academic self-esteem statements, thus these figures remain as in Figure 25 above

\$=each of these stories contained only low statements in the particular esteem category

The patterns of Figure 25 changed little in Figure 26, which measured low self-esteem scores in stories containing no high esteem statements on the same topics. The low number of unqualified personal esteem scores showed how few subjects (as with people in general) thought only poorly of themselves regarding their most central qualities.

3.22 Statistics

Given the relatively large number of response categories, the Independent Samples t-test was used to statistically analyse group differences on the self-esteem categories arising from the text analysis. The Independent Samples t-test was also used to assess differences between the two research groups on the CFSEI-2, on both global and component self-esteem scores.

1. CFSEI-2

Total Score: The t test for independent means indicated the group difference on total self-esteem scores on the CFSEI-2 was not significant.

Component Scores: The t test analysis of each of the factors making up the total CFSEI-2 score, namely personal, social and general self-esteem, indicated a significant difference on the *social esteem* variable only. Life-course offenders scored significantly lower than adolescent-limited offenders in their perception of how others saw them.

T-Test for Independent Means – Social Self-esteem

$t = -3.54$; $df = 30$; $sig. (2-tailed) = .002^*$; *confidence levels: lower = -6.79 and upper = -1.76*

** equal variances not assumed*

2. Text Analysis

Neither the chi-square nor the log linear statistics calculated on the data for group differences in high and low academic, personal, social and general self-esteem, were significant. The analyses were conducted on the total count of all stories that contained statements of self-esteem in the relevant category (e.g. high personal esteem). Each self-esteem count reflected the sum of stories containing statements that fell into that particular self-esteem category.

3.3 Reflections on the Results

Social self-esteem and evolutionary psychology.

The only significant group difference on the CFSEI-2 was the social self-esteem category. The identification by the CFSEI-2 of social esteem as the only significant discriminator between the research groups, in addition to the strong trend of a similar difference emerging from the text analysis, supports the evolutionary psychology argument that social status is a key human evolutionary adaptive mechanism.

Evolutionary psychologists would not be surprised that differences in this kind of self-esteem emerged as the strongest differentiating factor on the CFSEI-2. This school of psychology punts the adaptive value of psychological mechanisms for human survival., one of these being the qualities attractive to women when looking for long term mates. In primitive times these qualities ensured a mate brought with him the resources and commitment to provide a woman and her offspring with the long term security on which her survival depended. Research suggests that the situation is relatively unchanged for women today, except that resourcefulness in an intended long term mate is often signalled by the *potential* to be resourceful, rather than the actual possession of resources (Buss, 1999). According to Buss, signs of this potential include physical health and prowess, intelligence, ambition, and *a high social status*. In the hierarchical structure of societies, those who are important, powerful and influential in their social groups rise up the hierarchy and have readier access to available societal resources. Thus they make more desirable long term mates.

In terms of evolutionary psychology, males have a strong drive to maintain their social status. Recognition of his poor social status therefore could be expected to lead to aggressive repercussions by the life-course offender as he vigorously tries to protect his brittle self-esteem.

The validity of the CFSEI-2.

The lack of discrimination between the research groups on total self-esteem and on two of the three sub components of the CFSEI-2, namely personal and general self-esteem, bears further investigation. It is unclear at this stage whether such differences do not *in fact* exist between life-course and adolescent-limited offenders or whether the *discriminatory ability* of the CFSEI-2 is being called into question in the current research population.⁸⁵ The trends demonstrated in the qualitative text analysis suggest that such differences might exist between the life-course and adolescent-limited offender research groups, albeit these were not shown to be statistically significant.

The text analysis.

There were no statistically differences between the research groups on any of the four self-esteem components generated by the text analysis. As with the CFSEI-2, this result bears further investigation. More focused probes in the interviews to ascertain the value placed by a subject on statements relating to self-esteem would add greater certainty to conclusions drawn regarding group differences. Furthermore, Biographical Questionnaire probes that also took the cultural understanding of a self-esteem concepts into account (e.g. as regards leadership) would enhance the validity of the present life-story tool for measuring self-esteem.

⁸⁵ The reader is referred to chapter 3, 2.33 for concerns about the validity of the CFSE-2 as applied to an isiZulu speaking sample.

4 Conclusions

The preceding discussions of qualitative and quantitative results generated the following conclusions regarding the association between a life-course offending trajectory and self-esteem:

1. Using an available, peer reviewed formal measure of self-esteem, and a narrative tool, there were no strong differences in self-esteem between a limited number of semi-rural South African subjects, representing Moffitt's life-course and adolescent-limited offenders. The exception was social self-esteem, where adolescent-limited offenders demonstrated significantly higher social self-esteem on the CFSEI-2, and a similar trend was observed in subjects' life-stories.

The analyses suggest the matter is not finalized and should be reassessed using more effective interview probes in open-ended interviews, and a more culturally specific formal measure of self-esteem.

2. Low esteem or inflated high esteem? - The support lent to both these theories varied across the four components of self-esteem measured in the stories. This generates the interesting hypothesis that *both* these explanations are related to persistent aggression and an accompanying recidivist life style, but their relative influence varies across different kinds of self-esteem. This thesis is supported by recognition in the literature that self-esteem consists of several components rather than being a unitary entity (Wild et al., 2006).

The present research suggests that life-course offender types are less likely to deny failure relating to social and general self-esteem, as defined in the present study. Their aggressive responses when these kinds of self-esteem are threatened serve to bolster an acknowledged fragile low self-esteem. The reason for this "insight" may be that it is difficult to ignore the reality of success or failure when these are demonstrated by tangible features such as the possession of friends, of specific talents, and of success symbols such as material assets and career achievements. On the other hand, there are fewer directly observable symbols relating to personal self-esteem, as defined in this study. A sense of failure in this kind of esteem is also arguably the most threatening of all, as personal self-esteem reflects an individual's most central feelings of self worth. Thus it is the type of self-esteem most likely to be kept consistently, if inappropriately, high, by the already vulnerable life-course offender.

SUMMARY

The qualitative analysis of self-esteem differences between prisoner and non-prisoner groups, representing Moffitt's life-course and adolescent-limited offenders, showed notable differences between the groups as regards personal, social and general self-esteem. The adolescent-limited group displayed higher social and general self-esteem. While results varied for personal self-esteem, the adolescent-limited group also displayed higher self-esteem here if this was measured in terms of a subject's *consistently* positive view of himself. No differences in academic self-esteem were recorded. Group differences were not statistically different, either in terms of the quantitative assessment of the text analyses or on the CFSEI-2, with the exception of a higher social self-esteem by the adolescent-group on the CFSEI-2. It was felt that this lack of differentiation might be partly due to limitations in the probe questions on self-esteem in the Biographical Questionnaire, as well as to some items of the CFSEI-2 being culturally inappropriate for the research sample. The analyses generated an interesting hypothesis regarding the controversy in the literature around whether persistent aggression, a central feature of the life-course offender's behavioural repertoire, is facilitated by chronic low self-esteem or by inflated, brittle, high self-esteem (Baumeister, 2005). The results in the present study suggest that both these conditions lead to aggression, their influence dependent on the kind of self-esteem involved.

CHAPTER 10. CRITIQUE OF THE STUDY

OVERVIEW

This short chapter summarises design faults that emerged in the research process. It was concluded that these were relatively limited and did not impact significantly on the reliability and validity of the overall findings of the study.

1. Introduction

In the course of this dissertation passing criticism has been made of aspects of the research design. These limitations are summarised in this chapter. The intention is to assess whether any, or the sum, of these impacted significantly on the credibility of the findings. Suggestions are also made as to how future studies, using a similar design, might avoid these problems.

In general, the research design proved to be sound. In the methods chapter, reliability and validity aspects of the design were given extensive coverage and these feature were re-evaluated in each results discussion chapter. It was concluded once the analyses had been finalised that the research design produced results that were, in the main, both reliable and valid, within the qualitative framework of the study. Nevertheless, it remained important to isolate any design limitations in order to enhance the productivity of future studies using similar research tools.

2. Problems regarding the Biographical Questionnaire (See Appendix 1)

Omissions.

Moral Reasoning

In chapter 8, which compared differences in moral development between the research groups, the discussion of the moral reasoning subcode results noted that these statements were relatively sparse in non-prisoner compared with prisoner stories. This was due to a limitation of the Biographical Questionnaire. Moral statements were generated primarily by a prompt in the Biographical Questionnaire administered to prisoners and to Boys' Town and NICRO non-prisoners, asking whether they thought their crimes were wrong. This primed them for some kind of moral response. This section on "criminal behaviour" was omitted in the remaining interviews. Only about half this remaining group produced spontaneous moral reasoning statements in their stories (7 of 14 non-prisoner stories), leading to limited information about several subjects on this subcode. A matching prompt question in the Biographical Interview administered to non sentenced participants, on the "morality" of their antisocial behaviour would have remedied this omission. This probe would take the form of

Would you have carried on breaking the law as you did when you were younger, if you thought you would not be caught? Why?

Age of Onset

The Biographical Questionnaire did not tap the age of onset of crime particularly well, especially in prisoners' stories. While subjects spoke of early offences, they did not always specify these. The impression gained was that they did not bother to mention early transgressions if they had perpetrated many serious crimes at a later stage. These latter became the focus in their responses to interview questions about antisocial behaviour. This area needs to be more precisely accessed in further research, as the age of onset of antisocial behaviour is a crucial variable in Moffitt's taxonomy. This could be done by using prompts in the Biographical Questionnaire such as

Can you remember when you first did small things that were wrong, like drinking too much, driving a car without a licence, bunking school, smoking in the toilets, even taking some drugs?⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Targetted here is the commencement of status crimes, as subjects are not expected to have insight into early, conduct disorders in childhood. The intention is to tap these latter better in caregiver interviews.

The assumption behind this prompt would be that small offences invariably proceed to bigger ones for life-course offenders, while these are probably the only “crimes” of adolescent-limited offenders. Thus information on these will give a good “start” position on the path towards more serious offences.

Limited probing possible.

A more general criticism of the Biographical Questionnaire is not as easily remedied. It was raised in the discussion of several results (e.g. parent watchfulness, duration and conflict of peer relationships; family conflict) that information in the stories was too sparse or ambiguous to draw conclusions about a particular subject’s standing on the matter. While a few of these instances simply reflected poor interviewer technique, in the main this was not the source of the problem. In order to obtain the required detail or confirm innuendos in a story, further focused probe questions were needed. The concern here was that if these in-depth probes became part of the initial interview process, the open-ended strength of the process would be lost. The capacity of the life-story interview to allow subjects to generate their own material and place their own emphases, within a guiding framework, *was a pillar of the research’s validity and could not be compromised.*

To overcome this problem it is recommended that future studies, using a similar design, incorporate a *standard* follow-up interview. This would meet the need for detailed probes and allow for clarification of facts produced in the life-stories, while at the same time, preserving the integrity of the initial open-ended interview. In the present study, follow-up interviews gave pleasing results, but as these were ad hoc, not all subjects could be re-interviewed.

3. The Third Party

One reason for the dearth of early developmental information about subjects was the limited number of third parties that could be easily contacted and interviewed. In addition, not all these were subjects’ primary early caregivers. More rigorous planning to access primary caregivers of the subjects, as part of the research design, would assist here. These measures could include

- * increased funding, in order to remunerate the third party interviewer for her extended work
- * the use of a wider range of ways to contact the third party⁸⁷
- * a more effective initial contact with the third party to persuade them of the value of the interview

Tapping early developmental details.

Even when third parties were the primary caregivers, the information obtained on subjects’ early developmental details was disappointingly sparse. It is acknowledged that the present research design could never provide the firm facts about subjects’ pre-natal, post-natal and infant periods available in a longitudinal cohort study. However, the third party interview with caregivers should be able to tap information about *parents’ perceptions of a subject’s development relative to his siblings and other children of family friends.* It should reveal whether the participant in his youth was especially hard to discipline, more difficult to pin down to a task, more easily frustrated and aggressive, and so on.

One explanation for the bland early developmental information from third party interviews might be that it is just not possible to obtain information about aberrant child behaviour, unless this is extreme, in the context of the traditional Zulu cultural grouping of most subjects’ caregivers. Traditional Black families are typically quite accepting of difficult children (N. Ntshangase, personal communication, 2006, January 28). Another reason might be that, while parents of adolescent-limited subjects correctly reported the unexceptional development of their children, the parents of life-course subjects simply failed to note the absence of this due to a general lack of *watchfulness* associated with their parenting style (see chapter 5 for details of parental vigilance). These suppositions must as such until a more effective third party interview tool, in keeping with the retrospective nature of the current research design, is developed. To assist in formulating such a tool, focus

⁸⁷ In the present study this was restricted to two attempts per subject at telephonic contact. A postal contact or physical visit to the home were more time consuming options not used.

groups with health care workers who routinely deal with “deviant” children in the target communities, such as rural hospital based occupational and physio-therapists and nurses, would give some insights into how mothers perceive those children who patently are not developing as well as their peers. In turn, these insights would determine the kind of interview questions to include in a third party interview in order to better tap this information. This provides the subject for additional research.

4. Interviewer Training

Despite the fairly thorough training of the interviewers, some interview transcripts were not wholly satisfactory. This was due to the complexity of the research interview. These required the interviewer to cover a wide range of issues and to maintain a balance between obtaining information on a research variable needed for group comparisons and yet still allow subjects to present their stories in their own way. While mock interviews formed part of the training, at least *one pilot interview* for each interviewer, with a non research subject from a similar demographic background to those in the study, would have honed their interviewing skills and guided them on areas where they needed to improve their technique.

5. A Larger Budget: The Pilot Study and the Role of the Translator/Transcriber

In retrospect, the research project would have benefited from a larger budgetary allocation and better time planning.⁸⁸ A regular research grant was available but this was modest, given the status of the study (doctoral rather than post doctoral). Time planning problems related indirectly to financial limitations.

A pilot to assess the efficacy of the Biographical Questionnaire was conducted on four willing individuals by the researcher in her local community. These were middle class, well educated individuals. They responded comprehensively to the Questionnaire interview. This was not the case with some of the less well educated research subjects, who tended towards monosyllabic responses. A pilot using the trained research interviewers and the researcher, each conducting an interview with subjects similar in demographics to those in the research sample, would have been better able to identify areas for improvement in the Biographical tool, before the study proper began. A pilot study of this nature would also have provided the additional training recommended in point 4 above.

The second advantage of a larger research budget would be the capacity to employ a full time translator/transcriber. The nub of the delay in correcting shortcomings in interviewer technique and in the Questionnaire itself lay in the huge amount of data generated by each interview. Each amounted to about 20 single space typed pages. Added to this was the time needed to produce an English translation of the script, plus that taken in analysing the story, before any weaknesses in the interviewer technique or interview format emerged. The time lag was aggravated due to only one part time, translator / transcriber being available. A larger budget would allow for the employment of full time translating/transcription staff, to generate translated transcripts quickly, thereby shortening the time frame for correcting research design errors.

In summary, an increased budget would enhance future similar research by facilitating

- * the employment of a full time transcriber/translator in the project
- * a reduced time lag between pilot interviews and corrective feedback
- * payment of interviewers for their additional time in running pilots
- * additional payment of the third party interviewer for the time spend pursuing third party contacts more vigorously
- * a standard follow-up interview

6. The Socio-economic Questionnaire (see Appendix 3)

Socio-economic Questionnaire versus text analysis results: A discrepancy emerged between information on family “stability” from the Socio-economic Questionnaire (Item 11) and that derived from the life-story text coding of this variable (see chapter 5, 1.4 and 3.5). When the Socio-economic Questionnaire data was checked with subjects or third parties, it emerged that family information from the text analysis was more accurate.

⁸⁸ A universal truth!

The textual analysis revealed that in several instances where subjects had indicated dual parent rearing on the Questionnaire, one of the primary caregivers had been replaced by a step parent, who was not accepted by the subject. Similarly, a dual parent rating on the Questionnaire occurred in instances where one or both the primary caregivers had been absent for prolonged periods, during early developmental years, working elsewhere, living with the second wife (a traditional Zulu practice) and so on. In these instances, other members of the extended family would step in. Subjects reared in these conditions were consequently re-rated as coming from “divided” rather than “whole” families.

The incorrectness of some subjects’ responses to this Questionnaire item was due to the relative coarseness of the Socio-economic measure at this point, in addition to the inadequate preparation of respondents before completing this information. This item in a future Questionnaire must be explicit about the physical presence of both parents being required for much of the time, to score this as a “both parent” response.

7. The Representativeness of the Study

It can not be contested that a very small sample was used in this research to generate conclusions that are held to apply to a much larger body of criminals in the South African context. However, it is contended that, despite its small size, the research sample validly reflected Moffitt’s two kinds of offenders in this country. Subjects in the “life-course” group were not selected personally by the researcher but were provided by the prison authorities concerned, *solely on the basis of their fitting the research criteria of being repeat, violent criminals*. This group represented the demographic shape of the wider prison population in South African prisons at the time of the study. The “adolescent-limited” group also fitted the research criteria of notable delinquency in adolescence, but all fitted Moffitt’s adolescent-limited offending type as they had desisted from further crime in adulthood. As a body, both these groups fitted most aspects of Moffitt’s theory very well, despite most subjects originating from semi-rural, traditional cultural backgrounds, unlike the subjects in Moffitt’s study, who were representative of a developed, Western culture. Thus, conclusions drawn from the sample used can be used to support the assumption that Moffitt’s classes of offenders also develop in South African, despite marked cultural differences between the samples used across the two studies.

8. How Valuable was the Research Method?

Reflections on the pin-prick and golf-ball sized shortcomings of the study are enumerated in this chapter. This process attempts to improve the quality of future, similar research. In spite of the limitations discussed, the research method in the main has proved to be a fruitful and effective tool in terms of the aim of the study, namely, to investigate the validity of Moffitt’s taxonomy in a South African context. It was an exploratory, low budget investigation, with two primary longer term aims. If it produced positive findings, the study paves the way for a larger scale investigation, such as a longitudinal study in the vein of Terrie Moffitt’s Dunedin research, aimed at expanding and consolidating initial findings regarding the applicability of Moffitt’s taxonomy to a developing country such as South Africa. Its second long term aim was to act as a catalyst for the generation of pilot intervention studies with pre-pubertal at risk children, in an attempt to begin, sooner rather than later, an initiative to reduce the burgeoning crime in our country.

The research design has proved itself well suited to the exploratory goals of the present study. This advantage should also apply to other social science developmental research, which explores the validity of a set of preconceived hypotheses. In this regard, the research design has three key assets for future comparative studies:

1. Its use of several variables across which research groups are compared reduces the risk, associated with comparative studies, of invalid inferences (Cole & Means, 1981). It does this by comparing groups across a pattern of differences, rather than across a few specific variables. This patterning (represented by the “tapestry” metaphor describing the design process) was extended by the inclusion of a “triangulated” (Perrin, 1996) element in the design. Third party interviews, institutional records and some formal tests bolstered the life-story information.

2. The comparative nature of the study demands more detailed and rigorous research methodology than is typically the case in qualitative research. One has only to re-visit the prolonged accounts of unit counts, second rater reliability problems and so on in chapter 3 and the results chapters to be reminded of this feature. The primary aim of the detailed methodology was to allow a valid and reliable comparison between research groups. However, the spin off is that it also provides detailed method guidelines for further studies in related areas.

3. The design provides rich qualitative data in addition to the above features traditionally associated with quantitative research. This combination, arguably, provides the *kind of data best suited for exploratory comparative social science research, of an applied nature*. While input on specific topics is prompted by the semi-structured interview format, subjects could chose how much, what, and how they contributed to a given topic. There was also ample scope for the introduction of additional material relevant to an individual. A second advantage of the qualitative design focus was its capacity to tap into variables traditionally not accessed in a quantitative study although often of interest in developmental social science research. In the present study this related to information on subjects' moral beliefs, sense of self-worth and life goals.

CHAPTER 11. THE COMPLETED TAPESTRY: AN OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

OVERVIEW

This chapter draws together the prolonged presentation and discussion of the research results in the preceding chapters. By referring to the tapestry metaphor introduced earlier in this thesis it shows how the overall picture created by the sum of the research findings supports the key research hypothesis, namely, that Moffitt's taxonomy applies to a disadvantaged population in a developing country such as South Africa. It is also argued in the chapter that the results are compatible with the social learning theoretical framework of Moffitt's taxonomy.

1. Introduction

It is appropriate, as an introduction to this section providing an overview of the findings of the present research, to remind readers that the theory of criminal behaviour proposed in this study, and in Moffitt's taxonomy, differs markedly from traditional understandings about the aetiology of serious recidivist crime. These were reviewed in section 1 of the Literature Review in chapter 1. Over the past 100 years, the causes of crime were seen *either* in terms of an inherited, genetic predisposition, *or*, as a result of adverse social factors. The theoretical position of Moffitt, and this thesis, rejects both these views, maintaining that serious criminal behaviour is the outcome of *an integration* of adverse genetic and environmental features. The former, made up of hereditary, genetic, pre-and post-natal factors, results in an "at risk" child who responds adversely to a poor early parenting environment. It is this combination of effects that works together to produce a developmental cycle of events that leads to serious recidivist criminality.

There has been some wide ranging research support for Moffitt's taxonomy over the past decade (Moffitt, 2003). However, the theory has not been tested in South Africa, a country where marked social group differences encourages the perception that the high crime rate is the result of adverse social factors only. The present research interrogates this assumption, which if proved incorrect, has important implications for intervention strategies to reduce crime in this country.

Each results chapter in this paper drew conclusions from the analysis of a particular research variable. The present chapter consolidated these conclusions to answer the key research hypothesis, namely that there were marked differences between the life-course and adolescent-limited research groups on a range of variables, in line with Moffitt's taxonomy. Some of these variables were directly related to Moffitt's taxonomy, others were indirectly related and included in the present study to add depth to the findings as well as to enhance validity. The simple pie chart that appears later in this chapter is a graphic representation of the overall conclusions drawn about the relative strength of each of the variable analysis results – each of which is associated with one of the second level research hypotheses of this study, given in chapter 2.

The overview of each set of variable results presented below begins with the relevant research hypotheses from chapter 2, summarises the research findings, and raises any concerns regarding the validity of these results. The order of appearance of the hypotheses below differs from their order of presentation in chapter 2. In chapter 2 these were presented in order of their centrality to Moffitt's taxonomy. While the integration of child and environmental factors in Moffitt's taxonomy is a central tenet of this thesis, these feature are presented separately below, for the sake of clarity in the ensuing discussion.

2. General Discussion of Results in the Context of the Research Hypotheses

In general the findings provided solid support for Moffitt's taxonomy, showing differences in the expected direction on many variables. Some of these differences were also statistically significant, but more important were trends arising from the qualitative analyses that validated many of Moffitt's tenets in the present research population. Recapping the tapestry motif used in this dissertation, each trend is akin to a grouping of tapestry threads that makes up one pattern or image in the tapestry. Similarly, together, the qualitative trends create the overall tapestry picture.

2.1 Child Factors

2.11 Developmental History

It was hypothesised that a markedly poorer early developmental history, lower cognitive ability and poorer school progress would be associated with the life-course offender group than with the adolescent-limited group. In particular, it was hypothesised that the former group experienced more pre- and post-natal problems and developmental lags; and other early psychoneurological dysfunction.

Early psychoneurological dysfunctions could not be assessed, nor were childhood behaviour problems highlighted for most subjects. This was partly due to the retrospective design of the research, making it difficult to access subjects' early birth and development histories. It was also due to limitations of the third party interviews, which it had been hoped would provide information about subjects' early developmental and socialisation histories. Suggestions were made in Chapter 10 about ways to access more reliable early developmental information from caregivers in future research using a similar design.

Despite the above concerns about the reliability of developmental information, that which emerged in chapter 3 showed a trend supporting Moffitt's contention that life-course offenders have more problematic early developmental and temperamental features than do adolescent-limited offenders. Primary caregivers of 20% of the prison subjects and 64.7% of non-prisoners, were interviewed. Of these, 20% (4) of prisoner caregivers described early difficulties, such as maternal addiction and mental illness in a caregiver, and low frustration tolerance and aggression in the child, while this was the case in only 9% (1) of the non-prisoner caregivers.

2.12 Cognitive Ability and School Performance

A further aspect of developmental differences predicted between the groups was the hypothesis that the life-course offender group would demonstrate significantly lower cognitive ability and poorer school progress than the adolescent-limited group. In particular, it was hypothesised that they measured significantly lower on the Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices and achieved lower school grades.

These variables were discussed as part of participants' characteristics, in chapter 3. The expected differences in IQ between the groups did not materialise. As the literature associates specific verbal deficits with the life-course pathway, and a non-verbal measure of intellectual ability was used in the study, it was recommended that a more appropriate IQ measure be used in future studies. The conclusion that IQ differences were inadequately assessed in the study was reinforced by the significant differences in school progress between the groups, in the expected direction.

2.13 Impulsivity and Goal Setting

Chapter 7 covered impulsivity and goal setting. Discussion of the impulsivity variable is related to that in 2.11 of early developmental problems in the research groups. It was hypothesised that the life-course offender group responded to situations in markedly more impulsive ways than did the adolescent-limited offender group. The hypothesis that the life-course offender group demonstrated markedly less goal setting and planning than did the adolescent-limited offender group was an extension of the impulsivity hypothesis. In particular, it was hypothesised that they set fewer long term goals; had more difficulty persevering towards these and; set fewer prosocial goals.

Impulsivity: With the exceptions of ID 4 and 6, where there was third party evidence of early, easily frustrated, impulsive temperaments, the lack of data prevented conclusions being drawn about the discriminating ability of impulsivity between the research groups in the childhood period. However, the results provided strong, *indirect* evidence that the two research groups most likely differed temperamentally in the expected direction in this regard when young. Differences in the number of impulsive statements made in life-stories suggested significant differences in impulsive thinking between the groups. Not only did the *incidence* of impulsivity differ between the groups, so did the *nature* of the impulsive statements in the stories. The impulsivity of the life-course offenders was associated with three key areas: a desire for immediate

gratification; to engage in risk behaviours regardless of the consequences; and poor emotional control. That of the adolescent-limited group was restricted to decisions to engage in low level antisocial behaviours (i.e. “delinquent” acts). The key element distinguishing impulsivity between the groups was the much more damaging consequences of this behaviour for life-course offenders. It resulted in a reduction of life choices through long term imprisonment, through academic failure, and generally through the failure to pursue important life goals (e.g. such as sticking with a job). It also led to the death or severe physical damage of others. The consequences of the adolescent-limited groups’ impulsivity were less dire. Despite being quite antisocial as adolescents, as young adults most possessed a reasonable level of education, supportive relationships, and a sense of future purpose in their lives.

Goal Setting: The goal setting variable generated many categories, such as the type of goal, its achievability, and a subject’s capacity to persevere towards his goals. Not all these categories showed significant group differences. However, the overall pattern created by the sum of these categories was strongly supportive of Moffitt’s taxonomy, in so far as goal setting is seen as indicative of a planned, rather than impulsive, approach to life. The clearest group differences emerged on three goal setting features. The adolescent-limited group relative to the life-course group demonstrated a significantly greater ability to

- * set more realisable goals, in terms of a personal capacity to achieve the goal
- * break down long terms goals into short term, more achievable, steps
- * to sustain goal perseverance

2.14 Antisocial Behaviour

It was hypothesised that the life-course offender group demonstrated markedly more antisocial behaviour than the adolescent-limited group. In particular, it was hypothesised that they perpetrated more serious crimes; more victim oriented crime; and; began with this behaviour earlier and continued with it over a longer period. It was also hypothesised that the two groups committed a similar number of minor crimes and status offences.

The analysis in chapter 4 showed significant group differences, with life-course offenders committing more serious and victim oriented crimes than their counterparts. In line with Moffitt’s tenet that the two types of delinquents are impossible to distinguish in adolescence, was the non significant difference between the groups regarding status and minor criminal offences, the majority of which were assigned to the adolescent period in the stories.

While information on early childhood antisocial behaviours were not revealed by the study, the analysis of antisocial behaviour in the stories *indirectly* suggested these were present during the early childhood years of the life-course group. The qualitative analysis showed a strong trend towards more prolonged exposure to crime and earlier contact with the law in the life-course offender group compared with the adolescent-limited delinquent group.

2.15 Peer Relationships

It was hypothesised that the life-course offender group had markedly poorer peer relationships than did the adolescent-limited offender group. In particular, it was hypothesised that they associated more with groups whose prime activity was antisocial in nature; interacted with peers at a lower level of Selman’s friendship stages and; experienced poorer quality peer relationships.

Early childhood peer relationships were not accessed well in the study. Subjects themselves could not provide insight into these early relationships, and third party information was sparse. However, the life-story analysis in chapter 6 provided some sound information of subjects’ peer relationships in adolescence, and their present understanding of friendship. These findings supported Moffitt’s tenet that life-course offenders fail to develop adaptive peer relationships, while this is not the case with adolescent-limited offenders. Significant differences were found between the groups as regards their peer group associations in adolescence. Life-course offenders only had antisocial friends. While the adolescent-limited delinquents participated in antisocial groups, they also engaged in prosocial peer group relationships. Significant group differences were also found on the quality of peer relationships, with the life-course group describing shorter duration and more conflicted

relationships. There was no significant difference in the groups' positioning on the in-depth quality of their friendships, according to Selman's friendship stages. However, the trend in the qualitative analysis of category supported this research hypothesis. Friendships in the life-course group were predominantly self serving. While those of the adolescent-limited group contained a similar self serving element, many extended beyond this function to mutually reciprocal relationships.

2.16 Moral development

Moral development, covered in chapter 8, is a complex variable and produced many categories across which the groups were compared. It was hypothesised that the life-course offender group lagged markedly in their moral development, relative to the adolescent-limited group. In particular, it was hypothesised that they described fewer incidents of moral behaviour; functioned at higher levels of moral reasoning; had fewer moral values; experienced fewer of the early parent variables associated with moral behaviour; experienced less community cohesion and came from communities with fewer values; showed fewer altruistic inclinations and; had a more externalised locus of control.

While some group comparisons of the moral categories assessed failed to generate differences, overall, some steady group differences emerged. Strongest of these were the significant differences on moral reasoning, values and locus of control. The life-course, as compared with the adolescent-limited group, reasoned at a lower level of Kohlberg's moral reasoning stages, had a more limited set of moral values, and were strongly influenced by an external locus of control, while the adolescent-limited group's behaviour was influenced by an internal locus of control. Qualitative trends on other variables also supported the moral hypotheses. Group differences in the expected direction emerged on moral behaviour, community prosocial values and altruism. These were modest, possibly due to the limited data in each category.

The analysis revealed three aspects of moral development which were at odds with the literature on the association between moral development and antisocial behaviour. These discrepancies related to cultural and social factors specific to the research groups. The first of these was community cohesion. The literature identifies a link between unified community moral beliefs and practices, and moral behaviour. No group differences emerged due most likely to the fact that the communities of both groups in their youth were beset with violence in the form of faction fighting and gangsterism. Family responsibilities assigned to the child is also linked in the literature to positive moral development. This variable did not discriminate between the groups in the study. Most Zulu participants in both groups had many obligatory chores to complete which failed to enhance their sense of personal responsibility. The third discrepant finding related to a cultural influence antithetical to the expected association between inductive parenting and moral development.

2.17 Self-esteem

It was hypothesised that there were differences in self-esteem between the life-course and adolescent-limited offender groups. In particular, it was hypothesised that the former group showed a more inflated, brittle self-esteem or alternately a more vulnerable, depressed self-esteem; and lower self-esteem on sub-elements of global self-esteem.

The text analysis, presented in chapter 9, found no significant group differences. This finding was not regarded as conclusive due to some reliability and validity problems relating to the assessment of self-esteem in the study. These were in line with similar difficulties raised in the literature regarding the measurement of self-esteem in general. The need for a more focussed study of the relationship between self-esteem and chronic offending in the target population was noted.

Despite the above proviso, there were some strong qualitative trends that supported the literature linking problems with self-esteem and a life-course offending trajectory. These trends also supported current thinking that self-esteem is made up of component parts rather than being a global entity. The life-course offender group stories portrayed much lower self-esteem as regards *social and general esteem* than those of the adolescent-limited offenders. Varying results emerged for *personal esteem* (involving the most central of all self beliefs), but the life-course group were consistently lower on this when personal esteem was measured in

terms of a consistent view of self throughout a story. The data also commented on the debate in the literature as to whether chronic aggression is fuelled by a brittle, inflated esteem, or by a persistently low esteem. The results suggested both these explanations apply and are a function of the kind of component self-esteem with which they are associated.

2.2 Environmental Factors

2.21 Socio-economic Status

The literature shows socio-economic status as a moderating rather than causative factor in a life-course offending developmental pathway, via its impact on parenting style. Life-story data suggested informally that the present study supported the literature, in so far as most subjects from both research groups came from impoverished, lower socio-economic groups. The Socio-economic Questionnaire, shaped particularly to evaluate the socio-economic status of the target, semi-rural subjects' families, confirmed this result, as there was no significant differences between the groups on this measure.

2.22 Early parenting and family interactions

It was hypothesised that the life-course offender group experienced markedly poorer quality early parenting and family relationships than did the adolescent-limited offender group. In particular, it was hypothesised that that they experienced harsher, more inconsistent discipline; had colder, more rejecting early caregivers; experienced more limited parental vigilance; experienced poorer family communication and higher levels of family conflict and; had "unstable" family compositions (e.g. "single parent" family).

Parenting, and more generally, family dynamics, are key environmental factors in a life-course offending developmental trajectory in Moffitt's taxonomy. This was strongly confirmed in the present study, with some interesting exceptions. In line with the literature, significant group differences, in the expected directions, occurred for the subcodes, parenting style, parental vigilance, family dynamics and single parent families. The results of the present study differed slightly from Moffitt's findings as regards harshness of discipline and parental affect in parenting style, for the Zulu subjects. Discrepancies also occurred in the impact of an inductive parenting style.

Parenting Style: While Moffitt and other researchers working in a Western context found harshness in discipline and cold rejecting parental affect also associated with chronic aggression, no differences were recorded on these categories between the research groups. This discrepancy appeared to arise from cultural practices in the traditional family backgrounds of the Zulu subjects. A difference was recorded, in the expected direction on these parental categories between the Coloured subgroups of each research group. Of additional interest and relating to the harshness category of discipline, was the trend in the qualitative findings that, while both groups described equally "harsh" discipline, the life-course subjects frequently saw this as being "unfair". This led to the argument in this thesis that the active ingredient in the "harshness" variable in predicting a life-course trajectory is not harshness as such, but the child's perception that consequences for his misdemeanours are unfair. The adolescent-limited group, who experienced similar stringent consequences for their negative behaviour, perceived parental discipline as consistent and "fair".

Almost no reference was made by any subject in either research group to the use of inductive reasoning in parental discipline. An inductive parenting style is associated in the literature with the development of empathy and moral behaviour in the child. It was concluded that this discrepancy too was a function of the moderating influence of the Zulu traditional background of most subjects, as well as of the lower socio-economic status of the Coloured subjects.

Parental Vigilance: Significant group differences emerged in the results on parental "watchfulness", with the adolescent-limited group perceiving their caregivers as keeping a better check on their early antisocial behaviours. This result complements evidence in the literature that parental vigilance is a restraining factor in those at risk for antisocial behaviour. Granic & Patterson (2006) and Moffitt (1993) found that parents of

persistently antisocial children tended to back off from their disciplinary role as the young child became increasingly confrontational.

Family Elements: There were significant group differences in family dynamics, supporting Moffitt's tenet that the families of life-course offenders contain poorer communications patterns and higher levels of conflict and aggression. The association by Moffitt and others that single parent status is related to a life-course pattern was also supported by the results. According to the literature, this relationship arises through the moderating influence of the single parent status on parenting style. This feature was utilised in the redefinition of the concept "single and dual parent families" to "divided and whole families", to cater for the extended family constellation typical in traditional Zulu (and other African) communities.

Figures 27 and 28 below depict the overview of the results presented in this chapter, relative to the key variables in Moffitt's taxonomy. The size of the segments of the chart reflects the relative strength of each variable in terms of its discriminating ability between the research groups and does not necessarily equate with the centrality given to any one variable in Moffitt's taxonomy. The segment sizes are also not in true "mathematical" proportions to one another. The range of measures used to assess each research variable (qualitative statements and/or stories; quantitative measures) made it unfeasible to devise such a mathematical correct pictorial comparison.

Figure 27. *Moffitt's Key Variables*

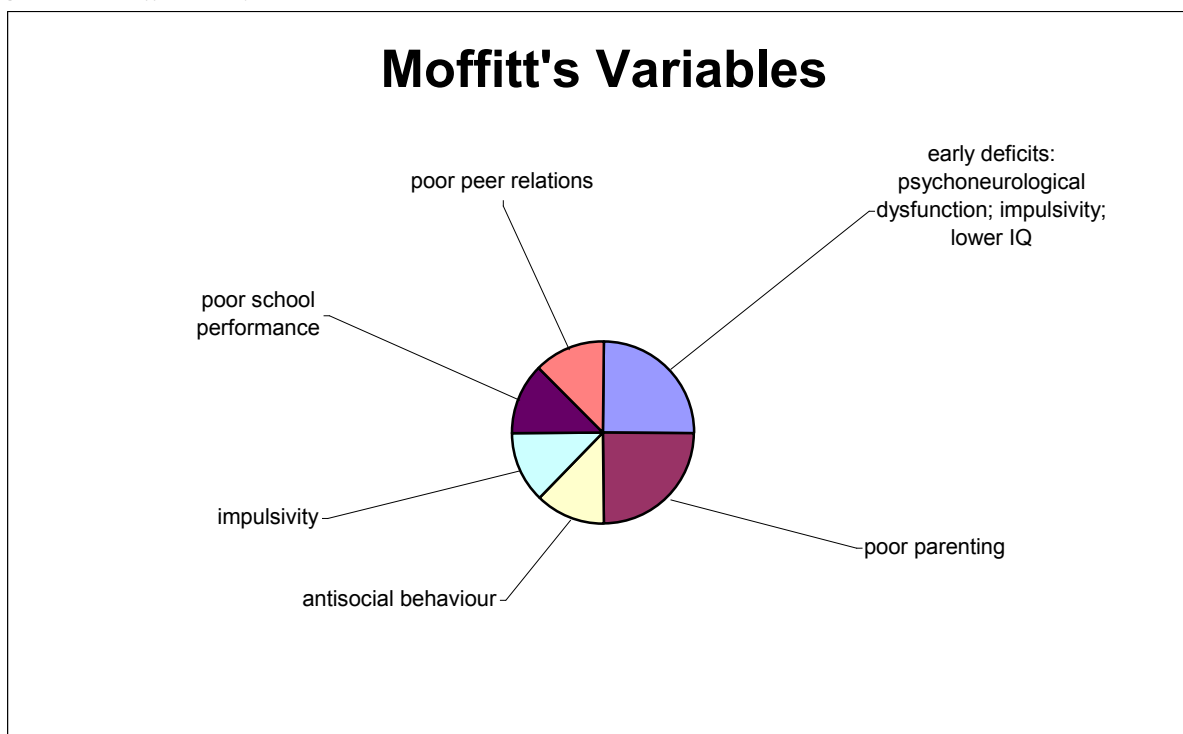


Figure 27 is a simplistic representation of the key variables that discriminated between Moffitt's life-course and adolescent-limited offenders. Early deficits, which refer to psychoneurological dysfunction, an impulsive, easily frustrated temperament, poor attention span and minor cognitive impairments, are child risk factors. Poor parenting is the major environmental risk factor. These two segments occupy the major part of the chart, on the right hand side. Arising from the interaction of these child and environmental risk factors is the downward spiral of the child's antisocial behaviour as it develops. This is represented by the variables filling the left hand side of the pie chart. Continued impulsivity, increasingly aggressive antisocial behaviour, poor scholastic performance and poor peer relationships are features of this pathway.

Figure 28 *Group Differences on Moffitt's and Other Variables*

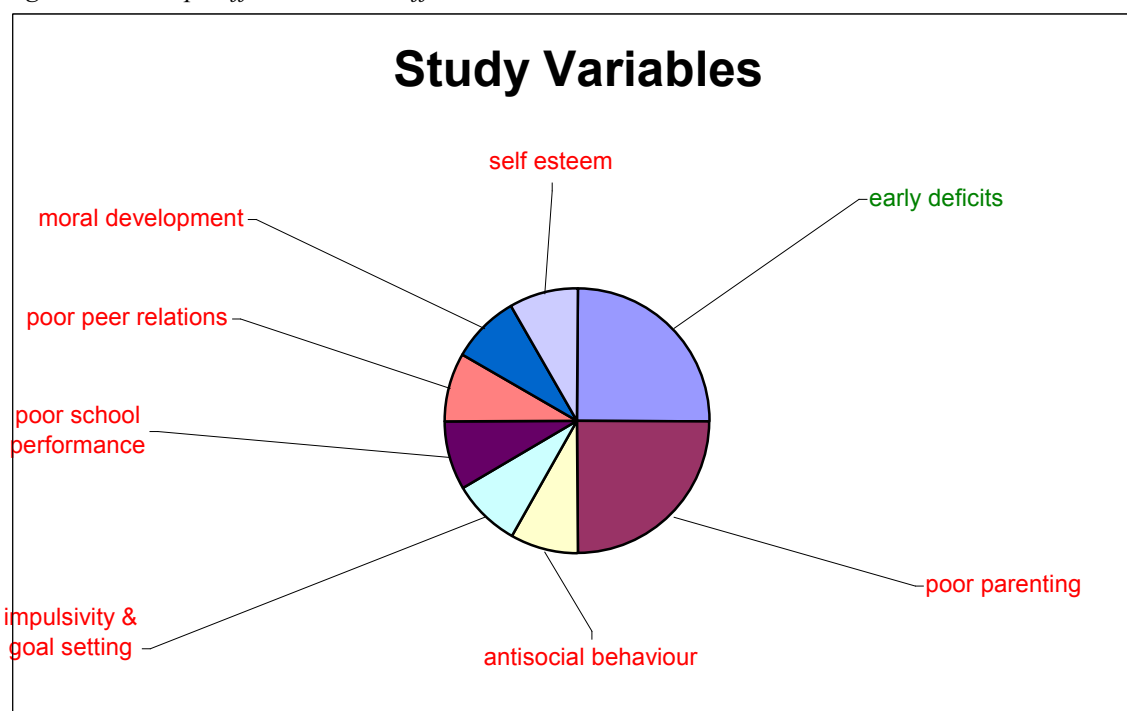


Figure 28 is a simplistic representation of Moffitt's variables plus the three additional measures made in the present study. Those labels coloured in red denote variables where group differences were found, some of these more marked than others. Those coloured in green denote variables which could not be adequately assessed. Again, the early interactive child and environmental variables take up the right hand segment of the chart, with those arising from this early interaction appearing on the left hand side of the diagram. When shown pictorially it becomes clear that most of Moffitt's taxonomic differences between the two types of offenders were supported in the present research, as were the hypotheses associated with the additional research variables, namely, goal setting, moral development and self-esteem. The outstanding omission in these results is the absence of evidence of psychoneurological dysfunction, early impulsivity, conduct disorders and cognitive impairment (falling into the "early deficits" segment). The former three aspects could not be measured. There were no group differences as regards cognitive ability, although this result bears re-assessment with a verbal measure of cognitive function.

3. *A Social Learning Explanation for the Study Findings*

The literature review in chapter 1 described a number of theoretical frameworks that explain a life-course offending pathway. These included psychoanalytic, cognitive and social learning explanations. The dominant explanation supported today, by Moffitt and others in her field, such as Colvin and Patterson, is that of social learning.

It now remains to decide whether the findings in the present study are compatible with a social learning framework. As argued in chapter 1, social learning best explains the processes whereby the at risk child, reared in Moffitt's criminogenic environment, develops a chronic antisocial lifestyle. In particular, Moffitt's explanation of the vulnerable child's response to the ineffective and maladaptive parenting of his early caregivers reflects social learning principles. The literature review also suggested that a social learning framework best accounted for other features associated with chronic antisocial behaviour, such as poor self-control, retarded moral development and maladaptive peer relationships.

The recent and comprehensive research of Gerald Patterson and his colleagues does not wholly support this conclusion (Granic and Patterson, 2006). Patterson criticised purely social learning explanations of chronic antisocial behaviour, as inadequately accounting for the systems theory principles that governed interactive theories such as that of Moffitt. He maintained that while such explanations dealt with developmental risk factors at a macro level, they were sketchy on the real time processes that accounted for the roll out of these risk factors over time. Explanations of chronic antisocial behaviour based only on social learning principles did not explain well the interaction of real time processes, such as operant learning, with developmental risk factors, such as inadequate parenting skills (see chapter 1, section 3). However, as the main aim of the present study was to test the applicability of Moffitt's taxonomy in a developing, semi rural South African population, it was beyond the scope and capacity⁸⁹ of this research to assess the applicability of Granic and Patterson's (2006) systems theory framework in the present research sample.

The question remains as to whether the results complement a social learning explanation of chronic antisocial behaviour. The contention is that this is the case. This conclusion derives primarily from the discriminating strength of the parenting variable in the present study. Differences in parenting style emerged as one of the strongest discriminators between the research groups, both in statistical terms and due to the large amount of qualitative data produced around parenting in each life-story. These early experiences clearly were very important to most subjects. The adjunct to this point is that the *impact of parenting on the child's development is understood in the psychological literature today to occur primarily through social learning principles*.

This strong impact of early parenting on the participants in the present study also links a social learning explanation to the impact of the other developmental variables, associated with a life-course pathway, that also discriminated between the groups in this study. These included poor peer relations, impulsivity, an external locus of control, fragile self-esteem, all of which are associated in the literature with *early maladaptive parenting*, in the vulnerable child.

4. The Tapestry Motif

Throughout this dissertation a tapestry metaphor has been used to represent the research process. This metaphor served to highlight the many strands of investigation that were followed in the attempt to prove the key research hypothesis, namely, that Moffitt's taxonomy applies equally well to subjects from disadvantaged backgrounds in a developing country as it does to those in developed Western research populations.

The tapestry metaphor continues to serve an effective purpose in this general discussion of the research results. The overview in section 2 above of the results across the range of variables investigated in the research leads to the contention that the "completed tapestry" indeed bears the likeness of the picture it was intended to represent. Sections of the results on their own are open to the criticisms traditionally levelled at qualitative studies that "go beyond themselves" in attempting to draw quasi-quantitative conclusions (i.e. in the comparison of two research populations). However, *the sum of all the findings* creates a picture that supports the main research hypothesis. Beginning with the seminal risk factors of Moffitt's taxonomy, the central character in this picture is undoubtedly poor parenting. Its status arises from the combination of its key influence on chronic antisocial behaviour shown in the literature, and the strength of group differences on this variable that emerged in the present study. While early deficits should by rights be represented as an equally dominant character in the tapestry, this is not the case. While improved research using a *similar retrospective design* could never generate such a strong finding, a clear character on the sideline of the picture – in support or rejection of this cardinal feature of Moffitt's taxonomy, would be anticipated. The remaining variables in Moffitt's taxonomy, depicted in Figure 27, might represent small groupings of clear defined activity on our tapestry. These are the positions earned by the outcomes of the data analyses showing the relatively poorer school performance, greater and more extended antisocial behaviour, maladaptive peer relationships and

⁸⁹ Granic and Patterson (2006) used behavioural observation methods to draw their conclusions while the present research relied on the life-story tool.

continued impulsivity of the life-course group in this study, relative to their adolescent-limited counterparts. Turning to Figure 28, the input of the goal setting and moral development variables are analogous to background scenes in the tapestry, that contextualise and give depth to the foreground characters. The self-esteem variable is presented by a small character, somewhat hazy and off centre in the tapestry. It promises a story that is yet to be fully unfolded.

This summing up of the research findings has taken a somewhat prosaic note, at odds with the systematic effort made throughout the study to provide results that are both reliable and valid. The reader is reminded that the necessary attention to this latter “scientific” approach, central if the study is to have any future applied value, is given in the preceding chapters, in particular the methods and results chapters. The richness of the tapestry metaphor is an apposite and informative way of portraying the overall impact of the research findings and how these, to a great extent, strongly support both the main, second and third level research hypotheses of this research, presented in chapter 2.

5. Future Testing Moffitt’s Theory in a South African Context

The following chapter looks briefly at the potential of the present research findings to generate much needed intervention to counteract, in the longer term, persistent crime in South Africa. Before turning to these programmes, the need for future research to further empirically test Moffitt’s taxonomy must be stressed. Such work should draw on the findings of the present study and extend these. There are three major fields where further research into Moffitt’s theory would be fruitful. Some of these relate to the current new research directions taken by Moffitt and her colleagues, others relate to areas poorly covered by Moffitt’s research.

- i. Moffitt and her colleagues currently are concentrating on neurological features that are linked on the development of persistent, violent behaviours (e.g. Ishikawa, S. & Raine, A., 2003). The presence of similar links in a South African sample needs to be investigated.
 - ii. Moffitt’s (1993) taxonomy provides a developmental explanation for two major kinds of delinquent behaviour. However, it is more sketchy on the real time processes that underpin the roll out of these risk factors over time, failing to explain the interaction of real time processes, such as social learning, with developmental risk factors (Granic & Patterson, 2006). Research into this process on mother/child and peer dyads, using Granic and Patterson’s dynamic systems model, would be valuable in a South African study.
 - iii. Independent research around Moffitt’s original theory identified an additional offender group that demonstrating child onset antisocial behaviour but no serious delinquency in adulthood Moffitt (2003). This group was characterised by a history of intermittent low level chronic offending. Moffitt noted the need for further research into this kind of delinquency, which could be conducted on a South African sample.
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CHAPTER 12. INTERVENTION PROGRAMS GENERATED BY THE RESEARCH

OVERVIEW

This chapter briefly reviews the literature on intervention programs that target problem children and raises the possibility of a local pilot intervention.

1. Introduction

The research findings of this study supported the hypothesis that Moffitt's taxonomy has relevance in a developing, semi rural South African population. This support was indirect in so far as the presence of psychoneurological deficits, a difficult temperament and conduct disorders in the infant and childhood phases of the life-course research group could not be proved. Fortunately, the robustness of the results did not depend on this information but on support for Moffitt's taxonomy arising from the evidence of many variables. Any one of these alone would have been insufficient proof that her theory applied in the present research population. Together, the likelihood of the sum of the supporting results on all these factors occurring by chance was very low. It was this overall effect, or "tapestry" that led to the conclusion that the present study validated the key research hypothesis. This conclusion was bolstered by the sound reliability and validity features of the research.

The study suggests that it is likely a number of the violent recidivist criminals in South African prisons have followed Moffitt's life-course developmental pathway. In the light of the current pressing problem of violent crime in South Africa, it is felt that the outcome of this modest research carries sufficient weight to generate a pilot intervention project underpinned by the tenets of Moffitt's taxonomy, with children at risk for recidivist crime.

In this chapter the implications of the research findings are translated into the principles that would guide such a pilot intervention. Rather than reinventing the wheel, the successes and failures of extant intervention projects elsewhere are also taken into account.

This chapter consists of two sections. This first is a review of the relevant intervention literature, and the second, suggestions for a local pilot intervention program.

2. Review of The Literature

Unlike the literary review covering research relevant to the main topic of the study, this review of the intervention literature is not exhaustive. It is based on reviews of intervention programs, rather than reports emanating directly from the programs themselves, and tracks the trends in these over time. Most of the intervention reviewed has occurred in developed countries. This reflects the fact that intervention is costly and usually generated by relatively wealthy government and quasi-government bodies.

Before engaging in the literature review, the frame of reference of the present discussion needs to be established. The review excludes interventions that take place after a youth has had his first brush with the law. In particular, these programs already operating in South Africa are not covered. This omission does not imply that such programs are of no value. Indeed, their aim to avoid contact between first offenders and the South African prison environment is laudable, as is their focus on "restorative justice" (Batley, 2004; Muntigh & Shapiro, 1997). The exclusion of this kind of intervention from the present review arises from the support given by the present study for Moffitt's taxonomy. This reinforces Moffitt's assertion that, for those who are likely to perpetrate the most violent and repeated crimes, intervention of any sort has significantly less chance of success once these individuals have developed an established pattern of antisocial behaviour, an event that takes place some time during adolescence. Restorative justice intervention is of primary value to the

adolescent-limited offender, reducing the likelihood of his becoming trapped in a cycle of crime. This cycle is perpetuated by exposure to criminal role models in jail, reduced employment opportunities due to a criminal record, and potential personal damage from the prison experience.⁹⁰ While these factors also promote the life-course offender's progress along this cycle, he is "trapped" in this already, even before he encounters prison.

Intervention programs to deflect serious adolescent delinquency have taken place across a range of contexts and involved several strategies. These include family, school and community based programs, whose methods vary from group social activities to behavioural-cognitive skills promotion methods. Meta-analyses of intervention programs have had difficulty assessing their efficacy, due to the varying frames of reference of each program (Gordon & Arbuthnot, 1987; Quay, 1987b). In particular, most programs fail to differentiate between the treatment requirements of early versus adolescent onset delinquency.

Intervention programs are divided into two broad types: group based and family based programs. The efficacy of group based programs has been especially difficult to measure, according to Gordon and Arbuthnot (1987). Thus, the poor comparable success rate of some of these may be due to differences in their parameters rather than failed intervention. Overall, the literature suggests that the combined parent and child early intervention approach taken in some family programs, rather than programs concentrating on child or youth groups only, have the most durable and consistent success rate.

2.1 Group Intervention Programs

These have been fairly successful in terms of the positive association between broad perspective taking (both interpersonal and sociomoral) developmental programs and improved behaviour and reduced recidivism (Gordon & Arbuthnot, 1987). These programs are not ideal for Moffitt's life-course offender as they assume participants have sound (if undeveloped) reasoning and perspective taking skills. It is questionable whether Moffitt's life-course individual, with his minor cognitive deficits and early lack of empathic skills, would best use of such programs. Despite these qualifications, many of the goals of group intervention dovetail with the social deficits of Moffitt's at risk child, and have the potential to be achieved in this subgroup with the addition of a social learning aspect to the program. There have been some encouraging recent results using behavioural-cognitive intervention on young adolescents, who fit the life-course offender mould, but who received no earlier intervention. Researchers at the Institute of Psychiatry in London currently are targeting aggressive adolescents in London schools, in particular those in special institutions who have been excluded from the standard educational system. Short cognitive-behavioural courses are being tried out here and the first results have been encouraging (Rose, 2006).

The following section outlines the main strategies used in group intervention programs.

Social Skills Training Programs: These help the child develop strategies to cope with interpersonal difficulties more effectively. They concentrate on modelling problem solving techniques in social situations, and use inductive reasoning strategies to create links between the role-plays and participants' increased insight. While some studies have reported a modest success rate (change present over three years after the intervention), many found that the skills learned were not maintained, or not generalised across situations. However, the technique remains relevant to programs aborting chronic antisocial behaviour, as it targets the particular difficulty the potential life-course has in resolving interpersonal problems in a sociable and effective manner.

The term *coaching* is used to describe the strategies used by some social skills programs to improve children's interpersonal skills (Asher & Renshaw, 1981). These specific skills training programs do not necessarily target potential chronically aggressive children, but their intervention principles are relevant to these individuals. As with other social skills programs, coaching aims to enhance the child's competency in its interpersonal relationships. It uses cognitive strategies and is based on the principle that even very young children can be taught social skills by adults. It works on the assumption that children are able to modify their interpersonal behaviour as a function of their knowledge of general interpersonal relationship principles, and that they have the capacity to translate this knowledge into effective action outside the coaching situation.

⁹⁰ For example, it is an established fact that HIV/AIDS is rife in most South African prison populations.

Less popular children are taught to give and receive positive interactions; how to make friends and how to be adequate listeners. As with other cognitive strategies, coaching programs report mixed success (Asher, 1981). An important general point raised by Asher and relevant to intervention arising from the present research, is that social skills programs should contain *age appropriate* interpersonal relationship training, as this varies according to the child's social-cognitive maturity (Selman, 1980, 1981).

Impulsivity Control and Anger Management: These programs used role modelling and the rehearsal of cognitive strategies to control impulsivity and anger in problem situations. The individual "thinks aloud" about the problem and how to approach it. Anger management is a particular aspect of impulsive control used in intervention with chronically aggressive youth. Techniques to manage anger include skills coaching to identify non-hostile cues that might be misinterpreted as hostile, anger control techniques, and generating non aggressive solutions to conflict (Shaffer, 2000). The importance of impulse control and anger management was highlighted by a recent longitudinal study with problem adolescents (Cooper et al., 2003). This underlined the importance of improved impulse control to reduce antisocial behaviour. Adolescents and children were taught how to manage impulsive anger by recognising their own impending anger (e.g. in response to provocation). They also selected and practiced cognitive strategies to use when this occurred.

Role Taking: This strategy is based on the idea that chronic antisocial behaviour is linked to the individual's inability to take the perspective of others, which results in misread social expectations and the misinterpretation of the actions of others. It ties in with the literature on moral development showing that the ability to take the perspective of others is required for socially concerned behaviour. While this is an important intervention goal, these programs concentrate on a cognitive rather than emotional understanding of others, and are not especially effective, according to Gordon and Arbuthnot (1987).

Sociomoral Reasoning: Some group strategies aim to develop the child's level of moral reasoning (Gibbs & Widaman, 1982). This is done by using guided dilemma discussions and related techniques such as role-play, to evoke cognitive disequilibrium, and then exposing the individual to a higher level of moral reasoning stage. As shown in the literature and in the current study, this approach is limited, as changes in moral reasoning are not necessarily equated with increased moral behaviour.

Social Learning Strategies: Some group programs include behavioural skills training in addition to cognitive strategies to reduce impulsive and aggressive behaviour. This is an effective combination. Tremblay, Pagini-Kurtz, Masse, Vitaro, & Phil (1995) trained 7-9 year old disruptive children in social skills and impulse control. Coaching, peer modelling, role-play and reinforcement contingencies were used in small group sessions dealing with topics such as: "how to help; what to do when angry" and "how to deal with teasing". Parents were also involved in parent management training. A follow-up at 12 years of age found that the experimental group committed less burglary, and were less likely to get drunk and to fight than were controls. Group differences increased in a subsequent follow-up until 15 years of age.

Schools based programs.

A subset of group intervention programs are those that are schools based. In intervening with Moffitt's potential life-course offenders, the distinction between schools programs aimed at juvenile delinquents in general and those targeting early onset antisocial behaviour, becomes particularly important. High school youth programs are examples of the former kind of intervention. As an example of these, Mahoney (2000) found that participation in extracurricular school activities was associated with reduced rates of early school dropout and criminal arrest in high school pupils. However, the rate of decline in antisocial behaviour depended largely on whether the individual's social network also participated in these activities. The literature suggests this strategy is unlikely to be effective with Moffitt's life-course delinquents (Patterson et al., 1989), who associate only with antisocial peers (a finding supported in the current study) and who also are unlikely to have sufficiently close relationships with their social group to be motivated to change their behaviour even if these took part in prosocial activities. Such an individual is likely to drop out of the program and look for new antisocial peers with whom to engage. Patterson et al. found that at best, intervention with chronically

aggressive youngsters during adolescence, produced short term effects that were lost about a year after treatment.

Pre-adolescent school based intervention is more promising for the potential life-course offender. Those that begin at a pre-school level are especially relevant as they target at risk children at an early age. The follow-up of the Perry Ypsilanti Head Start project for disadvantaged young children found that at 27 years of age, the experimental group had accumulated only half the arrests, and were more financially secure, than the controls (Farrington, 2002). While Head Start and other early learning programs do not specifically target aggressive children vulnerable to a life-course offending pathway, they address some of the needs of this group by improving school performance, concentration and socialisation skills.

Primary school intervention programs are also in line with Moffitt's taxonomy, as the child's antisocial behaviour is still open to change. Hawkins and colleagues ran successful school based prevention programs for six year old school children that involved parent and teacher training, and child skills training (Hawkins et al., 1991; Kolvin et al., 1981, cited in Farrington, 2002). These programs primarily involved behaviour techniques taught to parents and teachers, but also trained children in cognitive interpersonal problem solving strategies. Farrington's review of follow-up studies of the Hawkins Seattle Social Development project showed that 18 months later boys in the experimental group demonstrated significantly less aggression than those in the control group. At 11, the experimental group children were less likely to have initiated delinquency and substance abuse. Similar findings were reported for low income children in this project at 12 years of age. At 18, the children who had received continued intervention from grades 1-6 reported behaving in less violent ways, less alcohol abuse and fewer sexual partners, than the controls. Some school based interventions target bullying, a particular antisocial behaviour of young children. A good example of these are the Norwegian schools based programs of Olweus (1994).

School based programs that include behavioural change strategies seem more effective than those that concentrate on cognitive strategies alone. An example of the latter is Skroban's school based social competency intervention that used cognitive-behavioural strategies to promote social competency amongst troubled young school children (Skroban, Gottfredson, & Gottfredson, 1999). While a five year follow-up did not find Skroban et al.'s intervention to be effective, the program provides a good example of a multi-strategy intervention. The aims of this ambitious program included teaching troubled children to encode relevant social cues, accurately interpret these, generate effective solutions to interpersonal problems, anticipate realistically the consequences of actions, translate social decisions into effective behaviour, and express a positive sense of self-efficacy. Skroban et al. maintained that these skills could be learned by children in early primary school and that they led to improved problem solving, better school adjustment and peer acceptance in troubled children.

2.2 Family Based Intervention

Three approaches to family intervention have received positive support in the literature, and are reviewed below. Parent skills training, an intervention based on social learning skills, has reported favourable results (e.g. Patterson et al., 1989). Behavioural systems family therapy has also shown promise (Gordon, 2002; Gordon & Arbutnot, 1987). A combination of behavioural parent training and family skills training has been the most effective (Kumpfer & Alverado, 2003).

Parent skills training.

These programs shape parents' interactions with their child through social learning principles. Parents are important behaviour change agents who must be taken into consideration in any proposed intervention.⁹¹ Parent training programs to abort a life-course offending trajectory have to date continued to provide positive results and have the support of recognised bodies such as the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in the United Kingdom. Scott, who has worked extensively in this intervention field (e.g. Woolgar

⁹¹ Parent training intervention principles have also shaped parent effectiveness training programs, which do not necessarily target parents of potential life-course offenders (e.g. the STEP parent training program).

& Scott, 2005) found that rigorous behavioural intervention, administered to groups over a period of three months, was optimally effective (Scott, cited in Rose, 2006). Less intensive follow-up then maintained the intervention effects.

The work of Gerald Patterson at the Oregon Learning Centre, based on the link found between early child non-compliance and subsequent long term antisocial behaviour, is the prototype of parent training intervention (Chamberlain & Patterson, 1995; Kalb & Loeber, 2003). Training parents of young antisocial children in behavioural management techniques has produced some encouraging results. However, Patterson concluded that such programs were not always successful and that a combination of parent training and teaching the child academic and social relations skills was most effective (Patterson et al., 1989).

The combined parent-child approach recommended by Patterson et al. is in line with the interactive nature of the life-course developmental sequence. It aims to interrupt the pattern of aversive behaviours between child and caregiver. Temperamentally difficult children are reinforced for their coercive behaviour by parents' inept responses to this. The child in turn reinforces parent coercion by a temporary cessation of negative behaviour. If this pattern is not broken, the child learns to control others through coercion, and this becomes his relationship pattern of choice. Strategies to change this pattern include behavioural contracts, time-out to reduce antagonism in a situation, consistent reinforcement of positive child behaviour and consistent but relevant punishment of antisocial behaviour.

Systems and non behavioural approaches.

These intervention strategies are essentially family therapeutic methods that improve family communication skills. The efficacy of these programs in reducing chronic child antisocial behaviours has been poorly reviewed. They are less feasible for intervention with low socio-economic families who often can not afford the time to attend such intervention as a group.

Behavioural systems family therapy.

This strategy combines the parent and family therapy techniques outlined above. The therapist assesses behavioural sequences in the family to identify interpersonal payoffs, re-labels these sequences so as to cause a change in attribution and perspective in the family, and then gives instructions appropriate to the skills deficiencies in the family (e.g. limit setting; reinforcement). A review of research into intervention of child conduct disorders showed that such combined parent training and family involvement was the most effective (Gordon, 2002). Behavioural family therapy has had promising outcomes, but again is limited to families with capacity to engage as a group in family therapy. This excludes many target group families associated with the present study.

2.3 The Principles of Effective Intervention

The preceding overview of existing intervention strategies to abort life-course delinquency leads to the conclusion that many of the older programs were cognitively based and as such, not best suited for the semi-rural, lower socio economic population associated with the present research. For this latter group, a social learning, action based programs would be more effective. According to the literature review, most effective intervention programs are those that

- * arise from a research based risk and protective factor framework
- * involve families, peers, schools and communities as partners
- * target multiple outcomes

Within this framework, *early parent* intervention programs *combined* with *child intervention* appear to be the most cost-effective combination. While parent training alone is effective, as shown by the work of Patterson, these effects often do not generalise to school, nor do they influence the child's ability to make friends – both key areas where chronic antisocial behaviour patterns become entrenched (Woolgar & Scott, 2005). The multiple intervention approach recommended by reviews of extant intervention compliments the complex, interactive ("systems" based) developmental trajectory of life-course offending (Granic & Patterson, 2006). This approach also supports the ecosystems theoretical understanding of development, which supplements

systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Wandersman & Florin, 2003; Woolgar & Scott, 2005).

The points below summarise other key central elements of effective intervention programs according to the literature (Farrington, 2002; Greenberg et al., 2003; Kumpfer & Alverado, 2003; Nation et al., 2003; Weissburg, Kumpfer, & Seligman, 2003). These programs have the following five features:

1. They are long term, age specific and culturally appropriate.
2. They foster healthy development by teaching children to apply socio-emotional skills and moral values in daily life. This is achieved by using diverse interactive methods, such as role-play, modelling, and applied practice that creates opportunities for these children to use these new skills in their every day lives.
3. They aim to establish policies, institutional practices and environmental supports that nurture optimal development. Families, civic organisations and communities should be engaged to support these. Given the damaging effect of recidivist crime on a population's economic, physical and emotional well being (as is all too frequently noted in South Africa), substantial investment in early intervention programs for aggressive children is potentially very cost-effective. The development of such policies is not without problems. The furore created in the United Kingdom around Terrie Moffitt's taxonomy is ample evidence of this. Her views have been attacked at "genetic fundamentalism" and deterministic (Rose, 2006). On a more practical note, Woolgar and Scott (2005) observe that breakdowns in the effectiveness of intervention with antisocial children also occurs in their application to real life situations, due to policy makers and officials who remain unaware that effective programs exist, to poor adherence to the model if a program is implemented, and to inadequate development of therapist/trainer skills.
4. They select, train and supports interpersonally skilled staff to implement the programs.
5. They incorporate and adapt evidence-based programs to meet local community needs through planning and ongoing evaluative interactions with communities. Not only must ongoing programs be evaluated in terms of community needs, they should also be subject to a cost-benefit analysis so as not to waste resources. An appropriate experimental design is required to facilitate this. Woolgar and Scott (2005) provide an interesting review of intervention studies to determine the most cost-effective mix of various treatment settings (e.g. school, home) and of program duration. They found that parent treatment and child intervention together, especially if the child is school going, was the most cost-effective combination. They observed that long term intensive intervention can be burdensome on the family- a problem predicted for intervention in the current target population. Woolgar & Scott cite programs that offer workable shorter term intervention, although these would be more appropriate for families in a developed world environment (e.g. videotapes were used). In general, programs that provide the best long term benefits are those combining an early intensive period combined with periodic booster programs (Nation et al., 2003).

Woolgar and Scott's (2005) findings are echoed in another recent review of effective intervention in the prevention of delinquency (Nation et al., 2003) that concluded that a multiple intervention approach across a range of settings (school, home, community) and over the child's developing years (pre-school temper tantrum; bullying and petty theft in primary school; truanting in senior primary, and so on), was most effective. Varied intervention methods were also more effective than reliance on one strategy (e.g. only social learning or cognitive techniques). Within this variety, active programs that contained skills based components that directly increased participants' skills were more effective than programs that were reliant on information, knowledge and group discussion (features of cognitive intervention programs). The review emphasised the importance of matching the nature of the program to the developmental needs of its participants. As mentioned in relation to coaching earlier, these needs change in line with the developing maturity of the child.

The child is more receptive to certain intervention strategies at one stage rather than the others.⁹² Finally the review highlighted the importance of the intervention being sensitive to the cultural needs of the participants.

3. Principles of Intervention in the Target Population

The specific recommendations below for a pilot intervention program arising from the findings of the current study and are informed by the principles of effect intervention outlined in 1.3 above.

3.1 Ethical Considerations

The most “needy” target group.

Although this tenet was not specifically addressed in 1.3, it was implied by the importance placed on joint planning and evaluation of proposed intervention, with the community concerned. In chapter 3, section 7, one ethical principles guiding the present research was its value to society. The dissemination of the information arising from the present study to relevant bodies and individuals was identified as one way of achieving this. A pilot intervention program in a participating community would be another. Ethically, this should target the most “needy” section of the target groups involved in the research. When *accessibility* is also taken into account, the Nchanga community best fits this criterion. The majority of non-prisoner subjects were sourced in Nchanga, which is about 35 kilometres from the city of Durban and is an extremely poor area with a high unemployment rate. All 10 of the young adult Nchanga subjects were unemployed, despite many having obtained matriculation. Many families in the surrounding “Valley of 1000 Hills” vicinity lack basic amenities such as piped water and electricity. The district also has one of the highest reported HIV/AIDS rates in the province of Kwazulu-Natal. Aside from formal statistics about the country wide high crime rate, anecdotal evidence obtained in discussion with community leaders describes a worrying amount of crime, with young criminals preying on the local community.

The early predictors of a life-course developmental trajectory make up the second group of criteria in selecting a target intervention group. Unlike Head Start early intervention programs which target all young children in a selected disadvantaged community, the proposed intervention would target only those pre-school or junior school children who have come to the attention of their teachers due to their antisocial, bullying and otherwise difficult, behaviours. Slow learners, children whose main difficulty is one of concentration rather than aggression, and the extremely shy child would not be the focus of an intervention program designed to abort a potential life-course offending developmental pathway.

In light of the above point, the remainder of this discussion on a proposed pilot intervention concentrates on a program appropriate in a semi-rural Zulu community.

Community involvement.

As noted by Wassenaar (2006), research, especially in a developing country, should work in tandem with the needs of the target community and not be “imposed” to meet the researcher’s goals. The same applies to intervention programs. Thus extensive consultation with Nchanga community leaders and relevant members would be required before the institution of a pilot program.

3.2 Cost-effectiveness

While community involvement forms part of the ethical guidelines for a proposed intervention, it is also important in terms of cost-efficacy and in order to use the most effective intervention strategy, namely a multifaceted program. In terms of the cost-effective principle, the intervention only has a chance to be effective if it *wins the support of the community*. Albeit this support is tacit, without it, those in the community who must implement or support the intervention on the ground will sabotage the effort, and resources will be wasted. Thus parents and local school, pre-school and crèche teachers must find the short term goals of the

⁹² This awareness is echoed in a tenet of Granic and Patterson’s (2003) systems theory about the treatment of chronic antisocial behaviour, namely, that the timing of the intervention must coincide with patterns in the mother-child dyad relationship.

intervention acceptable.⁹³ As shown in the present study, not all the detailed aspects of Moffitt's taxonomy hold in a traditional, semi-rural Zulu community. Thus child rearing practices that are regarded as "adaptive" by the community must be identified and intervention strategies tailored around these. Motivation of those to implement the program in the community will be easier if the initiative has the support of respected leaders. In this regard, the initial access to the Nchanga research participants through local Catholic church leaders is an advantage. Using other local active church groups to initiate an intervention program would be as effective. Some of these are already deeply involved in community outreach and have access to a wide cross section of the local community.

Another aspect of cost-effectiveness relates to *regular program evaluation*. This would be done in two ways. The first is qualitative, with community discussion with leaders and those directly involved in the program taking place on a regular basis, to assess perceived satisfaction/problems with the program. The second would be a more formal evaluation in the form of an experimental/control design.

The third component of cost-efficacy would be to aim for an *enduring reduction in aggressive behaviour* over the long term, given that the long term goal of such a program is to prevent a recidivist violent criminal life style. Thus follow-up intervention must be part of the program design.

This point leads on to the fourth element of cost-effective intervention, which relates to the duration of the intervention modules. As mentioned earlier, families in the target community may lack capacity to participate in prolonged participation in a program. The need to work, the physical mobility of caregivers in the extended family, and the child's attendance at different schools are all problems here. For example, at the time of the Nchanga subjects' youth, many changed schools frequently, due to the outbreak of local faction fighting. These conditions have not materially changed. The literature suggests an initial prolonged intervention (e.g. regular group sessions over three month to a year) followed by short but regular intervention for several years. This design would need to be shaped to best meet the particular characteristics of the target community, with the underlying aim of maintaining regular, if intermittent, access to the target children over a prolonged period. This last tenet of cost-efficacy leads naturally to the next point, on the importance of multifaceted research.

3.3 Multifaceted Research

Intervention agents.

Multifaceted programs involve the child, school, parents and community. It is suggested (but would need on the ground confirmation) that using educational institutions as centres for program implementation would be most viable in the target community.

Parent training, especially as part of a wider school/community intervention, has proved especially effective in aborting the young child's descent into an aggressive, socially unaccepted life style. However, there are obstacles to an intervention program that targets caregivers of the pre-school child or junior school child in the proposed intervention population. With the explosion of HIV/AIDS in South Africa, the number of early orphaned children is growing rapidly. Other vulnerable youngsters have only one parent, who might also be ill in the pre-terminal stages of HIV/AIDS, or unavailable as the sole breadwinner. While grandmothers are frequently the most consistent caregiver in the young child's life, these individuals often lack the authority to implement changes in parenting practice, compared with that of the biological parent. In addition the high level of poverty in South Africa results in many parents in both single and dual parent families working long hours away from the home. This makes it difficult for them to engage in an intervention program with their child. Another obstacle is the attitude taken by many traditional African parents to problem children. In general, a higher level of aberrant behaviour is tolerated in African communities than would be the case in a Western nuclear family (Dr J C Kelly, personal communication, January, 2006). Sometimes these behaviours, if severe, are denied by the caregiver, as they are seen as a significant failure on the part of the mother (who is

⁹³ While all will support the long term goal of reducing crime, parenting methods promoted that are out of keeping with community values will not be accepted.

afraid of community censure), or as the result of witchcraft.⁹⁴ Finally, it would be difficult to synchronise the parenting strategies of the range of potential caregivers in the extended family.

Nevertheless, while a focus on parent intervention is not recommended for the pilot intervention associated with the present research, parents are important behaviour change agents who must be taken into consideration in any proposed intervention. Principles of effective parent intervention strategies should be to hand in the event a forward going pre-school or junior school program is able to involve the parents of antisocial children. In addition, these principles underpin aspects of a junior or pre-school based intervention strategy, where teachers act *in loco parentis*. Relevant to this is Colvin's (2000) observation that the child's early teachers are important initiators of his adaptive social learning by implementing a strategy of consistent reinforcement of good behaviour and firm but not harsh discipline of antisocial behaviour.

The concerns raised above, while not a reason to reject early parent intervention programs, suggest a pilot program within the context of the child's first years at school or pre-school would be more feasible. Here, teachers rather than parents, would be the key intervention agents. Teachers would also have a better chance than an external agency of getting parents to become involved in the intervention process. Although obstacles such as the large class sizes, understaffing and poorly trained educators exist, there are a sufficient number of good schools and competent staff for a pilot intervention program in one of these to be a viable option.

The importance of a broader "buy in" to intervention by the community, beyond the teachers and educational authorities directly involved in its implementation, was covered in 3.2 above in discussing cost-efficacy. If the intervention strategies are to be continued beyond the contact group, be this a crèche, pre-school or junior primary, albeit at a less intensive level, other community members must also become involved. As already stated, motivating this range of individuals in a community to become involved in the intervention would require the sanction and support of community leaders.

Intervention strategies.

According to the literature, a combination of strategies, with an overall skills based, social learning bias, is most effective in countering aggression in young children. Many of these strategies were outlined in the review in section 2 and will not be repeated here. Highlighted below are particular intervention change targets arising from the findings of the present study. These arise from those variables in the research that most strongly discriminated between the research groups.

Reducing impulsive behaviour by goal setting.

The results of this study indicated that an important function of any proposed intervention should be teaching the child to respond to situations less impulsively. Part of this strategy would be to teach him *how to set and achieve realistic goals*. Begun at an early stage and supported by a suitable mentor, these strategies would help the vulnerable child identify and achieve adaptive goals. These could include achieving within his capacity at school, making adequate friends, and participation in prosocial groups, such as those involving sport, the church and movements such as Cubs and Scouts.

The Contribution of Action Identity (ID) Theory: As shown in the main body of this paper, goal setting and impulsivity are negatively related. Vallacher and Wegner (1985)'s action identity theory generates some input regarding goal setting strategies. This would be a cognitive based intervention strategy. The literature review in section 2 raised some shortcomings of intervention programs based only on cognitive change strategies. In addition, cognitive strategies are, in general, antithetical to the traditional behaviour change practices of the semi-rural target intervention population. As shown in the present research, influence is exerted on the child by the caregiver through social example rather than communicated through verbal concepts. Cognitive change techniques concentrate on verbal communication to bring about change. Despite this proviso, there is a place for using *some* cognitive strategies based on action identity theory, in intervention with the target population, if these are balanced with social learning techniques. Simple cognitive group exercises with at risk children to

⁹⁴ This particular obstacle pertains to African subjects rather than those from the Coloured community.

break down *appropriate* longer term goals into easy short term objectives, which could be rewarded, have potential to be effective here. For example, the Grade 1 child who is rejected by peers for his aggression can be helped to break down a longer term goal (making a friend at school after a certain period of time), into short term objectives (identifying when he behaves inappropriately and practising different responses to these situations). The inclusion of a mentor-supplied reward at the achievement of interim goal objectives would add a social learning aspect to the strategy. While being *reinforced for his more appropriate behaviour*, the target child is *also learning a goal setting strategy*.

The deflection of aggression.

The stories of the life-course offender subjects described significantly more aggression in their antisocial behaviour compared with those of the adolescent-limited group. The results in chapter 5 suggested that inconsistent discipline was a key discriminator between the research groups, and that this negative effect was aggravated when the inconsistency was combined with *perceived harshness*.⁹⁵ Not only was antisocial (including aggression) behaviour not consistently punished but prosocial (non aggressive) responses were not consistently rewarded. Furthermore, families of the life-course group displayed greater interpersonal conflict than those of the adolescent-offenders. Thus a pilot intervention would need to counteract the *maladaptive reinforcement and modelling of aggression* experienced by the child at risk for chronic aggression. Appropriate strategies here would include consistently rewarding prosocial responses to conflict, consistently and appropriately punishing aggression, and the use cognitive strategies to explore non aggressive solutions to interpersonal problems.

Locus of control.

A strong group discriminator was locus of control (see chapter 8 on moral behaviour). This arm of the intervention arm would aim to promote a greater sense of personal agency in the target intervention children. Consistent consequences for behaviour is one way to achieve this. The acquisition of goal setting strategies is another. A cognitive strategy could involve the examination of consequences to actions by the group, to highlight individual responsibility for behaviour. The assignment of tasks to be completed, as long as these were not be overly burdensome, nor seen as routine duties⁹⁶, would also increase the child's internal locus of control.

Improving peer relationship skills.

Chapter 6 identified life-course participants' poor quality friendships and association only with antisocial peers. Maladaptive peer relationships originate *before* the vulnerable child associates with peers outside the home. His impulsive desire to have his needs met instantly, and the aggressive way he has learned to achieve this, does not endear him to young peers. As described in Moffitt's taxonomy, he becomes increasingly rejected by prosocial peers in his first years at school. This rejection further limits his opportunity to improve his socialising skills, especially as he begins to gravitate towards other rejects, who model maladaptive modes of interacting with others. A range of social group activities, where peer interactions are examined and shaped (rewarded/punished) by the group under the guidance of the mentor, in an age appropriate manner, would be useful here.

Cognitive strategies.

While the prime intervention strategy advocated for the proposed intervention would use social learning principles, the literature indicates that *a variety* of intervention modes is most effective. This has already emerged in the mix of social learning/cognitive intervention strategies suggested in the preceding paragraphs. While the at risk Zulu child from a semi-rural family may not be primed to respond well to cognitive strategies, some could be useful, to strengthen behaviour change initiated through social learning strategies. As already mentioned, cognitive strategies serve to clarify the link between act and personal agency; assist in anger management and in goal setting. Role-play is a useful cognitive strategy used naturally by the child in

⁹⁵ As discussed in chapter 5, harsh discipline alone was not a predictor of chronic aggression.

⁹⁶ This comment arises from the discussion of the impact of the assignment of responsibility on moral development for the Zulu subjects, in chapter 8.

his play. The emphasis placed in the Zulu culture on song, dance and performance in general could enhance the effectiveness of role-play in particular.

SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the literature around intervention programs aimed at deflecting a chronic aggressive life style. It recommended a pilot intervention program be considered in a low income, semi-rural area, from which most of the non-prisoner participants were sourced. Some suggestions were made as regards the nature of the program, which optimally should be schools based and underpinned by social learning strategies.

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APPENDIX 1

The Biographical Questionnaire

The points below are guidelines for material to be covered in the life-story interviews. It is not the intention to fire a series of questions at subjects. On the other hand, the interviews require some structure if material relevant to the research is to be thoroughly covered. The questions below act as guides to the interviewer. He/she may find the subject spontaneously offers information on many of the categories below. The interviewer will select which areas to probe further, within a framework of allowing the subject to generate his story in his own style as much as possible.

Structure of the Biographical Questionnaire

A. Micro-sociological framework.

The life-course is subjectively divided into meaningful principal and subordinate parts. It is a useful categorizing tool for obtaining data.

1. Time perspective

- a. What is the earliest period in your life that you remember well? And the next period you remember?
- b. What do you remember best?
- c. In which of these periods were you most happy/sad, or which did you find difficult? Why?
- d. Were there any things you really wished/wanted to do that you did/did not achieve? (Apply question to each period.) An example might be given such as: "Perhaps you were really keen to do well at school? Did that happen?"
- e. Who was very important to you in this time? Were there important people in this time whom you really did not like/were scared of? Were there people whom you looked up to, and tried to be like? (probe for the influence of older people and for siblings or peers). (Apply question to each period.)
- f. Can you name at least three things you really look forward to doing in the future, or hope to achieve? (Probe for more if responses are weak.)

2 Social Ecology

Understanding of subject's social relationships and activities.

- a. Where did you live at different times in your life? (Probe if he lived close to friends and family, or with strangers; if he moved around much.)
- b. What occupations and hobbies, art and business activities kept you busy in different periods? (Describe briefly.)
- c. Were you involved with religion? How?

B. Social psychological life patterns.

1. Family and Groups

1.1 Family

- a. Make-up of the family; contact details of known family members (relates to third person data gathering).
- b. Role and prestige of each child.
- c. Rights, duties, rewards, punishments specific to each child.
- d. Group activities in the family.
- e. Age at which each child left the family, and the circumstances.
- f. Life adjustment of siblings.
- g. General atmosphere in the family.
- h. Parenting styles. (This includes discord in the home; perceived restriction of regulations; readiness of reinforcement; severity of penalties; democracy of regulation and enforcement policies; protectiveness; readiness and direction of criticism; emotionality; acceptance.)
- i. Subject's attitude towards discipline exercised by parents.
- j. Did the subject respect his parents/caregivers? What was it especially that he respected about the way the parent/caregivers behaved.?

1.2 Schooling

- a. Chronological inventory of schools attended.

- b. Attitudes towards schools attended.
- c. Why changes in school occurred.
- d. Control over school attendance, studying etc, by parents and by school authorities.
- e. Relationship between parents and school.
- f. Description of the values and rules emphasized by the school.
- g. Description of non-scholastic activities at school.
- h. Comparison of school with home atmosphere.
- i. Attitudes to teachers.
- j. Attitudes to fellow learners.
- k. Indications of difficulties in learning to read and write, and of failure to pass a standard.

1.3 Groups

- a. Chronological listing of key groups in subject's life. Description of the key activities of the groups (social; sport; work; crime).
- b. Degree of involvement of subject in these groups, in addition to his role in the groups.
- c. Insight into subject's views on a good, bad or mediocre leader in key groups in his life.

2. Values, Norms and Expectations

2.1 Prohibitions

- a. Chronological inventory of all prohibitions subject can remember.
- b. Who issued these? (parents, caregivers, teachers, authorities)
- c. Subject's view (agree/disagree) on key prohibitions in his life.
- d. Ranking of prohibitions according to difficulty in observing them.
- e. Subject's reaction to his violation of one of these rules.
- f. Punishment and rewards that follow violation or observation of the different rules.
- g. Did the community the subject lived in as an adolescent and young adult (parents' friends, other elders) expect him to behave in a certain way. Were there things the community really found unacceptable. (e.g. Many communities hold that adolescents who contract the HIV/AIDS virus are immoral and evil). Were theft, hijacking and other similar crimes condemned.

2.2 Expectations

- a. List of expectations parents and important others had towards subject.
- b. Which of these did the subject realize.
- c. How did he feel about the expectations important others had of him.
- d. What about things that the community valued? (e.g. In certain communities giving money to the poor is highly valued). Did the community expect the subject to behave in a certain way?

3. The Institutional Situation: Prison/Boys'Town NICRO program (not for Nchanga/Durban subjects)

The procedure in this section must be adapted to each subject group. Core questions assess the subject's sense of his own responsibility for his misdemeanors, an issue relevant to the experiences of all the groups. The questions below are directed at the prisoner group. Ex-Boys Town subjects' attitudes to the authorities in their brushes with the law and their attitudes about their Boys Town experiences must be probed. Attitudes of NICRO "graduates" towards police and the law are also relevant. Their subjective experiences of the NICRO program are substituted for the institutionalised experiences of the other groups.

- a. History of subject's arrests, prison time, first conviction.
- b. Attitude to police and court officials (cruel; hostile; unfair; bullies?).
- c. Subject's opinion about the fairness or otherwise of the judicial system. (In particular, the subject's view on why he should not break the law).
- d. Self-reports about delinquent acts he engaged in during adolescents, and subsequent more serious crime.
- e. Description of the subject's feeling about his "worst" crime. Was it really a "wrong" act? Did he think the consequences to it were fair or not? Why?
- f. Would the subject be keen to engage in an activity that is not strictly legal but highly beneficial to himself, if he could be certain he would not be caught.
- g. Subject's opinion about a prisoner's basic rights and the way he feels he is actually treated.

C. Individual characteristics: personality and body.

q1. Personality through self descriptions

- a. Self-descriptions – Use “Who am I” technique to provide important personal characteristics.
- b. Self-descriptions focusing on different life periods: primary school period; adolescence; 10 years in the future.
- c. Subject’s description as he imagines it would be given by his best friend; by his enemy.
- d. Self-esteem (in terms of how favourable subject sees *himself relative to other people he knows*). His views on: How attractive he is to the opposite sex; popular amongst his peers; ability to cope with every day difficulties/street-wise; leadership.

2. Goals and Aspirations

2.1 Goals

- a. Description of at least three goals easily reached in the past, and of future aspirations in similar situations.
- b. Similar description of goals hard to attain.
- c. Similar description of goals, never attained.
- d. Description of situations of choice between two equally attractive goals (e.g. criminal versus non criminal activity).

2.2 Helping the Community

Do you have any aims about working with/helping your community or other people, in the future?

APPENDIX 2

The Third Party Questionnaire

The questions are partly based on Appendix 1 of Wright et al, (1999, p. 510), on measures of self-control, peer relationships and attitude to education. They also reflect Moffitt's (1993) interest in early developmental factors, such as poor attention span, emotional lability and temper tantrums, as early indicators of life-course offending. The interviews target close family members, preferably mothers, who have knowledge of subject's early developmental history and behaviour. Use the caregiver's comparison with other children in the family as a bench mark. See examples below in italics

a. Maternal Factors:

Did you have problems in pregnancy or during the birth of N? *Were these worse, same, less than with pregnancy/birth of your other children?*

Probe:

- Were you in good health?
- Baby came on due date/ was early/ late?
- Birth weight?
- Did you breastfeed/bottle feed –have problems with feeding?
- At time of pregnancy or 1st 6 months were you dependent on alcohol or drugs?
- Did baby cry a lot/ sleep poorly/ need your attention/ irritable -generally a difficult baby – in first few months? *Were these worse, same, less than for your other children at that age?*
- Did baby have any particular health problems in first year?

2. Childhood period

As a young child –until he became a teenager : -

- Did he get angry often? *more/less/same as other children*
- When he got angry how did he show it?
- Did he hit other children-a lot? *more/less/same as other children*
- Were other children afraid of him?
- As a child did he get into fights often ? *more/less/same as other children*
- Did he bully other children or his siblings? (this means to threaten violence to get what you want-“ If you don't let me play with that I'll hit you”)
- Did he find it difficult to do things where he needed to sit still? (e.g. drawing/ homework/ watching TV) *more/less/same as other children*
- Did he give up on a task easily (like trying to fit a toy together)? *more/less/same as other children*
- Did he get upset if he couldn't do something (like fix a toy/open something). How did he show this?
- Was he always active (always running around and moving)? *more/less/same as other children*
- If he wanted something-toy/sweet etc, did he want it straight away and get upset when this did not happen? *more/less/same as other children*
- Did he do dangerous things- take risks (e.g. jump off high things) *more/less/same as other children*

3. As a teenager

- Did he (still) fight a lot with other children his age? (if the answer was “yes” to this question in 2 above)

4. All Ages

- Did he show affection to you or other family members? (hug/kiss)
- Was he considerate? Did he think about you? What did he do for your birthday?
- Did he laugh and joke ? A little/ a lot? When he came home was the house full of laughter?
- Did he keep to himself a lot? (solitary)
- Did you trust him?
- Did he steal?
- Could he keep a promise?

5. Peer relationships

Did he have many/few friends at primary school? *more/less/same as other children*

At high school? *more/less/same as other children*

Did he keep the same friends throughout school or did these change?

At high school would you say his friends were mainly the type who broke the law or not? (look for simple % such as half/most /none)

4. Family relationships

-How did he get on with the family? *more/less/same as other children*

-Relationship with siblings/ parents or caregivers?

-Did he disobey parents often? *more/less/same as other children*

-Did he behave in ways that often made parents cross? *more/less/same as other children*

-Was he violent/ caring/ gentle/ ignored siblings?

5. Schooling

-How did he cope with school compared to siblings and close peers *better/worse/same as other children*

-Do you think he liked school-primary/high school?

-What standards did he repeat?

-What standard did he reach at school?

5. Delinquent behaviours

Description of the antisocial/delinquent behaviours he engaged in as an adolescent/young adult.- (These are the first things he did that were against the law/school rules etc, going up to his present prison sentence/the present time. Keep the answers short –get a list and ages.)

6. Economic Status (not a direct question)

We need to know something about the economic status of the caregivers. For example one mum interviewed said they had no money to buy uniforms so the child left school. Another said “ he had no reason to steal as he had what he needed” .. These statements tell a lot about the home circumstances of the subject. Please make a comment about the economic status in your report if you can.

7. Attitude of person you speak to about the subject (not a direct question)

Make a comment on whether the person you interview blames the prisoner for what he had done;/ rejects him/ still accepts and cares for him/ excuses him and blames someone else etc. If the subject is a non-prisoner, adjust question accordingly.

APPENDIX 3⁹⁷ The Socio-Economic Questionnaire

ITEMS 1; 2; 3 and 4 were for general information but did not contribute to the SES scores of subjects, which looked at their socio-economic family conditions in their developing years.

SES Questionnaire. Prison Group English Version

1. Tick the highest grade of schooling you achieved

No schooling	
Grade 3	
Grade 7	
Grade 9	
Grade 10	
Grade 12	
Tertiary study	

Scoring: (0): no schooling; (2)-Gr 3; (3)-Gr.7; (4)-Gr9; (5)-Gr 10; (6)-Gr 12; (7)-tertiary

2. Are you able to read easily?

Yes	No

Scoring: (1) no; (2)yes

2A. *(for further studies the following is recommended as more discriminating)*

2. Are you able to read easily? *Tick what you can do.*

Can not read	
Can read simple directions to get somewhere	
Can read a newspaper	
Can read a long book	

3.. In the year before you went to prison, what job or jobs did you have. Name work and the length of time you spent in each job

Kind of Job	Length of employment	Name Kind of Job
No skills- e.g. car guard/watchman		
Manual skills e.g bricklayer		
Office or Technical skills e.g clerk; electrician		
Professional skills e.g. teacher/trained nurse		

Scoring: (0) no work (1) unskilled (2) manual (3) technical/administrative (4) professional

4 . How much in Rands did you spent on clothes and shoes in the year before prison?

Under R200	
R200-R500	
R500-R1000	
R1000-R2000	

⁹⁷ The isiZulu translation of the Questionnaires, administered to most subjects, is available from the researcher.

R2000-R3000	
Over R3000	

Scoring: (1) less than R200 (2) R200-R500 (3) R500-R1000 (4) R1000-R2000 (5) R2000-R3000 (6) Over R3000

5. Tick all the kind of houses you lived in when you were a child and teenager

On the street	
Corrugated iron and/or cardboard house	
Mud house	
Brick house	
Other-describe	

Scoring: (1) no home (2) Iron/cardboard house (3) mud house (4) brick house

6. Rate the condition of the houses you lived in when you were a child and teenager, on a scale of 1-5. (1 = bad condition; 5 = very good condition.)

1 2 3 4 5

7.. Did you have electricity in the houses you lived in when you were a child and teenager?

Yes	No

Scoring: (1) no (2) yes

8. Where did you get your drinking water from at those times?

Tap in your home	
A communal tap	
The river	
Other-describe	

Scoring: (1) river (2) communal tap (3) tap in house

9. What kind of toilet did you have at those times?

Flush toilet	
VIP toilet	
Pit latrine	
No toilet	

Scoring: (1) no toilet (2) pit latrine (3) VIP toilet (4) flush toilet

10. State the occupational level of the main breadwinner in your family. State if this was your father, mother or another caregiver.

Main breadwinner

Occupation

Scoring: (1) unskilled (2) skilled (3) white collar (4) professional

11. Did you live with both your father and mother (until about 12 years of age)?

----- or

Did you live with 1 parent or none of your biological parents when young (until about 12 years of age)?

Scoring: (1) both (0) 1 parent

12. State the number of persons and rooms in your home when young (until about 12 years of age). Count the bathroom/toilet as one room. Only count rooms that are in the main structure, and people who live in the main structure.

No. of rooms----- No. of persons-----

Scoring: Calculate number of persons per room in home. (4) <1; (3) 1-1.4; (2) 1.5-1.9; (1) 2-2.4; (0) 2.5->3

SES Questionnaire. Non-prisoner Group English Version

1. Tick the highest grade of schooling you achieved

No schooling	
Grade 3	
Grade 7	
Grade 9	
Grade 10	
Grade 12	
Tertiary study	

Scoring: (0): no schooling; (2)-Gr 3; (3)-Gr.7; (4)-Gr9; (5)-Gr 10; (6)-Gr 12; (7)-tertiary

2. Are you able to read easily?

Yes	No

Scoring: (1) no; (2)yes

3.. In the past year what job or jobs did you have? Name work and the length of time you spent in each job.

Kind of Job	Length of employment	Name Kind of Job
No skills- e.g. car guard/watchman		
Manual skills e.g bricklayer		
Office or Technical skills e.g clerk; electrician		
Professional skills e.g. teacher/trained nurse		

Scoring: (0) no work (1) unskilled (2) manual (3) technical/administrative (4) professional

4. How much in Rands have you spent on clothes and shoes ⁹⁸

In the past month	In the past month	In the past 3 months	In the past year
Under R200			
R200-R500			
R500-R1000			
R1000-R2000			
R2000-R3000			
Over R3000			

Scoring: (1) less than R200 (2) R200-R500 (3) R500-R1000 (4) R1000-R2000 (5) R2000-R3000 (6) Over R3000

5 Tick all the kinds of homes you have lived in when you were a child and teenager

On the street	
Corrugated iron and/or cardboard house	
Mud house	
Brick house	
Other-describe	

⁹⁸ The SES Questionnaire was given to the prisoners first and the group required much explanation about amounts, hence the greater detail of the item in this subsequent administration.

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Scoring: (1) no home (2) Iron/cardboard house (3) mud house (4) brick house

6. Rate the condition of the houses you lived in when you were a child and teenager, on a scale of 1-5.
1 = bad condition; 5 = very good condition.

1 2 3 4 5

7.. Did you have electricity in the houses you lived in when you were a child and teenager?

Yes	No

Scoring: (1) no (2) yes

8. Where did you get your drinking water from at those times?

Tap in your home	
A communal tap	
The river	
Other-describe	

Scoring: (1) river (2) communal tap (3) tap in house

9. What kind of toilet did you have at those times?

Flush toilet	
VIP toilet	
Pit latrine	
No toilet	

Scoring: (1) no toilet (2) pit latrine (3) VIP toilet (4) flush toilet

10. State the occupational level of the main breadwinner in your family. State if this was your father, mother or another caregiver.

Main breadwinner

Occupation

Scoring: (1) unskilled (2) skilled (3) white collar (4) professional

11. Did you live with both your father and mother (until about 12 years of age)?

----- or

Did you live with 1 parent or none of your biological parents when young (until about 12 years of age)?

Scoring: (1) both (0) 1 parent

12. State the number of persons and rooms in your home when young (until about 12 years of age). Count the bathroom/toilet as one room. Only count rooms that are in the main structure, and people who live in the main structure.

No. of rooms----- No. of persons-----

Scoring: Calculate number of persons per room in home. (4) <1; (3) 1-1.4; (2) 1.5-1.9; (1) 2-2.4; (0) 2.5->3

APPENDIX 4

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH⁹⁹

I, _____ agree to take part in the research being carried out by June Kelly at X Prison.

What I agree to do in the research –I understand that I will have one or two interviews with one of the researchers. In these interviews I will be asked to talk about my earlier life, especially before I entered prison. I will be asked especially to talk about my life as a child and adolescent, and also about things I would like to do in the future. I will fill in some questionnaires. These will tell the research more about me. They will also tell the researcher about how I think when I am given different kinds of problems to work out.

I understand that joining is my own choice - I understand that joining the research is my choice. I am not forced to join. I can also leave the research at any time if I wish.

I understand I can help others by being part of the research -The story of my earlier life that I will tell and the questionnaires I do will help the researcher find out more about:

- * how the way young children get on with family and other people plays a part in whether that they take up crime when they are older
- * how the things that youth believe are important in their lives (their values) play a part in whether they take up crime when they are older

The information I give will help to develop programmes for young people who show signs that they may take up with crime at a later stage. These programmes aim to help the young people become useful members of the community.

I understand that my identity will not be revealed - The information I give in the interviews and in the questionnaires will be put into a report. This report will be shown to people involved in preventing crime, such as other researchers and senior prison authorities, in order to provide greater understanding about the factors leading to a criminal lifestyle. While the information I give will be used in this report, my identity at all times will remain anonymous.

I understand that information about new crimes may be reported to the Prison Head -

I agree that any new information I give in the interviews, about escapes, assaults or murders, (that are not related the crime for which I was sentenced) may not be kept confidential and be reported to the Head of the Prison.

.....
SIGNATURE OF RESPONDENT

.....
DATE

.....
SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

⁹⁹ This form was administered in isiZulu to mother tongue isiZulu speakers. It was adapted for non-prison subjects.

APPENDIX 5

Data Comparison between First and Follow Up Interviews

Example 1

1st Interview

How did you feel after each actual incident?[of serious assault]

I felt very proud. I think, I mean I was doing what my friends were doing.

So it felt like the right thing? Or did it..?.

Ja, felt like the... felt like the right thing at the time

Ok. So you were doing things in order to be accepted by a particular group of people

Ja, ja. (1, P 435)

How would they accept you now?[past peers' acceptance, now he is in prison]

A lot of them don't, huh.

Don't they?

Ja, a lot of them don't, ah, some of them respect me. But a lot of them don't. They don't, actually.

How're you gonna deal with that on the outside?

I don't really care. Now that I've got....I've got uh....one thing I've came to....I've come to... I've realised... that this is my life and I'm never going to (unclear). If you don't like it then too bad. (1, P 443).

2nd Interview

Friends- when you were a small guy-up to 10 years old, did you make friends that you have kept until at least when you went to prison, or were your friendship shorter?

No.

So you never really had a special friend for a long time.

No from the time I was born, I am now 28, I've met someone I can say is my friend now but my friend - the first friendship I had, was with my wife- when I met her- I think I was 15 and I ran away from home- but I can say she became a friend after I courted her and got married to her I can say she was really the person who showed me love. So before that I never had close friends. [wife has currently another partner!] (1-2, P 93)

(both interviews show the subject has not kept friends over any length of time, but the second is more specific)

Example 2

1st Interview

How would my best friend describe me? My best friend is my aunt's son. He won't have a way to describe now because he is outside [of me] but he is the person that can best describe me.

What kind of a person would he say you are?

....He would say I have a big heart because he had a short temper. Because if we had a fight, I would just stop talking to him because I didn't want to keep on arguing with him so it would be better if I kept quiet and went home, he would also go his own way. He would come over the following day calmer. When he is alone, he would see that he was the one at fault etc. (21, P 293)

So do you have a lot of friends?

No, I don't have a lot of friends, it's just that for me there is a difference between friends and an acquaintance.

There is getting along with someone because you live in the same neighbourhood or because you're doing the same things. Friendship is very different, you really don't know who your friend is. Because your friend wouldn't tell you if your girlfriend is cheating on you. They wouldn't tell you because they don't want to cause trouble, not because you would question where they got this. When you find it out from wherever, you find that whoever was there when stuff happened. And you get along with that person and you mustn't get too angry with them. A friend is a person you discuss everything with. If something happens it mustn't happen like this. I think this, ask them how much somebody loves you outside and then start moving away a bit. Giving each other advice on basic things in life and you can see that you understand each other. Even though you sometimes fight with friends over small things, even deception. But now I can't really say that I have a lot of friends. (21, P 334)

2nd Interview

Do you still have same friends that you have when you when you were 10 years of age and that are still your friends even now?

No, I no longer have them as my friends.

You no longer have them, okay, is there a person in life that has been a friend to you for a long time, if yes for how long?

I think it was five years.

Okay, is that person still a friend to you now?

It is in a way but it is no longer that strong relationship that we had before.

Is it because you don't meet as frequent as you did before?

We no longer meet regularly. But he is still here in Nchanga. (21-2, P 45)

While this subject refers to having few friends, the implication in the 1st interview is that he values friendships and makes the effort to maintain them. This is spelt out in the second interview.
